

Fourth of July Pet Safety Pointers



Fourth of July is a time for fun, frolic and fireworks! But for most pets, Independence Day can be an extremely stressful holiday. Why? The combination of loud sounds, bright lights and smoky smells can send any pet into a complete panic. While some cats and dogs cower in fear over the pyrotechnics, others don't seem to mind the ruckus. Instead, they set their sights on other holiday hazards. Whether you're dealing with a scaredy-cat or a hungry hound, here's how you can help furry friends enjoy the festivities without fear or injury.

For the Scaredy-Cat

If your pet doesn't do well in large crowds or with loud noises, you should just leave them at home. They'll be much happier hanging out in their own house. You can create a safe space for them to hide from outdoor fireworks by placing their pet bed, some **blankets** and their favorite toys in a secluded room (your bedroom, home office, basement, etc.). To ensure your pet stays calm and collected throughout the night, draw all the curtains closed and turn on the TV to drown out the disruptive noises outside.

For pets with severe anxiety, you can ease them in the following ways:

- Distract your pet from the pandemonium outside with toys! Try frozen-filled **snacker toys** for dogs and **catnip mice** for cats.
- Before you head out for a fun-filled night, play with your pet. A rousing game of fetch or the fluttering of a **wand toy** will tire your pet out, encouraging them to sleep during fireworks displays.
- Relax your frazzled dog with **PetPrefer® Soft Calming Chews**. Specially formulated with a blend of natural herbs, these chews will settle your pet's emotional state during high-stress situations.
- Put your pet's fears to rest with an **AKC® Calming Coat™**! Featuring a patent-pending design, this coat applies constant pressure to your pet's torso, which relaxes their body and reduces their stress.

For the Curious Canine

If your dog has nerves of steel, they can join you in most of the outdoor merriment. Before you head out though, make sure your dog is dressed to the nines. How so? Your canine companion should wear a close-fitting collar attached to a sturdy leash and an ID tag that contains their name, your address and your current phone number. Should your dog get lost or escape the party venue, they'll be easier to track down when proper identification is in place.

With the leash steady in hand, you (and your pup) can mix and mingle with all the partygoers. However, you'll want to keep a constant eye on your dog to ensure they stay away from specific party hazards. This includes everything from matches and lighter fluid to citronella candles. When any of these substances are consumed by pets, they can cause staggered breathing, skin irritation and even central nervous system depression. To prevent these types of problems, place these harmful party provisions just out of your pet's reach.

For the Hungry Hound

While most Fourth of July gatherings include incredible food and delicious drinks, your pet shouldn't partake in the spread. Regardless of which holiday you're celebrating, people food can be fatal food for pets. Though it may seem tempting, here are some party foods that you shouldn't serve your pet at your next backyard bash.

Alcohol

No matter the alcohol content, your pet should never consume alcoholic beverages or likeminded foods (rum raisin bread, stout cake, etc.). Since alcohol negatively affects dogs' livers and brains, it can cause some serious damage, resulting in tremors, abdominal bleeding and/or coma.

Salty Snack Foods

As you're filling bowls with chips and loading plates with crackers, mind your famished furbaby. Salt can lead to big problems. With a handful of pretzels, chips or lightly salted popcorn, sodium ion poisoning can take hold of your pet in just 15–30 minutes. Excessive vomiting, increased body temperature and sporadic seizures are all telltale signs.

Meat

Be particularly careful when it comes to freshly cooked meat. Since most meats are high in fat, they can give your dog a serious case of indigestion. If your dog licks lingering grease or eats meat drippings from just-cooked beef, bacon, and fried chicken, they may also develop pancreatitis. But this can be prevented! After your food is cooked to perfection, immediately clean up the meaty mess. Then, dispose of all grease-stained trays, foil pans and food containers to help your pet stay healthy.