



DEATH BY CHOCOLATE .... AND OTHER HOLIDAY TALES

As the little boy on the Oreos advert reminds us, "Chocolate isn't good for dogs". In fact, chocolate is highly toxic to dogs (and other pets); depending on the size of the animal and the amount consumed, ingestion can be fatal. The higher the percentage of cocoa solids present in the chocolate, the more dangerous. Just 7g (1-2 blocks!!) of 70% dark chocolate would kill a yorkie puppy weighing 1kg. If a 60kg Boerboel raided the pantry or sniffed out one of those Holiday-Season-sized 500g bars, he could also face an untimely death if not rushed to a veterinary clinic immediately. Milk chocolate is slightly less serious, with a toxic dose of around 60g per kg of the pet's weight, but should non the less be kept well away from curious snouts!

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD CHOCOLATE EVER BE GIVEN TO PETS AS A TREAT!!**

With many furry friends getting set to travel on holiday with their people, bear in mind the following to ensure their comfort in the car and their health whilst on vacation:

- Make regular stops (every 2-3 hours) for water breaks, to stretch legs and to "do the necessary".
- Don't feed a full meal before leaving; rather offer a couple of doggy biscuits/treats during comfort breaks. This will keep Fido/Spooky going throughout the journey but prevent a bout of car-sickness.
- Stock up on Nutricalm naturopathic capsules, a safe alternative to sedatives and marvelous for alleviating the stress associated with car or air travel. They are effective in all but the most highly-strung animals and are extensively used to help pets cope with holiday-fireworks and summer thunderstorms. Also really effective are the D.A.P. and C.A.P. collars, for dogs and cats respectively, which can be used for 30 consecutive days to calm nervous animals, or stored for up to 6 months and used for specific stressful situations such as thunderstorms, Guy Fawkes Day, a visit to the vet or kennels, etc. All of the abovementioned products can be obtained from the front desk – the nurse or receptionist will be happy to give you any further info you may require.
- Ensure that your pet's vaccinations, deworming and tick and flea control are up to date before leaving for another part of the country. Coastal, bushveld and mountainous areas are rife with ticks and this puts animals at increased risk for diseases such as biliary whilst on holiday. Rabies is also a major problem in Kwa-Zulu Natal; bear in mind that pets are required by law to be vaccinated against this horrific disease, which is FATAL to animals and humans.

CLINIC UPDATES

Our beloved morning receptionist at RVV, Cynthia Jenkins, has retired after 10 years and we've also said a sad good-bye to Kay. With the result, clients will see some new faces on reception at both practices – our new receptionists are enthusiastic and dedicated and we ask your patience and consideration as they go through their training phase; in no time they will be familiar with all of your pets' individual needs and will be able to offer the same level of advice as those staff-members you regularly deal with.

We are also thrilled to have installed an international, state of the art computer programme with a view to raising our service-levels even higher and providing our clients and patients with the very best a Veterinary Practice can offer.

THE FUNNY FARM

Festive Season, Feline-Style....

(sung to "Away in a Manger)

Away from all danger, not covered at all; there sits a plump turkey I'm hoping to maul.  
There's nobody looking, my fate I will seal; And don't you be thinking that guilt I will feel.  
Now I am so clever, I am a good thief. I have to choose quickly 'tween turkey and beef;  
A fish in a bright dish or cream I will lick, I'll eat it all quickly until I am sick.  
I know it's forbidden, I know that's the truth; To eat off the table is really uncouth.

But this is so tempting,  
dear humans

I really don't care, And I blame my  
for leaving it there!

