



## HOLIDAY CHAOS

### Prevention Is Better Than Cure

*Thanksgiving is a great day for pets too – if you make it that way*

The holidays are hectic. There's lots of chaos in your home, in the atmosphere, all around. People rush to and fro, visitors come and go, decorations are all over, tons of rich food everywhere.



So make sure you don't add an emergency vet trip to the chaos!

A 2012 report from Veterinary Pet Insurance shows that in 2011, policyholders spent more than **\$22.8 million on medical conditions associated with the holidays!!** Wow! That's stunning. Treatment costs ranged from \$105 to \$2,328!

So your holidays will get a lot more expensive if you don't exercise some precautions. But what's really scary is how ill (or worse) your pet can become.

1. **Keep holiday food up and out of reach** of your pets. Lots of foods that are everywhere at the holidays can be toxic to your pets.
2. **Watch the door!** Family and friends are coming and going, doors opening all the time, hugs exchanged – and the door is still open while no one's paying attention to the family pet. Many dogs get lost in the chaos of the holidays just because there's so much coming and going, and it's easy for them to slip out an unwatched door while humans are greeting and hugging each other.
3. **CRITICAL: Have a safe place for pets to go, to get away from the craziness**
  - Animals don't always like change. Most hate chaos. If your family and friends descend on your home, **HAVE A SAFE AND QUIET SPOT** for your fur-kid to hide out til the house is quite again
    - Keep a room closed off, for your pet only
    - Preferably lock it so little hands can't accidentally open it
    - Provide a bed or open kennel for him/her to take cover in
    - Turn on soothing music to drown out the chatter from rowdy guests
    - Use herbal scents (lavender, chamomile, tea tree, etc) or Adaptil infusers in the room as added calming elements
  - New people, or people your pets doesn't see very often, can be scary
    - Ask your family members and guests to slightly stagger their arrival times. It allows your pet to be introduced to a few people at once instead of a whole noisy crowd. How would you feel if suddenly thrust into a crowd of new people who all wanted to fuss over you? Ugh!

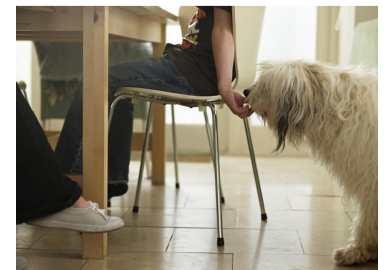


Missouri German Shepherd Rescue (MoGS)  
Doggie Health & Wellness Team  
**Wellness Wednesday Series on Canine Health**

- Introduce your pets PROPERLY to guests! The old assumption that your pet will love everyone (and everyone will love your pet) just ain't so. Certain personalities may clash, or arouse your pet's fears or protective instincts. Go SLOW, SLOW, SLOW. Instruct your guests to ignore your pet, and let your pet approach them. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOW GUESTS TO PUT THEIR FACES NEAR YOUR PET'S FACE. This is an invitation for a bite or scratch, and a very unhappy guest or worse. If you're unsure how to properly introduce new people to your pets, plan ahead and meet with an animal trainer who can guide you in the right direction
- Keep an eye on your pet! When your pet is starting to look anxious about the people, noise, chaos, or any element – put your pet in their crate and secure them.

**4. Even if your pets love your friends and relatives, and mingle all day having a great time, take certain safety precautions to keep everyone happy and well**

- Hang purses and jackets high or keep in a closet
  - Pets – like kids – are sneaky and may find something interesting inside a bag, purse or jacket. Eating a bottle of pills is no joke – it's dangerous and can kill your pet, especially if not supervised closely and ingestion is not caught immediately.
  - If your pet swallows your aunt's insulin, now both your pet AND your aunt are at risk! Her insulin is ruined and pharmacies aren't open for refills ....
  - Purses, gloves, hats, etc are a prime source of foreign bodies ... after all, who doesn't like a good chew now and again? (Don't look so innocent, Fido ... )
- Tell your relatives (politely) the rule is NO table scrapes for your pets. Let them know it can cause pancreatitis, GI upset, possible allergic reactions or toxicities if the pet eats the wrong food
- Set up baby gates to keep pets out of the kitchen while cooking. Someone can accidentally drop a turkey leg (a.k.a. foreign body and pancreatitis), pets can easily get stepped on (a.k.a. broken puppy leg or tail) and tripped over (a.k.a. broken human leg or arm).



**5. And If you travel over the river and through the woods to grandmother's house, be smart! Think ahead, anticipate the unexpected, and have safety plans in place in case of emergency.**

- keep a leash and non-slip collar (with ID tags on it) attached to your pets at all times
- keep each pet's Microchip information (number, chip company and their phone number), emergency vet, and regular vet information on hand (in your phone, in the glove box, etc)
- even if you don't plan on being gone all day, **pack extra food and medications** in case travel conditions deteriorate and you get stuck away from home an extra night
- When you use a crate for traveling, securely tie it down so it doesn't slide all over the place while you drive ..... your pets didn't sign up for a roller coaster ride in the back of the car
- Nausea and car anxiety happen. Talk to your vet a few days before your trip to discuss if medications for car sickness / anxiety reduction are smart for your pet.

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING! Please take a few precautions and make sure it's happy for your pets as well.**