

# For Immediate Release

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## **Keep pets safe from Halloween hazards**

LAKE MILLS – Halloween candies may fluster dentists, but they make veterinarians downright nervous.

That innocuous Hershey™ bar probably won't give your dog a cavity, but it might make him very ill.

“Every year around Halloween and Christmas, we see dogs who have been poisoned by eating large amounts of chocolate,” said Dr. Stork of the Lake Mills Veterinary Clinic.

The darker the chocolate, the higher the risk. Baking chocolate is far more dangerous than milk chocolate because it contains almost ten times the amount of caffeine and theobromine, chemicals that are harmful to dogs and cats.

Symptoms usually start with vomiting and diarrhea and can progress to restlessness, irregular heart rate, seizures, difficulty breathing and coma. Without immediate medical attention, these toxins can kill your pet.

But toxins aren't the only problem.

“Dogs and cats don't tend to take wrappers off candy before eating it. A wad of foil in the digestive tract can mean an expensive surgery,” said Dr. Stork.

If you suspect your dog might have been exposed, call your veterinarian immediately. Keep the dog as calm as possible and prevent convulsing/seizuring dogs from accidentally injuring themselves.

Prevent chocolate toxicity by making sure all family members know that dogs and cats should not eat chocolate, and secure all chocolate in containers inaccessible to pets. Keep children from sharing Halloween candy by designating a doggie treat jar from which children are encouraged to feed the dog.

To learn more about chocolate toxicity or other pet health hazards, visit the Lake Mills Veterinary Clinic web site, [www.lakemillsvetclinic.com](http://www.lakemillsvetclinic.com) or contact the clinic staff at 920-648-2421.

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