

# Christmas Hazards for Pets

**Holiday Plants:** Many holiday plants are toxic to dogs and cats, including poinsettia, mistletoe, and holly.

**Holly:** Toxic parts include leaves and berries. Can cause intestinal distress, including vomiting and diarrhea, and even depression.

**Mistletoe:** All parts of this plant are toxic, especially the berries. Toxicity signs include vomiting, diarrhea, low body temperature (a normal temperature in a dog is from 99.9 to 102.5), and some neurologic signs including seizures.

**Poinsettias:** Toxic parts are leaves, stems, and sap from flowers. Toxicity signs include severe irritation and blistering of mouth and intestinal tract, with vomiting, diarrhea, and temporary blindness.

## Deck The Halls:

**Lights:** Most lights can cause electrical shock and possible death if chewed on, and shattered glass can cause intestinal perforation.

**Decoration Hooks:** These can cause a blockage and or trauma to gastrointestinal tract if swallowed.

**Bulbs & Ornaments:** These items may look like little toys to your cat or dog, so try to keep them out of your pet's reach as to avoid the temptation of chewing on them.

**Tinsel & Ribbons:** These are especially tempting to cats and kittens. These are a choking hazard, and can severely damage the intestines. It is best to not use these items if you have an indoor cat.

## Is that for me?

**Chocolate:** Though very tasty to pets and humans, chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, heart arrhythmias, and death even when it is eaten small amounts. Be sure to keep all chocolate out of reach and off of tables where pets may have access.

**Ham:** This meat is very high in fat and will cause severe gastrointestinal distress if eaten in even small amounts.

Overall, to make your holidays more safe and enjoyable, use good common sense. If it seems that an item would be a temptation for a small child, consider keeping it put away from your pets as well. Reading about these hazards and taking a few simple precautions will keep your pet happy, healthy, and safe this holiday season.