

Pet **Tips**



*Presented
by
Mark D.
Setser, DVM, MS*

I know I love chocolate, so why shouldn't my pet?

Because it's toxic, that's why.

Chocolate contains a stimulant called theobromide that affects several systems of your pet's body, from gastrointestinal to cardiac to respiratory. The more concentrated the chocolate, the greater amount of theobromides present and more dangerous to the pet. No chocolate is safe for your pet to eat, but some are much worse than others. Unsweetened bakers chocolate is more toxic than chocolate ice cream. Bakers chocolate has almost nine times as much theobromide as milk chocolate.

Signs a pet owner might see if their pet has ingested chocolate include vomiting, diarrhea, nervous twitching, rapid breathing and heart rate. If you suspect your pet has ingested chocolate, seek veterinary care immediately and be certain to take along the ingredient label from the chocolate for your vet.

The first step in treatment is to remove any remaining chocolate in the system, this may involve inducing vomiting. Charcoal may be administered to absorb any remaining toxins. Supportive care is essential, and can include intravenous fluids and medications to control seizures and elevated heart rate.

Always keep chocolate out of reach of your family pet. Do not leave them laying out on a table or counter, no matter how well behaved your pet normally is. And remember, chocolate is not a stress reducer or pleasurable food for your pet. Please don't share chocolate with your cat or dog - you may not appreciate the ensuing result.

P.S. Bring in the column and receive \$10 off any veterinary service. New patients only. Offer expires 1/30/08.

**Village Vet
Animal Clinic
Broken Arrow
(918) 258-0040**

**All Creatures
Veterinary Hospital
Tulsa (918) 481-0440**

***"Where you go when it matters!"
Call Today!***