

Pet owners warned over toxic Easter treats

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Chocolates and the sultanas in hot cross buns can be dangerous for pets

Hot cross buns and chocolate may be sweet treats for humans, but experts warn that Easter is a deadly time for pets.

Jill Griffiths from Murdoch University Veterinary Hospital (MUVH) warned [pet](#) owners to remember that cocoa and [dark chocolate](#) were extremely dangerous for pets, with the sultanas in hot cross buns possibly leading to kidney failure.

"Chocolate is very toxic to dogs – they are at least 3 times as sensitive to the toxic compounds in it as humans, meaning they do not need to eat much to become very sick," said Dr Jill Griffiths from the MUVH.

"Chocolate toxicity starts with vomiting, diarrhoea, a pounding heart beat and agitation, then progress through tremors, twitches and collapse

to seizures and potentially death.

"It can take dogs and cats take a long time to detoxify after consuming stimulants such as caffeine, with treatment taking up to three days."

Obviously prevention is better than treatment, but if your pet manages to over indulge on delicious Easter treats, MUVH veterinary doctors recommend you take them to a vet as soon as possible.

"Hot cross buns slathered in butter are a traditional and delicious start to the day. However, sultanas have been associated with kidney failure in dogs, so best not to let your dog eat the leftovers," continued Dr Griffiths.

"If your pet has eaten sultanas or grapes, veterinary attention is recommended to either try to remove the grapes or sultanas from their system or to provide support to the kidneys if they are showing signs of injury."

Many people go away over Easter, leaving their animals in the care of friends or family. With animals susceptible to health dangers over the Easter period, Dr Griffiths highlighted the importance for [pet owners](#) to discuss what pet sitters should do in the event pets require emergency lifesaving surgery.

"It is important that the people who are looking after your pet know your wishes regarding treatment for your pet, especially if you are not contactable at all times," she said.

"Unfortunately, this is a situation we see in the Emergency Room all too often, and if your pet sitter doesn't know what you want for your pet, it can mean significant delays to instituting optimal treatment.

"Clear communication and setting expectations and limits in advance are very important here, and mean that your pet can get the appropriate treatment."

Provided by Murdoch University

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