

Back away from the holiday goodies...

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With the holidays approaching, it is important to remember that those treats we enjoy so much for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas may not be a good idea for Fido or Fuzzball. Here is a quick rundown of common foods that can be very harmful to your pet.

Chocolate

Most of us know that chocolate is not good for pets, but why? Chocolate contains both theobromine and caffeine, which can cause damage to the heart and nervous system.

Dark chocolate contains the most theobromine, followed by milk chocolate and white chocolate.

Avocado

The leaves, fruit, seeds and bark of avocados contain Persin, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea in dogs. Birds and rodents are especially sensitive to avocado poisoning, and can develop congestion, difficulty breathing and fluid accumulation around the heart.

Some ingestions may even be fatal.

Macadamia Nuts

Macadamia nuts are commonly used in many cookies and candies. However, they can cause problems for your canine companion. These nuts have caused weakness, depression, vomiting, tremors and hyperthermia in dogs. Signs usually appear within 12 hours of ingestion and last approximately 12 to 48 hours.

Grapes & Raisins

Although the toxic substance within grapes and raisins is unknown, these fruits can cause kidney failure. In pets that already have certain health problems, signs may be more dramatic.

Yeast Dough

Yeast dough can rise and cause gas to accumulate in your pet's digestive system. This can be painful and can cause the stomach or intestines to rupture. Because the risk diminishes after the dough is cooked and the yeast has fully risen, pets can have small bits of bread as treats.

Xylitol

Xylitol is used as a sweetener in many products, including gum, candy, baked goods and toothpaste. It can cause insulin release in most species, which can lead to liver failure. The increase in insulin leads to hypoglycemia (lowered sugar levels).

Onions, Garlic, Chives

These vegetables and herbs can cause gastrointestinal irritation and could lead to red blood cell damage. Although cats are more susceptible, dogs are also at risk if a large enough amount is consumed. An occasional low dose, such as what might be found in pet foods or treats, likely will not cause a problem, but it is recommend that you do NOT give your pets large quantities of these foods.

Milk

Because pets do not possess significant amounts of lactase (the enzyme that breaks down lactose in milk), milk and other milk-based products cause them diarrhea or other digestive upset.

Fat Trimmings

Although it can be tempting to offer fat trimmings for a treat, even small amounts of fat can trigger a painful inflammatory condition of the pancreas called pancreatitis. Signs of pancreatitis include stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhea.