

Dogs and Valentine's chocolate don't mix

By Jack Sommars, AAHA

The folks at the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' (ASPCA) Poison Control Center don't need a calendar to know when it's Christmas or Valentine's Day. Their phones ring off the hook. Yet another pet – most likely a dog – has gotten into some chocolate.

“We actually have what we call a chocolate season,” explains Dr. Tina Wismer, a veterinary toxicologist for the ASPCA. “It runs from Halloween until Valentine's Day. That's when we get most of our chocolate-related calls.”

Last year, their center received 6,900 of these calls – 98 percent of them involving dogs.

“Dogs don't have an off-switch,” she explains. “Most have a sweet tooth and will eat as much as they can. Cats, on the other hand, may nibble a bit but don't gorge themselves like dogs will.”

Why is chocolate so dangerous?

Read the whole story