

# Holiday threat facts for pet parents!



## That's shocking!

Electrocution is a more common emergency among pediatric patients and is most likely to happen when pets chew on electrical cords. This can cause pain, burns, irregular heart beat, respiratory distress, impaired consciousness and death. Unplug decorations when not in use and when pets aren't supervised.



## Ooh, shiny!

Tinsel can pose significant danger to pets if ingested, resulting in an intestinal obstruction called a linear foreign body. A linear foreign body occurs when something stringy wraps around the base of the tongue or anchors itself in the stomach so that it cannot pass through, then slicing through the rest of the intestines.



## That's the pits

Chocolate can cause many clinical signs including agitation, hyperactivity and varying degrees of gastrointestinal signs. Heart arrhythmias and neurologic disturbances are also possible. Other foods, like corn cobs and fruit pits, can cause gastrointestinal obstructions requiring emergency surgery.



## It's not so bad

Historically thought to be highly toxic, Poinsettia ingestion may have mild consequences, such as skin irritation, goopy eyes, salivation, vomiting and diarrhea, which typically resolve themselves.



## Keep your pet away from antifreeze

Antifreeze is extremely poisonous and can cause severe damage, even death, if your pet ingests it. Clean up any leaks or spills right away to keep your pet from getting sick.



## Hold the salt

Salt-based walkway de-icers can be harsh on pets' paws, leading to irritation and burns. Wipe your pets' paws when they come indoors. Additionally, eating these chemicals can be highly toxic. Consider using pet friendly de-icers on your walkway.



## Watch out for that tree!

Christmas trees can be very hazardous to pets. Trees are often sprayed with numerous harmful pesticides, leak sap that can cause stomach upset, and shed needles that can cause vomiting and intestinal blockages. Of course, drinking the water from the tree stand can also cause serious illness and glass and other types of ornaments can be hazardous as well.



## Bring your pets indoors

Dogs and cats that enjoy the freedom of the great outdoors may not love the idea of being cooped up inside, but a warm living room can provide safety from freezing temperatures, disease, and other animals looking for a fight over food or a place to stay warm.



## Care for your pet's skin

Like humans, dogs and cats can get dry skin during the winter months. Certain gels and creams can help keep your pet's paws, ears, and nose moisturized and prevent painful cracking. Some products may not be suitable for your pet and even toxic, so be sure to check with your family veterinarian about what products they would recommend for your pet's skin.



Brought to you by NorthStar VETS®

© 2013 NorthStar VETS

**Contact your family veterinarian with any questions about holiday threats that could affect your pets.**