



Happy Holidays!

The holiday season is upon us, which of course means joy and happiness for most. Please keep it that way by helping your pets stay happy and healthy during this season. We do love to see you AND your pets, but we prefer that it not be because of a preventable illness.

Remember to watch for pets sneaking food at your holiday gatherings, and make sure garbage is contained where pets can't get into it. Eating too much rich human food suddenly can lead to a condition called **pancreatitis** – which includes vomiting, abdominal pain, and severe illness. Foreign objects can also lead to intestinal obstructions, which require emergency surgery.

Cooler conditions outside can lead to **hypothermia** or **frostbite** if your pet is not prepared. Be sure to monitor their temperature if they are outside for a long time. Offer outdoor pets a warm cozy place to sleep or just cuddle up. Wipe or wash **road salt** off feet if out for a walk on the sidewalk or street. Be sure that all pets, especially outdoor pets, still have access to fresh water to drink so they do not become dehydrated.

As we all become a little less active at this time of year, consider reducing your pet's **food intake** slightly to avoid the winter weight gain we so often see. Even a 10% reduction in calories will help with weight control over the winter. Of course, we do recommend getting out there and exercising with your pet even in winter. It's good for you both!

If you intend on **traveling** during the holiday season, be sure to make arrangements for your pets early. Can you take them with you? Will your hotel allow pets? Will those you visit mind if you bring a pet along? Does your pet have a **microchip** in case he or she gets lost on the road? Is your information up to date in the microchip database? Do you need to schedule **boarding**? Many boarding sites book up months in advance for the Christmas season so call early. Can you schedule a pet sitter, and is it a reliable person? Does your pet sitter have your veterinarian's contact number in case of emergency? There are MANY things to consider when traveling for the holidays, especially when pets are involved.

Antifreeze is a perennial danger at this time of year. If you use antifreeze, try to choose a pet-safe variety. If you see a leak, scoop up the contaminated snow immediately, or wash it off your driveway with plenty of water. Keep this and all chemicals out of pet reach.

Holiday decorations can be very tempting, so be sure to keep them out of range of your pets. Tinsel and other strings can cause intestinal obstruction, glass balls on trees can be broken and cause lacerations, extra cords can be chewed and cause electrocution, and that Christmas tree may just get knocked over by an overzealous dog or tree-climbing cat!



Above all, have a happy and healthy Christmas season. As we said before, we love to see you, but.....



Scott County Animal Hospital, P.C.

115 S. 16th Avenue Eldridge, IA 52748 563-285-8624 www.scottcountyanimalhospital.com