

PRESS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Let's Talk Turkey About Your Pets and Thanksgiving

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The last thing any pet owner wants to do on Thanksgiving is rush their pet to the animal emergency room. The sad truth is that many pets are injured or poisoned around Thanksgiving. How can you make sure your holiday doesn't end in disaster?

During the holidays, most animal related ER visits are due to eating something inappropriate. Some foods cause upset stomachs, some are poisonous, and some can cause life-threatening obstructions. We know that 60% of us will share our holiday meal with our pets, but you should follow a few basic guidelines.

A small amount of white turkey is an acceptable treat but definitely avoid the turkey skin and the turkey bones. The skin is often fatty and can cause pets to develop pancreatitis, a painful and potentially lethal inflammation of your pet's pancreas. Poultry bones, especially cooked, have potential to both break off and cause a perforation of the digestive tract or cause an obstruction.

Other foods to avoid include grapes and raisins, excessively salty foods, foods flavored with onion or garlic powder, desserts and sweets containing Xylitol, and chocolates.

All leftovers should be secured behind a pet-proof door. Remember, keep your trash can secure. As we leave the kitchen and dining room to relax with our guests, pets often are lured by the enticing smell of food and can sneak into the trash or leftovers. Many items used in the meal preparation and then thrown away can be dangerous. A turkey string, foil wrappers, and food containers may smell like food and be eaten by a curious pet.

During family gatherings, if you are having people over that you know can't resist slipping your pet some people food (there's one in every family), consider confining pets away from the kitchen/dining areas. It might also be best to keep pets confined if they are overly anxious. Monitor people going in and out of the front door so that your pets don't escape.

Keep your veterinarian's phone number and the local animal emergency hospital handy. A quick call to either of them can give you life-saving advice or even help you avoid a trip to the

emergency room.

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The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA), founded in 1898, is a professional organization of more than 330 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine. For more information, visit www.vtvets.org or call (802) 878-6888.