

Holidays

By Naomi Yamasaki

Let's have a wonderful and safe holiday season this year for you, your family and your pets! Once again, the holidays are upon us, which means lots of holiday festivities. However, we should keep in mind the following special precautions for our pets:

Holidays often mean big family feasts for, but before including Fido on the feast, here are some foods to avoid giving to your pet:

- Turkey bones (or any cooked bones) should never be given to your pets as they can splinter and cause internal bleeding or death from choking.
- Table scraps are not encouraged in large quantities as they can cause diarrhea, constipation or gas in your pets. Remember, moderation! Pooch doesn't need extra holiday pounds.
- Chocolate is a human treat only. Chocolate contains a stimulant called theobromine, which can make dogs quite ill and even cause death if consumed in large quantities.

And of course there are some things that Fido may try to treat himself to that you may want to keep out of reach, or not use this year in your holiday decorations:

- Keep dogs away from poinsettias, holly, and mistletoe, they can be toxic to your dog.
- Remove holiday lights from lower branches of your tree. They may get very hot and burn dogs
- Refrain from using edible ornaments. Your dog may knock down your tree in an attempt to eat them.
- Tinsel is dangerous for dogs. It may obstruct circulation and, if swallowed, block the intestines. Some dogs think it's edible, so be careful!
- Whether your tree is live or artificial, both kinds of needles are sharp and indigestible. Don't leave your dog unattended with the tree. (Also, if you have a dog that likes to 'mark' you may want to keep an extra watchful eye on him when he's inspecting the Christmas tree.)
- Avoid using glass ornaments. They break easily and may cut your dog's feet or mouth.

The holiday season is a stressful time for dogs. Try to keep a normal schedule during this time, amid all the excitement.

From all of us here at Downtown Dogs, have a safe and wonderful holiday season!