



HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



Celebrating the Holidays **with** the **WHOLE** Family

We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving and have much to be grateful for. Which of course includes your furry family members!

Recent surveys show that 81% of people with pets see their furry friends as true members of the family. These furry family members are now often included in holiday celebrations with the rest of the human family members.

But you **MUST** exercise caution and not sneak your pets too many (or the wrong type of) ‘goodies’ that can make them ill or worse. Sadly, vet offices are full of sick dogs around the holidays after they eat the wrong things.

Our pets are our beloved family members, but remember this: they’re still a different species than us -- and their bodies process food differently!

- Many human foods can easily cause upset tummies, severe illness, and even death
 - high in salt, fat and sugars – can damage liver and kidneys
 - high in calories – fat pets have hip and joint problems, organ problems and shorter lives
 - things like gravies, dressings, desserts, turkey and poultry skin – can easily cause *pancreatitis*.
 - seasonings – like those in gravy, sauces, stuffing, dips, appetizers, salad dressings, green beans, even in packaged dressings/dips -- often have onion, *which can be toxic to pets*
 - garlic, especially in higher quantities, can also be toxic
 - some fruits common in holiday fruit platters can be toxic – the big one is grapes/raisins, but also the pits of apples, peaches, plums
- Most dogs love bones but there are “bone rules”
 - *cooked bones are dangerous!! Never feed them to your dog!!*
 - poultry bones are bad news for dogs – they tend to shatter into sharp pieces and get stuck easily. They can pierce your dog’s esophagus, intestines and stomach.





Missouri German Shepherd Rescue (MoGS)
Doggie Health & Wellness Team
Wellness Wednesday Series on Canine Health

- Firmly instruct your guests NOT to feed your pet unless you “approve” it first!
 - friends and relatives think they’re being nice to your pet – educate them to the dangers
 - set out “pet treats” for guests to give your pets (actual pet treats, homemade pet treats, or plain turkey. NO BONES!)
 - have “Holiday Pet Feeding Rules” and inform guests what they are
- Think we’re kidding? Here are some sad (and entirely avoidable) experiences. BE SMART – be vigilant, aware, and yes, strict.
 - 2013 – the family dog ate a piece of onion and other ingredients from the family’s Thanksgiving dinner and “has not been the same since”. The dog had tremors and seizures, and the family was at the vet daily for several weeks. They finally had to see a neurologist. Thousands of dollars later, the dog pulled through.
 - 2013 – a 3 year old girl fed chocolate to the neighbor’s German Shepherd through the fence, and tragically the dog died. The little girl didn’t know she was doing anything wrong because no one had taught her.
 - 2012 – a family dog ate some of the family’s spaghetti dinner the day after Thanksgiving, and the dog became violently ill. They almost lost the dog and “were devastated”
 - 2012 – a woman’s dog chewed on a “stick” in the yard of a family member she was visiting over the holidays. “It turned out to be connected to a vine in the grapevine family – and “my poor dog was sick for hours, all night long.”

Please keep your pet safe this holiday! Make sure they have a great time that’s also healthy and safe. They’ll give thanks that they’re still healthy because of your vigilance!

And if all else fails and you’re still sorely tempted to share that stuffing, ask yourself this: do you REALLY want to ruin your holiday with an emergency trip to the vet?

RESOURCES FOR SAFE DOGGIE HOLIDAYS

You don’t have to totally exclude your furry kids from joining the festivities. Try these tips and safe alternatives for your holiday celebrations:

- Cook-up your own puppy safe meal.
 - <http://thebark.com/content/thanksgiving-dinner-dogs>
 - Add a little lean/plain turkey and/or cooked/plain sweet potato to their dinner bowls
- Many cities now have “doggie bakeries” that offer **canine safe** Thanksgiving Day dinners.
 - In Kansas City and Omaha, Three Dog Bakery offers a “Beast Feast” with turkey dinner, side dishes and dessert (<http://www.threedog.com/Kansas-City-Plaza/default.htm>)
- Make your own doggie treats and have a dish of them set out. Google for recipes.
- If your pet has food allergies: avoid feeding anything outside their standard diet unless you discuss it with your vet first.