

## 6 Risks for Pets During the Holidays

To help you keep your pets safe this holiday season, we gathered a list of the top dangers. If you're worried your pet has gotten into any of the items below, watch for common signs such as diarrhea, vomiting, loss of appetite, or abdominal aches. In the case of a holiday emergency, contact your primary veterinary care provider or the local emergency vet.

- 1. Packages** and their contents can be dangerous for pets to ingest. We have all heard the funny story of a pet chewing through a package before the gift can be given, but it could create a veterinary emergency.
- 2. Chocolate** and other holiday sweets are poisonous for pets. Best to keep the tray of cookies and candy bowl on higher tables during holiday parties.
- 3. Poinsettias** are mildly toxic to cats and dogs. This beautiful holiday tradition should be displayed out of reach to avoid the risk of a holiday emergency.
- 4. Christmas lights** bring the sparkle to the season, but are a chewing hazard – electrocution, severe burns, and ingestion of lights and wires. Wrap the lights as tight as possible to the tree to limit the dangling temptation for cats, cover any cords leading from the tree to the outlet, and pick lights that are steady rather than twinkling. (Bonus Tip: also make sure trees or decorations are secure, to limit the chances of them falling on a pet!)
- 5. Tinsel and ribbon** are not safe for cats and dogs to ingest and can cause blockages in their bodies. It is safest to use wrapping paper without tinsel or bows, especially if eyes can't be kept on a pet when the presents are out.
- 6. Ornaments** can be very enticing for pets, much like holiday lights. Pets think ornaments are like any other toy they can bat around. However, many ornaments are made with products that are toxic for pets to ingest and broken ornaments put pets at risk for cuts.



**New Year's Eve Reminder: Remember that confetti poppers and fireworks can be anxiety-inducing for pets.**