



On Thanksgiving, be Thankful and Provide a Feast Best Suited for Pets – Pet Insurance Association Provides Advisory

Pets ingesting rich and fatty foods, chocolates, or other unsuitable or unintended items, can create a thankless holiday visiting the veterinary emergency hospital.

Pittsburgh, PA, November 11, 2009 --(PR.com)-- As pet owners head into the season of special gatherings, celebrations and holiday tidings, the North American Pet Health Insurance Association (NAPHIA) reminds pet owners to protect their pets.

It is almost impossible for most family members to sit and wait through the wonderful aromas' of a special holiday feast being prepared. We will wander into the kitchen, with the preface to provide help to the cook, and maybe be available... to make sure there is not too much wine in the gravy. This is true for our four-legged family members as well. They too are wanting to sample a scrap in the kitchen, or partake in an unusual treat from the coffee table. As our pets stand ready and prepared to lunge at any opportunity for food or strange foreign object, as pet owners we must be vigilant and protect our pets from their natural tendencies.

Pets ingesting rich and fatty foods, chocolates, or other unsuitable or unintended items, can create a thankless holiday visiting the veterinary emergency hospital.

As pet owners, we need to provide extra care and attention to their pet during this time of year, according to Dr. Ingmire, (of Mokena Animal Clinic, near Chicago). “It is important to plan and consider our pets as we head into the holiday season. Our pets are certainly aware of this special time of the year and want to be a part of all of the celebrations. Without consideration of our pets, trouble and mischief can ensue. Even a well-behaved pet that feels slighted or confined during festivities may get into trouble that normally would not happen during other times of the year,” according to Dr. Ingmire.

Pet owners need to be mindful of the following:

- Do not provide any forms of chocolate
- Do not provide table scraps or foods not specifically prepared for our pets
- Secure or remove garbage and food scraps from the kitchen before sitting down to dine
- Adjust your pets' feeding time to occur as you are serving dinner for special occasions and add a special pet treat as part of the pet meal
- Plan and provide short periods of special one-on-one time for walks and just providing focused attention during special occasions
- Our pets will adjust better to the additional activities taking place in the home, if a little bit of special attention is provided.

“Providing rich human foods is just a bad idea and it can cause Pancreatitis and general internal illness. Pancreatitis is an inflammation of the pancreas, and it can be life threatening. When a pet is diagnosed as having pancreatitis, he/she becomes more susceptible to developing it again so you want to avoid your pet



ever having it. The best way to protect our pets so they can enjoy a healthy and happy life is to avoid feeding human foods. If your pet becomes ill with bloody vomit and diarrhea after consuming turkey or ham or getting into the garbage, take your pet to your veterinarian immediately,” continued Dr. Ingmire.

Other cautionary “tails” to share during holidays include avoiding poinsettias and tinsel, especially with cats in the house. Dogs can become ill after consuming Christmas tree standing water, though generally not life threatening. On the other hand, there are many positive examples of great things pet owners can do to correctly spoil their pets. Provide a special holiday trip to the groomer or provide a nice shampoo wash and dry at home. Hang a stocking with correct treats and toys. A new toy with a bit of cat nip is okay for our feline friends. Just remember, pets are aware it is a special time of the year and all of the festivities can cause our pets to get into mischief and potential painful trouble. Also check with your veterinarian for the preferred 24 hour emergency pet hospital in your area for care after hours and have the phone number with your other important emergency information.

Founded in 2007, the North American Pet Health Insurance Association is committed to educating and promoting the values and benefits of pet health insurance to North American pet owners, the general public, and the veterinary industry. For more information, visit www.naphia.org or call 412-319-7730 / 412-908-9766.

About pets in the United States

Research shows that pets are truly regarded as members of the American family. About 60% of U.S. households have at least one dog, cat, bird, or other companion animal. Many have more than one. There are more than 72 million pet dogs in the U.S. and nearly 82 million pet cats. Projected 2009 pet expenditures for North America are over \$45 billion, of which \$25 billion will be spent on veterinary related care.

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