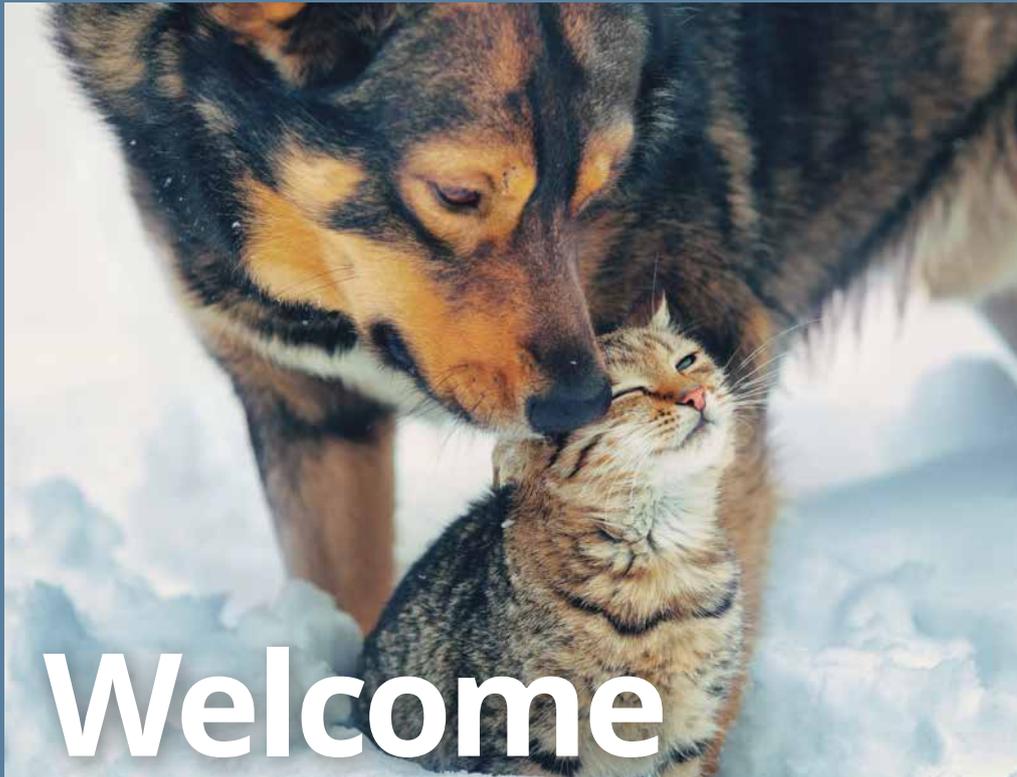
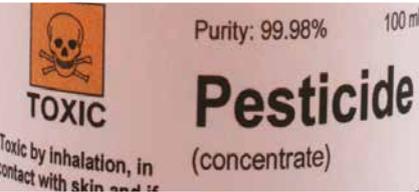


# Toxic Times

WINTER 2014 ISSUE



**With Christmas practically upon us, a very warm welcome to the Christmas edition of Toxic Times, a slightly shorter issue, but with the added benefit of a Christmas Hazards poster, suitable for display in your waiting room or for giving to owners.**

As always, Toxic Time is available to download from the website, or we would be happy to send out hard copies if you would prefer.

It has been a full year, with cases of palm oil washed on up beaches, the increase in prevalence of e-cigarettes, and concerns over sycamore poisoning in horses.

This issue gives some important information on our revised treatment doses for chocolate ingestion, a common enquiry throughout the year, and even more frequently encountered at Christmas.

We always value and enjoy meeting you at our CPD courses, and the dates and locations for 2015 sessions are given.

Your feedback and input is hugely important, and if you ever have an interesting case where you do not need to contact us, please consider letting us know about it by using the 'Report a Case' facility on our website [www.vpisglobal.com](http://www.vpisglobal.com)

*Very best wishes for a Happy Christmas and for another exciting and busy New Year.*

## Interesting case

Benzalkonium chloride is commonly found in household products and represents a particular toxic hazard for cats.

