

CHOCOLATE TOXICITY

MOST ACCIDENTAL CHOCOLATE EXPOSURES IN PETS OCCUR AROUND HOLIDAYS, ESPECIALLY HALLOWEEN, CHRISTMAS, VALENTINE'S DAY AND EASTER.



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Active ingredient in chocolate is theobromine which is a stimulant. The caffeine contained in chocolate can also be hazardous.

Forms- milk, dark, white, semi-sweet, baking (unsweetened)

Clinical signs onset within 1-4 hours and can vary depending on the type and amount of chocolate that the dog ingested.

Main clinical signs: vomiting, hyper-excitability, ataxia, diarrhea, seizures, coma and death.

Treatment: gastric lavage, toxiban, Iv fluids, monitoring for cardiac arrhythmias, urine production, GI protectants, sedation may be required.

It takes, on average, a fairly large amount of theobromine 100-150 mg/kg to cause a toxic reaction. Although there are variables to consider like the individual sensitivity, animal size and chocolate concentration.

On average,
Milk chocolate contains 44 mg of theobromine per oz.
Semisweet chocolate contains 150mg/oz.
Baker's chocolate 390mg/oz.

Using a dose of 100 mg/kg as the toxic dose it comes out roughly as:

1 ounce per 1 pound of body weight for *Milk chocolate*

1 ounce per 3 pounds of body weight for *Semisweet chocolate*

1 ounce per 9 pounds of body weight for *Baker's chocolate*.

So, for example, 2 oz. of Baker's chocolate can cause great risk to an 15 lb. dog. Yet, 2 oz. of Milk chocolate usually will only cause digestive problems.