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## **It is Candy Season-Keep your pet safe!**

With the holiday season coming near, pets are at greater risk of ingesting toxic foods. Keep your pet safe with keeping these items in tight sealing containers and in cabinets away from the pet's reach. Educate children and keep the pet kenneled when children are eating candy.

### **Chocolate**

Common sources of chocolate poisoning are candy, cakes, brownies, baking supplies (cocoa, chocolate chips). Most pet owners have heard not to feed your pet chocolate. This is a warning that you do not want to ignore. Signs of chocolate toxicities can occur anywhere from 6 hrs to 12 hrs after ingestion. Sickness can be delayed, if the pet ingested candy in wrappers. Initially a pet owner may believe the pet is fine but the pet will start showing the following signs: increase drinking, vomiting, diarrhea, bloat, acting restless. This leads to hyperactivity, increase urination, incoordination, tremors and seizures. Death usually occurs as a result of heart arrhythmias and respiratory failure.

### **Chewing Gum**

Xylitol is used as a sugar substitute sweetener in many products. In the United States, the use of xylitol has grown rapidly over the last few years. It is increasingly found in sugar-free gum, candy, and foods. It is also available in granulated form for baking. It is popular among diabetics and those on low-carbohydrate diets. Humans absorb xylitol slowly, making it safe for consumption. However, in dogs, xylitol is quickly absorbed into the bloodstream. It then acts as a strong promoter of insulin release, which causes profound hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). In dogs, xylitol can also cause liver failure, bleeding, and death. Signs include vomiting, lethargy (tired), weakness and seizures.

### **Other Candy**

Any candy can be a source for intestinal disturbances such as vomiting and diarrhea. Consumed in large amounts some seemingly safe candies such as gummy bears can cause disturbances in the pet's electrolytes and may even lead to death.

### **What to do if my pet ingests candy?**

If you see your pet ingest candy, call your veterinarian immediately. If your veterinarian is not immediately available, call the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center. Usually, there is a small fee charged to your credit card to discuss a poisoning. Make sure that you have the label or container available to read the ingredient list off to the poison control center or veterinarian. The poison control center will then tell you what signs to watch for, if your pet needs immediate treatment and what that treatment should consist of.

Please visit the following websites for more information:

[www.petpoisonhelpline.com](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com) 1-800-213-6680

<http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/poison-control/> 1-888-426-4435

Disclaimer: This written content is meant to be educational and is not medical advice. Always consult a veterinarian about medical advice for your pet.