

## **Keep Your Pet in the Holiday Spirit and Out of the Hospital**

The holiday season is full of presents, joy, and family, but also an increased risk of danger for pets. Make sure to keep an eye on your pet when lighting candles, decorating your house, and enjoying holiday food and treats!

### **Candles and String Lights**

Make sure to keep candles away from your pets. The flame may scare or confuse your pet, which could lead to them trying to investigate what it is. Your pet could wind up knocking over the flame and catching himself or the surrounding area on fire. Make sure to keep your candles in a safe place out of your pet's reach and to keep a screen across your fireplace!

String lights are a very popular decoration during the holiday season. While beautiful, these lights can pose a risk to your pets. Make sure to keep cords out of reach of your pets, or get a protective covering to prevent your pet from chewing on the wires and bulbs.

If your pet manages to get a hold of the lights, make sure you know the signs of electric shock in animals. Pets who have suffered electric shock will often appear dazed and confused. They may exhibit burns in the mouth, difficulty breathing, seizures, and in extreme cases, death. If you notice any of these symptoms in your pet or notice a chewed cable, contact us or an emergency Veterinary Clinic immediately!

### **Trees and Ornaments**

If you put up a tree during the holiday season, make sure to take extra precautions to keep your fur babies safe! Invest in a weighted tree stand to keep the tree from tipping over if a curious cat decides to climb it or an energized dog bumps into it. Keep tinsel and breakable ornaments up high and out of reach of pets. Everyone loves presents! Be sure to monitor any placed under the tree to make sure your pets didn't get too excited and try to open them early!

Ornaments are another very common decoration to see throughout the holiday season. These can be very harmful to pets, who may mistake them for toys. If your pet breaks a glass or metal ornament, it can lead to cuts on his or her body, and if your pet ingests the broken ornament, it can lead to cuts in his or her throat and internal damage. Plastic and plush ornaments can also pose a threat to your pet, as they can cause internal blockages. Your pet could also suffer from lethargy, a loss of appetite, or stomach pain if he ingests holiday decorations. If you suspect your pet has ingested a decoration, call us or an emergency Veterinary Clinic immediately!

### **Food and Treats**

There are many reasons for celebrations this time of year, and those celebrations often come with delicious food and tasty treats. In all of the holiday cheer, don't forget that some food can be dangerous for pets to consume! Make sure to keep bones away from pets, as when ingested, bones can cause internal damage such as cuts to the throat or stomach, blockages in the intestinal tract, and may cause your pet to choke.

There are many common holiday scents and flavors that are toxic to pets. Make sure to keep your pets away from anything that contains peppermint, pine, and wintergreen.

You should also avoid giving your pet:

- Raisins
- Grapes
- Onions
- Chocolate
- Caffeine
- Macadamia nuts
- Fatty foods

These foods are toxic to pets and may cause an upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, and even pancreatitis. We always recommend sticking to food and treats made for your pet, but if you do want to give them a special treat, make sure to check if it is safe for animals before giving it to them!

Following these safety tips can help keep your pet happy and healthy, and out of the hospital this holiday season! If you have any questions about this blog, give us a call or send us a message, and we'll be happy to answer them!

From our family to yours, we wish you happy holidays and a safe New Year!