

## Holiday Season Advice for Cat Owners

### **Ways to keep your feline from getting sick and into trouble offered.**

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While enjoying the holiday season, it is important to remember the potential hazards that certain goodies and décor can pose to furry companions.

And to help keep pets happy and healthy during the holiday season, The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is offering pet owners the following advice: Consider decorating your tree with ornaments that are relatively less enticing to pets, such as dried non-toxic flowers, wood, fabric or pine cones. Traditional decorations such as ribbons or tinsel, if ingested, can become lodged in the intestines and cause intestinal obstruction. This is a very common problem, particularly with cats. Keep your pet on its normal diet. Any change of diet, even for one meal, may give your cat severe indigestion and diarrhea. This is particularly true for older animals that have more delicate digestive systems and nutritional requirements. Alcohol and pets do not mix. Place unattended alcoholic drinks where pets cannot reach them. If ingested, the animal could become very sick and weak and may go into a coma, possibly resulting in death from respiratory failure. Keep aluminum foil and cellophane candy wrappers away from pets. They can cause vomiting and intestinal blockage. Be careful with holiday floral arrangements. Lilies are commonly used this time of year and all varieties, including Tiger, Asian, Japanese Show, Stargazer and Casa Blanca can cause kidney failure in cats. Poinsettias are also toxic to cats. Safe alternatives can include artificial flowers made from silk or plastic. Keep pets away from Christmas tree water. The water may contain fertilizers which, if ingested, can cause stomach upset. Stagnant tree water can also act as a breeding ground for bacteria and if ingested a pet could end up with nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

For more information, visit the Animal Poison Control Center's website.