

## Holiday Pet Care Tips



1. Never leave your pet home alone with a real Christmas tree decorated in breakable ornaments. Cats may want to climb the tree and dogs may be inspired to use it as a fire hydrant. We recommend an artificial tree with soft needles. A real tree's needles can lodge in between your pet's paw pads or get caught in your pet's nostrils. And an artificial tree doesn't require water so your pet won't drink it and become ill.
2. Avoid using tinsel. It's surprisingly sharp and can cut through your animal's intestines if swallowed.
3. Tape tree light cords to the wall and across the floor so dogs and cats don't chew through them and get burned or electrocuted.
4. Keep in mind that holiday plants such as Mistletoe, Holly, English Ivy, and Poinsettias are poisonous to pets.
5. Remember that many ornaments can be fatal if swallowed.
6. Candles can be hazardous. Flame or dripping wax can burn dogs or singe their whiskers or hair. They're also a fire hazard if your cat/dog knocks them over.

### **Safe Holiday Toys/Snacks**

The larger the toy, the better. Get a large toy so your pet won't be in danger of ingesting it. Rope, fabric, and soft squeak toys are good choices. However, they should be used under supervision because if left alone, a dog can chew off bits of plastic or fabric and ingest it, leading to serious intestinal problems. For cats, fresh catnip, size-appropriate balls, and kitty kongs are good choices.

As for holiday snacks, it's best to resist the urge to feed your pet table scraps. Bones can splinter and perforate the stomach or other internal organs and over-indulging in holiday goodies can cause diarrhea and intestinal upsets.

## **Friends And Family**

Frequent visits from friends and family are commonplace during the holidays. However, pets that are easily frightened or excited should be kept in a separate, quiet room away from festivities. Also, with guests coming and going, an unattended open door allows dogs and cats outside where they may be exposed to passing cars. Dogs and cats are social animals that crave human companionship. Make sure you set aside enough time to spend with your animal companion this holiday season. It is, after all, a traditional time to spend with loved ones, and that includes your pets.