

# Keep your pets happy and healthy this Thanksgiving!

November starts the holiday and cold weather season. Here are a few tips to keep your pets healthy and safe this winter!

People often have friends and family visit during the holiday season. If you plan on having visitors, keep in mind that these people are strangers to your pets. Take it slowly, introduce the guests and let them get used to the idea of having unfamiliar people around.

Many people are tempted to feed table scraps and human food to their pets. Many of these foods may be delicious to us, but harmful or fatal to your pet:

- ◆ Alcoholic beverages
- ◆ Chocolate
- ◆ Coffee
- ◆ Moldy or spoiled foods
- ◆ Onions or onion powder
- ◆ Salt
- ◆ Yeast dough
- ◆ Poultry bones (which animals can choke on) and large amounts of turkey or chicken (which can cause pancreatitis—a serious and often deadly condition in dogs)

Instead of feeding human food, try substituting with turkey flavored food or treats. This will help keep your pet free from gastrointestinal problems this holiday.

As the temperature drops, some pets may require more care, especially older ones and ones that live outdoors. Keep your pet groomed. Matted fur won't properly protect your pet against the cold.

Staying warm outside means burning more calories, so you may have to feed your pet more when the temperatures drop.

Check your driveway and garage for antifreeze. Antifreeze tastes sweet to pets, but most brands are very poisonous and can be fatal if consumed. If your pet ingests any amount of antifreeze, contact your veterinarian immediately. Consider using a pet-safe antifreeze.

Regularly check your pet's water to make sure it isn't frozen. When your pet is outside, make sure there is plenty of fresh water available. Animals can't burn calories without water, and if they can't burn calories, they can't keep warm. Also, use a tip resistant plastic or ceramic water bowl instead of a metal one, as your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to cold metal.

Provide a doghouse for your dog, so he can stay warm in the cold temperatures. Make sure it is large enough for him to sit and lay down, but small enough to hold in his body heat.

Get into a habit of slapping the hood of your vehicle before starting it. In their search to keep warm outdoors, cats often seek shelter next to a warm car engine or tire.

**BE PREPARED.....**Keep your veterinarian's phone number and an emergency number in a convenient location.