

## Christmas treats can kill

We want everybody to enjoy their Christmas.

Think carefully before you feed your pets food designed for humans.

### Beware of the following

**Chocolate:** Contains Theobromine which is toxic to dogs and can cause death.

Clinical signs to watch for are: Vomiting, diarrhoea, restlessness, panting, increased urination. Extreme cases have cardiac arrhythmia & seizure, coma and death. Clinical Signs can be seen within 1-2 hours of ingestion- if pet has eaten doses approaching or exceeding figures in table below vet attention is warranted

Type chocolate	4kg cat	5kg dog	10kg dog	20kg dog
Milk	35g	55g	110g	220g
Dark	14g	18g	35g	70g
Cooking	5g	7g	14g	28g
White	200X less toxic than milk chocolate so virtually impossible to cause toxicity			

**Caffeine** – Causes same toxicity at dose 140mg/kg

**Onions:** Lethargy, panting, inappetence, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatal anaemia  
Poisoning can occur from a single large ingestion or a smaller amount eaten over a few days.

- Toxicity from eating onions, leeks, garlic, onion powder
- Dose in 10kg dog is ¼ cup / cats more sensitive and toxicity from less
- Examples are: Pizza, Soups, Baby foods, Left overs – often meat mixed with onions

**Macadamia nuts:** As little as 20gms or 6 nuts can cause illness, not fatal.

Clinical signs to watch for are: Weakness, depression, stiffness, tremors.

Abdomen pain, recumbent, inability to walk.

Increased heart rate.

**Grapes / Raisins:** Causes vomiting, diarrhoea, off food, weight loss, dehydration, weight loss, abdominal pain, excess thirst, coma and death.

Grapes - Toxicity from as little as 19g/kg. That means 200gms grapes eaten by a 10kg dog could be fatal

Raisins – Toxicity from as little as 3 gm/kg

**Cooked bones:** These are brittle and sharp slivers can lodge in the throat, pierce the stomach lining and cause painful constipation when trying to pass.

**Pancreatitis:** Possibly the most common presentation to Vet Emergency Centres on Boxing Day are dogs with abdominal pain. These may be due to just over eating, but often have developed into pancreatitis due to the sudden increase in fatty foods consumed.

Pancreatitis causes a serious and very painful acute abdomen.

Clinical signs to watch for are:

- Vomiting - especially serious if unable to hold down water.
- Not eating.
- Signs of abdominal pain - restless, lying on cool surfaces.