



Friendly Newsletter

Companion Pet Care- December 2019



Come see us at the longest-established Veterinary Practice in Encinitas!



1. Holiday Safety Tips
2. Winter Weather
3. Brave Patient



Pet Safety During the Holidays

The holiday season is upon us, and many pet parents plan to include their furry companions in the festivities. As you gear up for the holidays, it is important to try to keep your pet's eating and exercise habits as close to their normal routine as possible. Also, please be sure to steer pets clear of the following unhealthy treats, toxic plants and dangerous decorations.

Caution: Seasonal Plants and Decorations

Christmas Trees: Securely anchor your Christmas tree so it doesn't tip and fall, causing possible injury to your pet. This will also prevent the tree water—which may contain fertilizers that can cause stomach upset—from spilling. Stagnant tree water is a breeding ground for bacteria, and your pet could end up with nausea or diarrhea should s/he imbibe.

Avoid Mistletoe & Holly: 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.

Tinsel-less Town: Kitties love this sparkly, light-catching "toy" that's easy to bat around and carry in their mouths. But a nibble can lead to a swallow, which can lead to an obstructed digestive tract, severe vomiting, dehydration and possible surgery. It's best to brighten your boughs with something other than tinsel.

Don't leave lighted candles unattended. Pets may burn themselves or cause a fire if they knock candles over. Be sure to use appropriate candle holders, placed on a stable surface. And if you leave the room, put the candle out!

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 and digestive tract.

Plan a Pet-Safe Holiday Gathering

House Rules: If your animal-loving guests would like to give your pets a little extra attention and exercise while you're busy tending to the party, ask them to feel free to start a nice play or petting session.

Put the Meds Away: Make sure all of your medications are locked behind secure doors, and be sure to tell your guests to keep their meds zipped up and packed away, too.

A Room of Their Own: Give your pet his own quiet space to retreat to—complete with fresh water and a place to snuggle. Shy pups and cats might want to hide out under a piece of furniture, in his carrying case or in a separate room away from noise.

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. And remember that many pets are also scared of fireworks, so be sure to secure them in a safe, escape-proof area as midnight approaches.

*Derived from the ASPCA website: <https://www.aspcare.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/holiday-safety-tips>

Winter Weather- Adapting with the Changes



When it comes to your pet's body condition here are some things to consider over the holidays:

- The weather is getting colder and the days are shorter. In bears, this triggers a response to hibernate. Similarly, it can induce rest and lower activity levels to other animals including our pets.
- Holiday schedules and traveling can influence how much time you are available for your pet, including possibly not playing or exercising them as much.
- Colder weather can be harder on joints in animals with degenerative joint disease or osteoarthritis, making it less comfortable to get around.

These factors can lead to decreased activity and the potential to gain some holiday weight. Cutting back on calories during times of lower activity is recommended, starting with cutting back or eliminating treats which can have incredibly high calorie counts. Also, if your pet is older or has a history of arthritis, make sure they have warm, soft places available to rest, and consider joint supplements.

(For more information on keeping a healthy body condition and managing arthritis please contact us to set up an appointment!)



Patient of the Month!

Allie is a 5-year-old beautiful female Boxer who presented for dental issues. She had a condition where her gums were overgrown, completely covering all of her lower incisor teeth in the front of her mouth, and hiding many other teeth. This condition is called "gingival hyperplasia" and is a result of inflammation of the gums. This inflammation can be from an infection around the tooth, infection of the gums, or the body reacting to tissues of the mouth inappropriately (immune-mediated). Every growth should always be approached cautiously to be differentiated from cancer, and gingival hyperplasia is not cancer. We performed a dental cleaning and removed the excessive gingival growths with a procedure called a gingivectomy, and unfortunately had to extract some teeth that were concurrently affected. The result is a much healthier mouth and happy pet flashing a brilliant smile at home! Allie was so brave during her procedure and recovery, we are very happy for her!



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The photo on the left shows Allie's mouth prior to the procedure, while the photo on the right shows her healed mouth after the gingivectomy.