

M&S Money report pet poisonings on the increase

Submitted by: pr-sending-enterprises

Wednesday, 19 November 2008

M&S Money has urged pet owners to ensure medication is securely stored around the house following a large increase in reports of pet poisonings.

The potentially fatal mishap is a growing problem across the UK, with a 34% year-on-year increase in reported cases to Vetfone - a 24-hour advice line available to M&S Pet Insurance (<http://www6.marksandspencer.com/pages/default.asp?PageId=Home&Product=PI>) customers. Vetfone is manned by qualified veterinary nurses who can give concerned animal lovers immediate advice on a pet's condition. Around 70% of calls to the service by M&S Money (<http://www6.marksandspencer.com/>) customers are made out of normal veterinary hours.

One of the major increases of poisonings seen involves nicotine-based products, including nicotine patches, chewing gum and inhalers.

The toxic dose of nicotine in dogs is five milligrams per pound pet bodyweight and a dose of 10mg/lb can be lethal. While a cigarette contains 15-25 milligrams of nicotine, nicotine patches can contain much more at between 8-114 milligrams of nicotine and even nicotine inhalers contain around 10 milligrams of nicotine. Signs of toxicity are dose-dependent and include tremors, weakness, depression and vomiting.

Vetfone Operations Manager & Senior Emergency Vet Nurse, Louise O'Dwyer, said: "It is very concerning that there has been such a large increase in reported pet poisonings.

"Nicotine poisoning can be particularly serious. Remember prevention is better than cure, so ensure products such as cigarettes, nicotine patches and gums and even ashtrays containing cigarette butts are kept away from your pets reach."

M&S Money Insurance Manager, Judith Roberts, said: "Anyone who suspects that their pet has swallowed household medication should first try and identify what's been eaten, by recovering packaging such as blister packs or boxes and then seek immediate veterinary advice.

"M&S Pet Insurance policyholders can rest assured that a qualified veterinary expert is available round the clock to provide advice and answer questions should a pet become unwell."

Ends

Notes to Editors:

M&S Money (the trading name of Marks & Spencer Financial Services) was founded in 1985 as the financial services division of Marks and Spencer Group plc. The company is now a top ten credit card (<http://www6.marksandspencer.com/pages/default.asp?PageId=home&Product=CC>) provider and the second largest travel money retailer in the UK. M&S Money also offers a range of insurance cover, including home insurance (<http://www6.marksandspencer.com/pages/default.asp?PageId=home&Product=HI>) and car insurance (<http://www6.marksandspencer.com/pages/default.asp?PageId=HOME&Product=CI>), as well as loans,

savings and investment products.

In November 2004, Marks & Spencer sold M&S Money to HSBC, one of the world's largest banking and financial services organisations with over 9,500 offices in 85 countries and territories.

M&S Money has an executive committee comprising an equal number of representatives from HSBC and Marks & Spencer.

The company employs 1,200 staff at its headquarters in Chester, delivering personal financial services to its customers, reflecting the core values of Marks & Spencer - quality, value, service, innovation and trust.

For further information and to request a case study please call the M&S Money press office:

Simon Coughlin
Media Relations Manager
Group Comms Level 41
HSBC
8 Canada Square
London
E14 5HQ.
01244 6686174