

WARNING—COCOA SHELL MULCH MAY BE TOXIC TO CATS AND DOGS IF INGESTED

The following warning was received from Judy Campbell on April 17, 2009:

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Subject: For the love of our pets...

Please tell every dog or cat owner you know. Even if you don't have a pet, please pass this to those who do. I found out about this last week.

Over the weekend the doting owner of two young lab mixes purchased Cocoa Mulch from Target to use in their garden. They loved the way it smelled and it was advertised to keep cats away from their garden. Their dog Calypso decided that the mulch smelled good enough to eat and devoured a large helping. She vomited a few times which was typical when she eats something new but wasn't acting lethargic in any way. The next day, Mom woke up and took Calypso out for her morning walk. Half way through the walk, she had a seizure and died instantly.

Although the mulch had NO warnings printed on the label, upon further investigation on the company's website, this product is HIGHLY toxic to dogs and cats.

Cocoa Mulch is manufactured by Hershey's, and they claim that 'It is true that studies have shown that 50% of the dogs that eat Cocoa Mulch can suffer physical harm to a variety of degrees (depending on each individual dog). However, 98% of all dogs won't eat it.'

This Snopes site gives the following information: <http://www.snopes.com/critters/crusader/cocoamulch.asp>

Cocoa Mulch, which is sold by Home Depot, Foreman's Garden Supply and other Garden supply stores, contains a lethal ingredient called 'Theobromine'. It is lethal to dogs and cats. It smells like chocolate and it really attracts dogs. They will ingest this stuff and die. Several deaths already occurred in the last 2-3 weeks. Theobromine is in all chocolate, especially dark or baker's chocolate which is toxic to dogs. Cocoa bean shells contain potentially toxic quantities of theobromine, a xanthine compound similar in effects to caffeine and theophylline. A dog that ingested a lethal quantity of garden mulch made from cacao bean shells developed severe convulsions and died 17 hours later. Analysis of the stomach contents and the ingested cacao bean shells revealed the presence of lethal amounts of theobromine.

PLEASE GIVE THIS THE WIDEST DISTRIBUTION!