



## Winter and Holiday Hazards

The winter holidays can be a busy time. This can make supervising our pets a little more difficult than usual. With all the decorations and snacks that tend to be out this time of year, it's very easy for our pets to take advantage of the situation and help themselves to a few extra treats. Here is a list of items that should be kept out of your pets reach to ensure a safe holiday season for everyone.

### FOODS

Some of the foods and treats that are common during the holidays can cause harm to our pets. Foods that are rich and high in fat can cause upset stomach. Ingestion of bones can block the intestines. If you think your pet has eaten a bone, please call us right away.

Other foods that are harmful are: chocolate, coffee, alcoholic beverages, avocado, garlic, onions, grapes, raisins, yeast dough, salts, raw meats, nuts (macadamia in particular) and any spoiled foods.

Chocolate is one of the most popular treats during the holidays and is often a gift placed under the Christmas tree. If you think or know that there is a gift containing chocolate, put it up somewhere that your pets can't reach it. Chocolate contains caffeine and theobromine. These two ingredients are toxic to pets and can be fatal. If you think your pet has eaten some chocolate, please call us and let us know what kind of chocolate and how much has been eaten.

### PLANTS

The following popular holiday plants can be harmful to your pets, please keep them up high and out of reach: Poinsettia, Holly, Mistletoe and Christmas Cactus. For other harmful household plants, please ask us for a full list.

### CHRISTMAS TREE

The Christmas tree can also be a hazard during the holidays. Some real trees need plant food/preservatives in the water. If you can't avoid using a plant food, make sure you have a tree skirt wrapped tightly around the base of the tree to prevent your pets from trying to drink the water. Make sure that your tree is securely anchored in its base so that it doesn't get knocked over by an excited dog or a cat who likes to climb.

When decorating your tree and your house, keep any breakable, sharp, or edible ornaments out of reach. Candles, tinsel, ribbons, popcorn strings and small ornaments should be avoided if possible. They can easily be seen as a toy or a treat and if ingested, they can cause an intestinal blockage that may require surgery. Please call us if you think your pet may have eaten something.

Decorations and toys that have electrical cords and batteries should be stored safely. Some pets may find these dangerous items to be chew toys.

### **OUTDOOR PETS**

Outdoor pets need special attention during the colder months. Every outdoor animal should have a proper shelter. A comfortable dog house, that is well insulated and raised off the ground and with the door facing away from the worst of the winds is necessary for an outdoor dog and, a similar shelter should be available for any outdoor cats. Food and water bowls should be cleaned and checked regularly. Ensure the water bowl doesn't freeze during the cold weather. If possible please bring any outdoor pets inside on the coldest days.

For any further question, please don't hesitate to call us at anytime.

Have a safe and happy holiday season!!