

**ANIMAL
RESCUE
LEAGUE
of BOSTON**



A champion for animals

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ARL Offers Tips to Keep Pets Safe During the Holidays

The holiday season is upon us, and the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is reminding pet owners of some things to keep in mind to help keep our pets safe and healthy as we celebrate with friends, family, food and festivities!

Plants and Decorations

Pet owners should be aware of the holiday plants being brought into the home – mistletoe, holly, some types of lilies can cause a host of issues if they are ingested and additionally, poinsettias, while traditional, can also be toxic. Stick to artificial plant decorations, or opt for a pet-friendly bouquet.

If you have a Christmas tree, make sure it's anchored so it doesn't tip over and injure your pet, and also be sure to keep pets from drinking the tree water which could cause gastrointestinal discomfort.

For decorations, with its sparkle, tinsel can be mistaken for a toy, but if ingested can cause vomiting, dehydration or even a blockage in the digestive tract, so in short, if you have pets, leave the tinsel in the box! Also, be sure to never leave candles unattended, and keep wires, batteries and ornaments out of reach of your pet's paws.

Foods to Avoid

We all know that chocolate is a no-no, but there are also potential dangers hidden in many of the side dishes and snacks we enjoy during the holidays. These include onions, garlic, grapes

and raisins, nuts, milk and dairy, and xylitol, which is a sweetener found in many products including candy, gum and baked goods, can all be toxic to our pets.

Do not give your dog bones, either cooked or raw! Bones can splinter, causing intestinal obstructions and even fracture teeth.

Be mindful while cooking – consider keeping pets out of the kitchen and remind your guests not to feed your pets any scraps!

Should your pet ingest any items that may be toxic, contact the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435 immediately.

Holiday Gatherings

If your hosting family or friends for the holidays, it could be a stimulus overload for your pet, causing anxiety and overexcitement. And in turn unpleasant behaviors may surface so be sure to set up your pet for success *before* your guests arrive.

Give your pets plenty of attention and exercise prior to guests arriving because we all know tired pets are more apt to be better behaved pets!

With guests constantly coming and going, it's best to remind visitors to be mindful when entering and exiting your home to ensure your pet does not make a great escape in all of the excitement – if they are overanxious they may make a dash for the door!

Additionally, provide your pet with a safe space away from your guests should they need an escape from the excitement. The space should have fresh water, food, and items to keep them occupied including toys, or perhaps a food puzzle and bedding so they can be comfortable.

We all want our pets safe and healthy, so it's best to plan ahead to ensure a worry-free holiday season.

ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:

The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is an unwavering champion for animals in need, committed to keeping them safe and healthy in habitats and homes. Founded in 1899, ARL provides high-quality veterinary care, adoption, and rescue services; while also confronting the root causes of animal cruelty and neglect through innovative community programs, police investigations, and public advocacy. In 2021, ARL served over 23,000 animals throughout Massachusetts. ARL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. The Animal Rescue League of Boston does not receive government grants or public funding and relies on the generosity of our supporters to help animals in need. For more information please visit us online at arlboston.org; and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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