



Holiday Pet Safety: More Than Just an Upset Stomach

Protect your pets from pancreatitis and neurological dangers this season!

The holidays are a time for family, celebration, and, of course, food. From turkey and gravy to buttery side dishes and rich desserts, it's hard to resist sharing a bite or two with our pets. But those well-intentioned table scraps can have serious consequences. Fatty, greasy, or rich holiday foods are a leading cause of pancreatitis in pets, and in some cases, can even lead to neurological complications that go far beyond a simple upset stomach.

Pancreatitis: The Hidden Holiday Threat

What It Is:

Pancreatitis occurs when the pancreas becomes inflamed and releases digestive enzymes that damage the organ itself.

Common Signs:

- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy or weakness
- Hunched posture or belly pain
- Fever

Why It Matters:

Pancreatitis doesn't just affect digestion, it can lead to serious neurological symptoms when inflammation and metabolic changes impact the brain and nerves.

Neurological Dangers to Watch For

Pancreatitis and certain holiday toxins can cause dangerous changes in the nervous system.

Watch for these warning signs:

- Disorientation or confusion
- Tremors, shaking, or twitching
- Weakness or loss of coordination
- Collapsing or staggering
- Seizures

These symptoms can develop quickly and may indicate low blood sugar, electrolyte imbalances, or toxin exposure, all medical emergencies.

Top Holiday Hazards

Fatty Foods

- Turkey or chicken skin
- Gravy, butter, and drippings
- Fat trimmings, ham, sausage, and bacon

Even a few bites can trigger pancreatitis in sensitive pets!

Toxic Foods & Drinks

- Chocolate
- Grapes and raisins
- Onions and garlic
- Alcohol and caffeine
- Xylitol (in sugar-free candy and gum)

These can cause neurological signs like tremors, seizures, or com

Foreign Body Dangers

- Bones, skewers, and toothpicks
- Food wrappers and ribbons
- Holiday decorations and tinsel

These items can be swallowed, causing choking, intestinal blockage, or internal injury.

Holiday Safety Tips

- **Keep human food out of reach** — secure trash cans and counters.
- **Educate guests** — remind visitors not to feed the pets.
- **Offer pet-safe treats instead** — or a toy for distraction.
- **Watch for warning signs** — vomiting, tremors, weakness, or collapse require immediate veterinary care.
- **Keep emergency numbers handy** — your local vet and pet poison control hotline.

If You Suspect a Problem

Call your veterinarian right away or contact:

ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center: (888) 426-4435

Pet Poison Helpline: (855) 764-7661

Early treatment can save your pet's life.

A Safe Holiday Is a Happy Holiday

Keep the festive spirit alive by protecting your pets from fatty foods, toxic treats, and dangerous decorations. Their health, and your peace of mind, are the best gifts of all.

Contact Us

SCAN – Specialty Center for Animal Neurology

Clearwater – (727) 325-2955

2481 Sunset Point Rd, Clearwater, FL 33765

Naples – (239) 500-7226

2575 Northbrooke Plaza Dr building 100, Naples, FL 34119

scanfl.com