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## **Poppins Pet-Sitters warns of 'death-by-chocolate' in pets at Easter**

Puppy dog eyes on Easter morning are difficult to resist, but Veterinary Nurses from POPPINS Pet-Sitters are pleading pet owners to stay strong and choose a safer option.

Poppins Pet-Sitters owner and Veterinary Nurse Hannah Reed says many people don't know why chocolate is 'taboo' for dogs and tend to give them Easter treats out of 'love' or 'kindness'.

"Chocolate contains a chemical called theobromine which is highly toxic to many animals – especially dogs," she said.

"Dogs don't have a particular liver enzyme we humans do to break down the chemical."

Veterinarian Michael Woodcock from THE VET LOUNGE in Coomera said it only takes as little as one 50g milk chocolate egg to kill a small puppy.

"The toxic elements cause rapid heart rates and nervous system changes. This is initially seen as vomiting and diarrhoea within hours of eating the chocolate, then nervous twitches, then tremors and possible seizures," Dr Woodcock said.

"As time progresses, your pet may show increased tension to stimulus like noise or touch, stiffness and eventually may go into a coma or cardiac arrest and die."

Hannah says there are many safer Easter treats for pets such as carob, but if your dog does raid the Easter Bunny this year keep a close watch for up to 72 hours, and if they show any signs of poisoning, take your dog to the vet immediately.

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