

M&S Pet Insurance Warns Chocolate Treats Can Be A Doggy Danger This Easter



Released on: March 30, 2010, 12:03 am

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Industry: [Financial](#)

M&S Pet Insurance is warning dog owners of the dangers of chocolate poisoning in household pets ahead of the Easter weekend.

Chocolate eggs and other treats left around the house at Easter can be a big temptation to four legged friends, however unlike most people they can become extremely unwell if they eat large amounts of chocolate which is intended for humans.

The toxic chemical within chocolate is called Theobromine and the amount contained within chocolate varies according to the type and quality of chocolate. Dark chocolate usually contains high levels of the toxic chemical, compared with white chocolate which contains comparatively little. Even a small amount of high quality dark chocolate eaten by a dog can cause clinical signs such as hyperexcitability and restlessness, vomiting, tremors and convulsions.

While M&S [Pet Insurance](#) policyholders have access to a 24-hour advice line, 365 days a year, meaning that if the worst happens this Easter they know they have support at the end of the phone, as it is much better to avoid the problem in the first place.

Vetfone nurses provide concerned pet owners with immediate advice on an animal's condition and can decide whether emergency medical treatment is required.

Vetfone Deputy Operations Manager, Clare Scantlebury, said: "Easter is a great excuse to indulge in all things chocolaty, but dog owners should think carefully about storing chocolate eggs in a safe place out of the reach of hungry dogs.

"The potential danger depends on the amount of chocolate eaten, the type of chocolate and the size of the dog. If you suspect your dog has eaten chocolate and is showing signs of illness, seek medical advice immediately."

David Wells, M&S Head of Insurance, said: "It's not just the chocolate at Easter which can cause illness and injury in pets. We have seen claims when dogs have eaten small novelty toys from Easter eggs and shredded plastic used as packing material in Easter baskets.

"Small toys may cause internal damage or an intestinal blockage which can be life threatening. Ideally keep these objects well out of reach of your pets and supervise your dogs closely if children are playing with the toys."

Ends

Notes to Editors

About

M&S

Money

M&S Money (the trading name of Marks & Spencer Financial Services) was founded in 1985 as the financial services division of Marks and Spencer Group plc, making 2010 the company's 25th anniversary.

The company is a top-ten [credit card](#) provider and the second-largest travel money retailer in the UK. M&S Money also offers a range of insurance cover, including [home insurance](#) and [car insurance](#), as well as loans, savings and investment products.

In November 2004, Marks & Spencer sold M&S Money to HSBC. HSBC Holdings plc, the parent company of the HSBC Group, is headquartered in London. The Group serves customers worldwide from around 8,000 offices in 88 countries and territories in Europe, the Asia-Pacific region, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa. With assets of US\$2,364 billion at 31 December 2009, HSBC is one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations. HSBC is marketed worldwide as 'the world's local bank'.

M&S Money has an executive committee comprising an equal number of representatives from HSBC and Marks & Spencer.

M&S Pet Insurance policies are provided by RSA Insurance Group plc.

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