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HALLOWEEN PET PRECAUTIONS

Halloween isn't for everyone. From energetic trick-or-treaters to scary decorations, it can be a frightening time for your furry friends. In fact, danger lurks around every corner during Halloween, putting pets in serious peril. Luckily, you can prevent fur from flying by knowing just what to **F. E. A. R.**

F is for Food

While keeping certain foods away from pets is a common concern throughout the year, it's especially important during Halloween. After all, there are many harmful sweets hiding in your candy bowl and kids' goodie bags. Here are some popular Halloween snacks that you should stow away from your pet.

Chocolate

Don't let your cat or dog consume chocolate in any form! Remember: the darker the chocolate, the more toxic it is for your precious pets.

Sugar-Free Candy

Gum, mints, candy and even some baked goods that are deemed "sugar-free" can put your pet's life at risk. Why? They contain trace amounts of artificial sweetener (known as xylitol) that'll interfere with your dog's blood sugar and/or tamper with your cat's kidneys.

Raisins

While some neighbors may hand out healthy snacks during the Halloween, mind the mini boxes of raisins. Yes, they are great for kids, but they're terrible for dogs. They can cause serious damage to your dog's kidneys if ingested.

E is for Environment

With trick-or-treaters running wild, make sure you provide your pet with a place where they'll feel safe. For optimal comfort, lay a soft blanket and a fluffy toy on their favorite spot within a closed room. This will not only prevent your pet from getting riled up, but it will also stop them from running outside as the front door swings open and closed.

However, if your pet isn't prone to a jailbreak, feel free to let them roam your home. But, beware of your Halloween decorations! Crepe paper, cobwebs and harvest corn can create problems when hung within your pet's reach. And if you have a curious cat, light up your jack-o'-lanterns with flameless candles instead. Then, your cat (and your home!) won't set ablaze by accident.

A is for Attire

Did you know that roughly 17% of pet owners dress up their pets for Halloween? When choosing a costume for your pet, abide by the following rules:

- Costumes should not cover up a pet's eyes or ears.
- Costume should not limit their movement, including walking and breathing.
- Remove possible choking hazards from costume before outfitting your pet.
- If your pet appears to be uncomfortable in their costume, take it off immediately.

And whether you and your pet are headed outside for the night or handing out candy to trick-or-treaters at your home, make sure your pet is wearing an up-to-date ID tag, a collar blinker, an LED collar and a short leash that's firmly adhered to your hand. On Halloween night, your pet has many opportunities to run, so keep them close and properly identified.

R is for Recovery

After a wild night in or out, give your pet some time to recuperate. You can calm indoor cats who are bothered by all the Halloween commotion by combing their fur with a pin curry brush. Comforted by both your presence and touch, your cat will feel safe and start to de-stress.

And if you spend most of your Halloween running around with your dog, call it a night when they get noticeably tired. Panting, excessive licking and frequent shaking are all telltale signs of doggy fatigue. As soon as you get home, prepare a quiet room for them to crash. All you really need is a warm pet bed and a fresh bowl of water.

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

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