

# holiday pet safety

Help give your pets a happy and safe holiday season by following a few simple tips. And know that you can always keep pets entertained by providing pet-safe toys, chews and food, all of which make excellent holiday pet presents.

## **Holiday plants and décor:**

Holiday plants and décor certainly lend a festive atmosphere to the home, whether for a party or just for the family to enjoy. Exercise caution with your furry, four-legged family members, as some holiday plants and décor can pose a health risk. The following plants can be toxic to pets so be sure to keep them out of reach and supervise your pets (especially cats).

- Holly
- Poinsettia
- Ivy
- Mistletoe

The following décor can cause intestinal blockage, wounds, choking hazards, toxicity, burns and electric shock if left around unsupervised pets, especially curious cats. Use with caution and ensure tinsel and ornaments are placed high on the tree and out of reach of pets.

- Tinsel
- Ornaments
- Candles
- Indoor tree water and fertilizer
- Bubble lights
- Cords

### **Holiday food and parties:**

Holidays aren't complete without a party or two! Parties usually mean lots of yummy food and lots of guests. With a few simple tips you can minimize the impact that holiday food and parties can have on your pets. Holiday food can cause intestinal problems, especially those foods that are high in fat. Some holiday food can even be toxic. The following is food to avoid giving your pet:

- Holiday food (such as turkey)
- Chocolate
- Alcohol
- Bones (especially poultry)
- Caffeine

Keep all trash cans out of reach of your pets.

Remember that your pets may not be familiar with all of your guests and the noise caused by holiday revelry can be stressful to them. You may find it best to keep pets in a quiet place, away from the holiday party, people and food.

- Unfamiliar guests:** Ensure pets are supervised around guests, especially children
- Pets as guests:** Always ensure your pet is a welcome guest, and ask your guests to check with you before bringing their pets as guests as not all pets are social in stressful environments
- Open doors:** Keep an eye on fast-moving pets as people enter and leave your home

### **Presents:**

Presents come in all shapes, sizes and forms. Be sure all presents are either kept out of reach or that pets are supervised while around them. Gift packaging can pose a risk to intestinal health, batteries can cause burns and some presents may contain food. Try to avoid exposing your pet to the following:

- Styrofoam
- Plastic bags

- Batteries
- Presents containing food

### **Cold weather:**

The holiday season also means cold weather season. Always ensure your pet has a warm, sheltered place to escape the cold, and that they have access to fresh water. Those outdoor breaks and walks may have to be shortened due to cold weather as pets accustomed to the warm indoor temperatures may not be properly prepared to handle cold temperatures.

- Antifreeze:** Never leave antifreeze out where pets can get to it, as this sweet liquid is deadly for animals if ingested; if pets are staying in the garage, make sure the antifreeze isn't reachable
- Rock salt:** Look for pet-safe ice melt if needed, as rock salt can be irritating to paws, mouths and stomachs

If your pet is exposed to any of the items listed here in this care sheet, contact your veterinarian immediately. Some of the items, such as antifreeze, pose a serious medical risk and proper veterinary care is critical.

*Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for medical diagnosis.*



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