



Thanksgiving and Holiday Pet Safety Tips Provided to you by PETS^MMART

The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays can be potentially dangerous for our four legged friends. By following these tips, we hope that you can ensure a safe and happy holiday season for ALL your family members:

"People" food: Pet parents often think they are giving their four-legged friend a special treat by feeding them from the table, but they are actually doing more harm than good. People food is simply not meant for pets. Table scraps leftover from a holiday feast, especially ones covered in gravy or poultry skin, can cause severe gastrointestinal upset. If your meal includes poultry of any kind, do not give the bones to your pets. Unfortunately, poultry bones can splinter, form sharp points and get stuck in the throat, gums or the roof of the mouth, causing severe problems. Onions are another ingredient that can be toxic to both dogs and cats. And lastly, never feed your pets chocolate. Chocolate contains the heart stimulant theobromine which can cause a fatal heart attack if ingested in large doses.

Houseguests: During the holiday bash, pets may not understand why their usually quiet home is now full of people and noise. Providing pets with a quiet place to retreat, where they can venture out to visit if they feel like it, will help them be more at ease. Pet parents also should keep an eye on pets when doors are opening and closing frequently. Dogs and cats easily can slip out in all of the commotion.

Electrical cords: Twinkling lights around the house mean extra cords and plugs -- and more tempting "chew toys" for pets. Taking an extra minute or two during decorating to tape down or cover cords will help prevent shocks, burns or more serious injuries.

Christmas trees: Anchoring the top of the tree to the ceiling with a strong cord will help keep it in place around frolicking pets. Cats also are inclined to eat tinsel hanging from trees -- this can cause an intestinal obstruction -- so pet parents are cautioned to keep tinsel decorations high on the tree where the family cat won't be tempted.

Mistletoe berries, pine needles and other tasty treats: Mistletoe and holly berries, as well as poinsettia plants can be poisonous to pets, causing severe upset stomachs. Pine needles can puncture holes in a pet's intestine causing an emergency visit to the vet. Repellent sprays also help keep pets away from areas and objects that may cause them harm.

