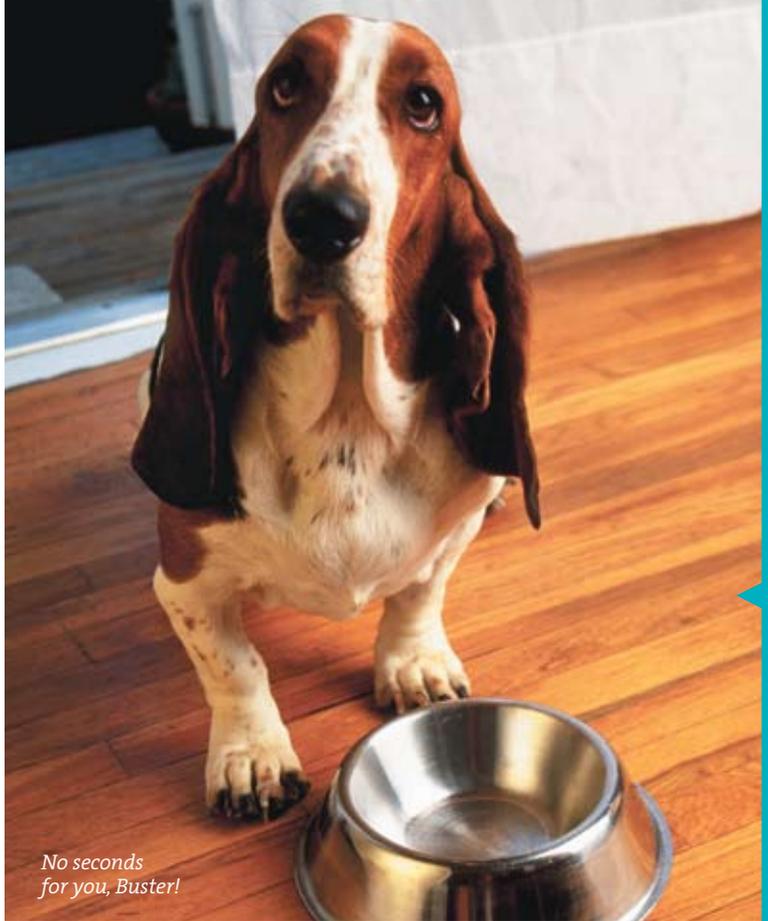




Why Fido can't feast on cocoa

Q: Why is chocolate deadly for dogs?

Chocolate contains two ingredients that dogs' bodies can't process: caffeine and theobromine. In fact, these ingredients are toxic when a dog ingests them and can cause serious illness and even death, says Timothy Hackett, D.V.M., associate professor of emergency and critical care medicine at Colorado State University. If you're worried your pooch has broken into your Halloween stash, watch for the following symptoms: vomiting, diarrhea, increased urination, restlessness, hyperactivity, a "drunken" walk or body tremors. If you notice any of these signs, rush your dog to a vet immediately. Your veterinarian will induce vomiting and monitor your dog's heart. If Fido seems fine after a forbidden chocolate feast, try to figure out how much chocolate he ate and what type (dark chocolate can cause more damage thanks to its higher concentration of theobromine), and call your vet to see if the amount ingested was a toxic dose.



No seconds for you, Buster!

Paunchy pet?

While a pudgy pooch or fat cat may look adorable, underneath the paunch could be serious health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease and arthritis, says Edward Moser, V.D.M., DACVN, an adjunct member of the nutrition faculty at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and consulting veterinary nutritionist for Wellness Natural Food for Pets. To help an overweight pet drop pounds:

- ▶ **Sneak fruits and vegetables into his bowl** Green beans, puréed pumpkin, carrots and tomatoes are low in calories and high in water and fiber, so your pet will fill up on less.
- ▶ **Skip processed treats** Instead, give Fido a piece of fruit or a vegetable; put a small piece of tuna in Fluffy's wet food.
- ▶ **Break up meals into several feedings** This will help keep your pet's metabolism stoked all day.
- ▶ **Crunch the numbers** Calorie counts are just as important for pets as they are for humans. Find out the number of calories your dog should consume at goldendoodles.com; for felines, go to catinfo.org.



80% The number of dogs who have oral disease by age 3.
70% The number of cats who have oral disease by age 3.
2-3 The number of years you can increase your pet's life span by taking him to the vet for annual dental care visits.

Source: American Animal Hospital Association and Stuart Sound Animal Hospital