



The holiday season is a joyful time for family and friends, but it's also a time when pet owners should be aware of holiday dangers for dogs, cats, and other pets. Below are a few of the top hazards and how to avoid them.

Food Hazards for the Holidays

Chocolate: This delicious treat could cause seizures or the death of your pet. Clinical signs usually appear within 6-12 hours of ingestion. Mild signs include vomiting, diarrhea, increased water intake, and restlessness. More severe signs associated with toxicity are increased heart rate, increased respiration, and blue-colored gums.

Rich or fatty foods (turkey, skins, gravy): While these foods are delicious to us, they can contribute to a condition known as pancreatitis in your pets. This condition can be extremely painful and serious, sometimes requiring emergency veterinary assistance.

Bones: Bones can splinter and cause tears or obstructions in your pet's digestive tract

Onions: Onions in your Thanksgiving stuffing can be toxic to your dog or cat. If ingested, they can lead to severe anemia.

Grapes and raisins: These can be toxic to some pets leading to kidney failure.

Chewing gum: Can contain a product known as xylitol that could be hazardous to your pet's health.

Caffeine and Alcohol: These can also be toxic to your beloved pet.

Solutions: Feed pets before the festivities begin to discourage begging and stealing. Keep all goodies out of reach! Make sure that all leftover foods are kept in tightly closed containers. Keep garbage cans tightly secured and provide chew toys or other occupying devices to your pet during the holiday activities. BUT remember, accidents happen!! Always keep the number to an emergency vet clinic close at hand.

Decorations

While pretty, many decorations can be a hazard to your pet. Decorations such as breakable glass ornaments, tinsel, and garland could cause severe intestinal issues, such as obstruction, if ingested by your pet.

Strings of lights are irresistible chew toys to some animals and should be kept out of reach as they could lead to electrocution as well as intestinal issues.

Christmas trees are a magical playground for your mischievous pet. Please ensure that your Christmas tree is as secure as possible to prevent any unexpected injuries.

Plants

Plants are common holiday hazards for pets. Plants such as poinsettias, mistletoe, holly berries and some Christmas trees (cedar), can be toxic to dogs, cats, and birds. If possible, avoid bringing these poisonous plants into your home. Even non-toxic plants can cause an upset stomach if ingested by a dog or cat, so keep the "safe" plants well out of reach of your pets.