

Home



Now's the time to deck the halls with boughs of holly! But as you begin to trim your tree, be sure to keep your pets in mind. While pets love joining in family festivities, some Christmas decorations pose hidden hazards to these adorable animals. Find out how you can pet-proof your home so your pets can safely savor the holiday season!

Fatal Foods

Yes, it is tempting to treat your pets to holiday leftovers, but you really shouldn't. Many of the foods served at holiday gatherings are either high in fat or high in sugar, making it very difficult for cats and dogs to digest. During the holiday season, keep the following foods out of your pets' reach.

Chocolate

Whether it's chocolate chips or cocoa powder, pets should not consume chocolate in any form. It contains a lethal combination of caffeine and theobromine, which can cause seizures and heart failure.

Grapes & Raisins

Nutritious for most, grapes and raisins both have an unknown toxin that can do some serious damage to your dog's kidneys.

Mixed Nuts

Cashews, pistachios, walnuts, pecans and macadamia nuts all have an extremely high fat content. Even when consumed in limited quantities, these nuts will affect the digestive and nervous systems of most pets.

Nutmeg

A popular spice used to season homemade pumpkin pie and sweet potato dishes, nutmeg contains mild hallucinogenic properties that can create tremors, seizures and serious central nervous system problems.

Christmas Tree Concerns

For curious pets, your Christmas tree is the ultimate plaything. From its sweeping branches to the shimmering lights, a trimmed tree has lots of decorations that pets just can't wait to get their paws on. So come Christmastime, you'll want to take some special precautions when you set up your Christmas tree display.

Christmas Lights

Even though holiday lights lend a festive air to your Christmas decor, they can also pose a threat to your pets. With just a slight tug or some moderate chewing, the wires could injure your furry friends with an electrical shock. Luckily, you can protect your pets by concealing excess wiring with duck tape or with a durable cord cover.

Tinsel

If you have a cat, brighten your boughs with something other than tinsel. Although it seems like this dangly decoration could pass as the perfect cat toy (it's shiny, crinkly, flexible, etc.), it can actually cause a lot of injury when ingested. In fact, a strand of tinsel can obstruct a cat's digestive tract mere minutes after consumption, resulting in expensive emergency surgery. To avoid these potential problems, replace tinsel with large faux garlands and/or shatterproof ornaments.

Christmas Tree Water

While a live Christmas tree doesn't present many threats to your pet, its water dish does. Even if you water your Christmas tree once a day, stagnant tree water is a breeding ground for bacteria. You can prevent your pets from playing in or sipping from the water basin by simply covering the bowl up. Anything from a tree skirt to aluminum foil will work wonders.

Poisonous Plants

Planning on bringing some holiday foliage into your home this year? If so, make sure your pets stay far away from certain plants. Mistletoe, holly and poinsettias all have high toxicity levels that can put your pets in peril when ingested. To reduce the risk of pet-plant contact, place these "poisonous" plants in high, hard-to-reach places. Or, you can play it safe by incorporating artificial wreaths and faux-flower garlands into your Christmas design instead.

Article by Marisa Christiano
Information for reference only. Items and availability may vary.

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