

# Compliments of Your Professional Pet Sitter

## Eight tips to help you and your pets safely enjoy the holidays



Holidays can be extremely fun for humans, but may pose hidden risks for pets. These seven tips will help keep your pets safe this holiday season.

**Don't be a turkey on "Turkey Day."** Holiday treats, such as rich, fatty scraps, bones from pork and poultry, alcoholic beverages, chocolate and other sweets and candies can be harmful or toxic to pets.

These foods have been linked to pancreatitis in pets. Signs and symptoms of an inflamed pancreas include vomiting and abdominal pain. Severe pancreatitis requires emergency medical care and treatment.

**O (No) Christmas Tree!** Below it. In it. On top of it. Around it. You name it and the Christmas tree poses the possibility of harm to your pets. Pine tree water can be poisonous, so it's best to use an enclosed tree stand. If that's not possible, be sure to cover open tree stand bases. The tree should be secured to a wall with strong wire or twine because a toppling tree can cause serious injuries to dogs and cats.

**Decorations can be dangerous as well.**

Tinsel entices canines and felines alike. Glass ornaments look like shiny fetch balls. Ornaments, hooks, twinkling lights and electrical wiring all pose significant danger to pets. When no one's around to supervise, unplug lights and any electrical decorations a pet has access to. Be sure to cover or tack down electrical cords.

**Remember, common holiday pet poisons also include plants.** Holiday plants that are poisonous to pets include mistletoe berries, holly, hibiscus, Christmas roses and the poinsettia. Keep these out of your pet's reach.

**Sugar free doesn't guarantee a happy ending.** Xylitol, a sugar substitute, causes a dog's blood sugar to drop quickly. This poisoning can be treated, but causes liver failure if not treated properly.

**Macadamia nuts aren't all they're cracked up to be.** Dogs experience

severe weakness in their back legs, appearing paralyzed, after ingesting macadamia nuts. Dogs usually recover from this condition within three days.

**Pets and bread dough don't mix well.** When bread dough is ingested it continues to rise and may cause an intestinal blockage.

**Consider your pet's long-term health when treating and feeding during the holidays.** While the tendency is to spoil with a lot of food and edible treats, this can sometimes lead to unnecessary weight gain. Give your pet a special toy or spend some extra time playing and petting instead.

Following these valuable tips will help keep pets out of danger, while still enjoying the festivities that accompany the most wonderful time of the year!