



## Paw Prints

Jodi Schneider McNamee  
Columnist

### Keep the holidays safe for your dog

It's time for holiday parties, preparing dinners, and setting out the holiday decorations and Christmas tree. There are suddenly a lot of potential hazards revealed to your dog, especially if he is a puppy.

One of the best parts about the holidays is all the wonderful food! Remember that dogs have an exceptional sense of smell, and your dog's nose knows what's cooking and he may even beg for some of the delicious food that you are preparing.

In order to keep Rover safe and healthy during this time of year you'll need to make sure that he stays away from those tempting foods and beverages.

Rich, fatty foods like ham, gravy, or grease can cause problems ranging from stomach upsets to pancreatitis, which is an inflammation of the pancreas resulting in pain, vomiting, and dehydration. Pets with this serious condition often require hospitalization for treatment.

Bones, especially turkey bones, are never a good snack for Rover. Dogs can choke on the sharp little edges, or the bones can become lodged or splinter in the digestive tract.

Chocolate and cocoa contain theobromine, which is a chemical that is highly toxic to dogs. Ingestion in even small amounts can cause vomiting and diarrhea, and in large amounts it can cause seizures and can be fatal.

Keep your dog away from nuts, especially almonds, walnuts, and pistachios, they can cause stomach upset. Macadamia nuts can be toxic to dogs!

The holidays should be a happy time for you and your furry friend, not a time for an emergency visit to your veterinarian.

As you get ready for the holidays, it's important to keep your pet's eating and exercise habits as close to the normal routine as possible.

With some advance planning and a little prevention, you can make things more

festive for Rover and less stressful for you!

If you don't want your dog to feel left out and you want to give your dog something special, buy or bake him some special healthy dog treats shaped like candy canes or Christmas trees.

Holiday plants may be beautiful to look at, but one easy way to keep your pooch safe during the holidays is to avoid bringing mistletoe, holly, poinsettias and lilies into your home. They can lead to serious health problems if your furry friend decides to chew on one.

There's nothing like a real Christmas tree during the holidays. The pine fragrance is so appealing. Your furry friends think so, too. Yet Christmas trees are considered to be mildly toxic. Fir tree oils can be irritating to the mouth and stomach. Both live and artificial tree needles are sharp and indigestible. If you have a live Christmas tree, avoid adding fertilizer or aspirin to the water (both are dangerous to your dog).

Keep your dog away from the water that's keeping your tree fresh; even stagnant water that's in the reservoir could make him sick.

Unfortunately some dogs, especially puppies, like to chew on electrical cords, which can lead to electrical

shock, burns, or possible death. So check your holiday lights frequently for any signs of chewing. And turn the lights off and unplug them when you are not home.

Those stunning Christmas ornaments, sparkling icicles, and shiny garland may look pretty, but they can be a source of danger to your curious pooch. When decorating your tree with lights keep them at the top of the tree, away from Rover. Avoid using glass ornaments. They can break easily and cut your dog's mouth or paws.

Stay away from edible decorations such as cranberry or popcorn strings — these traditional strands will be too tempting for Rover to ignore!

Part of the fun of Christmas is to place beautifully wrapped gifts covered with bows and ribbons under the tree. But your curious furry friend may decide your gifts could make great chew toys, which could pose a choking hazard or end up obstructing the intestines.

Nowhere does the average family dog get into so much trouble as at the front door! Guests do have to knock to be known, and your dog just might love to door-dash with over-the-top excitement. If you haven't had time to train for all the comings and goings at the door, it's always



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

Autumn enjoys the holidays.

good practice to either have your furry friend crated or provided with a quiet place to retreat during the festivities. Make sure Rover has his own safe area with fresh water, a few treats, and toys.

So now you can relax and enjoy the festivities of the holiday knowing that you're taking good care of your furry friend. Once you know the hazards, a little care and precaution will go a long way to keep the holidays a safe and happy time for everyone.

If you think your dog has come into contact with something poisonous, contact your veterinarian immediately or call the Pet Poison Helpline at 1-800-213-6680.

# Raise a Paw for Furry Friends!

## Pet Photos with Santa!

Saturday, Dec. 5 • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Inside the Maida Bailey building on Spruce, located behind the Sisters Chamber office.



Miss Abby, Furry Friends' Spokes-dog, with Santa

Drop off your donation at...  
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442 E. Main Ave.  
or mail a check to  
Furry Friends Foundation  
P.O. Box 698, Sisters, OR 97759  
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Also ... Furry Friends Foundation, 501(c)(3), needs your support to feed Sisters-area pets this holiday! Please consider a donation of dry pet-food (dog or cat). Dog biscuits and cat treats are also needed.

Cash donations welcome! Make checks payable to Furry Friends Foundation.

The pet-food will be distributed in conjunction with the Sisters Kiwanis Holiday Food Share program to help Sisters-area families.