The next edition of Toxic Times will discuss the problems associated with these products in greater depth, but we describe here a specific case with a fatal outcome.

A 3.8 kg Balinese cat presented with red patches on the skin and alopecia around the neck and ears. She was treated with steroids and 'cream for broken skin'. She represented the next day with dyspnoea, lethargy, inappetence, coughing blood tinged foam and hypersalivation. The skin was not as red as it had been the previous day. She was admitted and given oxygen, an x-ray, etamiphylline (Millophylline®) and IV fluids. Blood biochemistry showed high glucose (due to stress), high amylase and low ALKP. Body temperature was low. The owner then said the cat may have been exposed to a new cleaning product ('Dettol Antibac') which contained benzalkonium chloride. The cat was started on ranitidine and buprenorphine but was found dead the next morning.

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Chocolate Toxicity – revised treatment doses**
- **CPD: 2015 Dates**



# Chocolate Toxicity

## IMPORTANT: Revised Treatment Doses for Chocolate

We have recently reviewed and revised our treatment doses for chocolate. The revised doses are based on case data analysis (over 700 of our cases where the dose of chocolate eaten was estimated or known) combined with the analysis of original sources where the theobromine content of chocolate products has been measured.

Toxic effects in dogs occur at theobromine doses of 20 mg/kg, with severe signs at 40-50 mg/kg and seizures at 60 mg/kg. Looking at the various concentrations of theobromine reported in chocolate products we are able to calculate the quantity equivalent to 20 mg. The revised treatment doses are shown in the table below.

It is also worth noting that the amount of theobromine in products varies due to natural differences in cocoa beans and the formulation of products and that there may be some genetic, although not breed, susceptibility to theobromine toxicity in some dogs.

<b>Dark Chocolate</b>	Treat for >3.5 g/kg
<b>Milk Chocolate</b>	Treat for >14 g/kg
<b>White Chocolate</b>	Contains extremely low concentrations of theobromine and is not likely to cause theobromine toxicity. No treatment required



In addition approximately half of the cases reported to us remain asymptomatic. In over a 1000 canine cases with follow up on our database we have only 5 deaths, so although chocolate can make dogs unwell it is very rarely fatal. We are also aware that numerous cases of chocolate toxicity go unreported. If you want to tell us about a case you can do so on our website [www.vpisglobal.com](http://www.vpisglobal.com) (click on Report a Case).

### White chocolate: a clarification

Any white chocolate, irrespective of quality or price, by European law can only contain cocoa butter and thus minimal concentrations of theobromine.

It does however contain high levels of sugar, therefore ingestion of large quantities are not without consequence, but this would be a separate issue to theobromine concerns.

## CPD: 2015 Dates and Locations

If you're feeling in an organisational frame of mind, here are the dates and locations of 2015 CPD courses:

**January 21st** London  
**February 11th** Plymouth  
**March 11th** Birmingham  
**May 13th** London  
**June 10th** Bristol  
**July 8th** Edinburgh  
**September 2nd** Cambridge  
**October 1st** Manchester  
**November 25th** London

### Key Areas Covered (six hours of CPD)

We'll cover the following, with scope for the additional discussion of any particular agent or topic you would like included on the day itself:

- Case histories for potential poisons cases
- Decontamination for poisons cases
- Toxicology information resources
- Common or tricky poisonings in cats and dogs

### Cost and Bookings

**Standard fee:** £285 + VAT

**Early bird fee:** £240 + VAT \*

Each delegate will receive course notes and a CPD certificate (equates to 6 hours CPD training). Lunch and refreshments are provided.

Bookings: For further details please visit our website at <http://vpisglobal.com/class-based-courses/>

\* Early bird discount applies to bookings made up to 8 weeks prior to the course date