

Christmas Season and Keeping Your Pets Safe

Christmas season is a time of cheer for humans. But for pets, it can mean a time of change. There will be more noises and visitors, new objects and different smells. Here's how to keep your pet safe and healthy during the festive season.

Christmas Day Tips

Minimising stress:



Create a calm, quiet spot for your pet away from the noise.



Exercise your pet before any guests arrive.



Keep Christmas flowers and plants out of your pet's reach.

Keep decorations out of reach, especially:

- Candy canes or chocolate.
- Round, ball-like decorations, which may break in your pet's mouth, causing lacerations to their intestines and tongue.
- Sparkly items e.g., flickering tree lights, small and shiny ornaments, ribbon and bows.
- Tinsel, which can obstruct the intestines and create a surgical emergency.

Creative ideas to spoil your pet:

- Create a treasure hunt through the house or garden of your pet's regular dry food.
- Mix your pet's regular food with a treat
- Use a recipe that is specifically designed to be a safe treat for your pet.
- Spend extra quality time with your pet by playing games or going for extra walks.

Human foods are not a treat for pets

Christmas is a time of giving, but many human foods can cause serious illness.

Most cooked meats are okay to feed to cats and dogs in small quantities. However, do not feed your pets cooked bones as these they can easily splinter and damage their intestines and throat. Keep meat scraps free of gravy and marinades.



Sweet treats that are toxic for pets include:



Currants



Grapes



Raisins



Lollies



Christmas pudding



Chocolate



Sugar-free sweet products

Fireworks and Storms

Many pounds and shelters report an increase in runaway cats and dogs after a storm or fireworks night.

A dog can hear 10 times better than a human. Fireworks typically explode at a staggering 145-150 decibels, so these explosions can be terrifyingly frightening and loud.

As many animals have a fear of fireworks and storms, they often injure themselves trying to escape the noise. Some dogs will jump or dig under fences. Others find their way onto busy roads and can be struck by vehicles.

If you can, it's best to stay home with your pet, provide them with a comfortable environment and engage them in normal activities.

If you're not going to be at home, make sure you provide her with a safe, secure and comfortable environment. Whenever possible, bring your pet indoors. If your pet has ongoing trouble with loud noises like fireworks and storms please consult your veterinarian.



Here are some simple steps to minimise firework and storm stress in pets:



- Ensure your pets are wearing ID tags and their microchip details are up to date.
- If you know a storm is coming, or fireworks are planned, ensure your pets are exercised and well fed before the storm starts.
- Keep your animals indoors in a safe, secure and comfortable environment.

- Securely stable horses at a location away from firework noises.
- Leave the TV or radio on to mask any sounds.
- Remove any sharp objects that might cause injury to a panicking animal.
- If your pets are particularly prone to fireworks or storm panic, stay at home with them.