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HOLIDAY HAZARDS

The holidays are special times during the year when families and friends come together in celebration. Unfortunately, many pet owners fail to recognize the potential dangers that these special occasions pose. **Animal Emergency Referral Center** wants to warn you of some of the basic holiday items that can cause serious harm to your pet.

CHRISTMAS

- **Holiday plants** – The following holiday plants are toxic to cats and dogs; **Christmas rose, Holly, Lilies, and Mistletoe.**
- **Ribbons** – Sure it make look adorable, but placing a ribbon around your pet's neck may cause them to choke. Or your pet may swallow and cause intestinal obstructions.
- **Bubbling lights** – Older forms of this attractive decoration may contain methylene chloride, which is a highly toxic chemical.
- **Angel Hair (spun glass)** – Can be irritating to eyes and skin, and could cause intestinal obstruction if eaten in large amounts.
- **Christmas tree water** – Stagnant tree water or water containing preservatives could result in stomach upset if ingested.
- **Decoration hooks** – Can cause blockage and/or trauma to the gastrointestinal tract if swallowed.
- **Styrofoam** – Can cause your dog or cat to choke if swallowed.
- **Ornaments** – These can look like toys to your cat or dog, so keep them out of your pet's reach so they don't pose a risk for injury.
- **Tinsel** – Can cause choking or internal trauma if swallowed.
- **Chocolate** – Toxic in any season!

NEW YEAR'S

- **Balloons and Confetti** – These are among the common items used to decorate a New Year's Eve party, but can pose an obstruction or choking hazard to your pet if ingested. Be sure to keep an eye on them when they are around these items or place them in an area that does not have decorations.
- **Loud noises** – New Year's is typically a noisy holiday. Unfortunately, loud noises frighten pets and can cause them to run off. Keep your pet in a separate room, away from noisemakers, music, and other loud sounds that may startle them.
- **Alcohol** – Alcoholic beverages are toxic to pets and should NEVER be given to your dog or cat.