



December Safety Tips

Of course you want to include your furry companions in the festivities, pet parents, but as you celebrate this holiday season, try to keep your pet's eating and exercise habits as close to their normal routine as possible. And be sure to steer them clear of the following unhealthy treats, toxic plants and dangerous decorations:

O Christmas Tree

Don't let your pet drink the tree water—it may contain fertilizers that can cause stomach upset. Stagnant tree water is a breeding ground for bacteria and your pet could end up with nausea or diarrhea should he imbibe.

Tinsel-less Town

A nibble of tinsel can lead to a swallow, which can lead to an obstructed digestive tract, severe vomiting, dehydration and possible surgery.

Toy Joy

Looking to stuff your pet's stockings? Choose gifts that are safe.

- Dogs have been known to tear their toys apart and swallowing the pieces, which can then become lodged in the esophagus, stomach or intestines. Stick with chew toys that are basically indestructible, Kongs can be stuffed with healthy foods or chew treats that designed to be safely digestible.
- Long, stringy things are a feline's dream, but the most risky toys for cats involve ribbon, yarn and loose little parts that can get stuck in the intestines, often necessitating surgery. Surprise kitty with a new ball that's too big to swallow, a stuffed catnip toy or the interactive cat dancer—and tons of play sessions together.

Forget the Mistletoe & Holly and Poinsettias

[Holly](#), when ingested, can cause pets to suffer nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. [Mistletoe](#) can cause gastrointestinal upset and cardiovascular problems. And many [varieties of lilies](#), can cause kidney failure in cats if ingested. Opt for just-as-jolly artificial plants made from silk or plastic, or choose a [pet-safe bouquet](#).

Leave Wired Up

Keep wires, batteries and glass or plastic ornaments out of paws' reach. A wire can deliver a potentially lethal electrical shock and a punctured battery can cause burns to the mouth and esophagus, while shards of breakable ornaments can damage your pet's mouth.

New Year's Noise

As you count down to the new year, please keep in mind that strings of thrown confetti can get lodged in a cat's intestines, if ingested, perhaps necessitating surgery. Noisy poppers can terrify pets and cause possible damage to sensitive ears.

