

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### EMERGENCY VETERINARIANS URGE HALLOWEEN CAUTION

*"One of our busiest nights," according to doctors at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center.*

**Chicago, Ill., Oct. 30, 2015...** "Halloween is the start of a busy season in our emergency room," said Dr. Jerry Klein, the supervising veterinarian at Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center. "Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years—they're some of the busiest times of the year at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center. Both cats and dogs find ways to get into trouble on Halloween and the days following."

Emergency room veterinarians at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center want pet owners to be aware of the following common Halloween dangers:

**Corncobs and Gourds.** Dried corncobs—very common in fall decorative arrangements—can cause emergencies for dogs. When chewed, the cobs may fragment into sharp pieces that can block airways or digestive tracts. Dried gourd shells can cause similar problems. Pet should always be kept away from any kind of dried vegetable arrangement or decoration.

**Candy and Chocolate.** Chocolate is toxic to both cats and dogs. The darker the chocolate, the more dangerous it is to pets. Even a small amount of dark chocolate, including baking chocolate used in cakes and cupcakes, can be enough to prompt an emergency room visit. Any candy can cause upset stomachs and may pose a choking hazard for pets.

**Sugar-free candy & sugar-free gum.** Sugar-free candy and sugar-free gum that use the sweetener Xylitol are toxic to cats and dogs.

**Pet Costumes.** Strings, ties, and elastic bands are all unsafe for pets. Pet costumes should fasten with broad lengths of Velcro® as fasteners rather than elastic or strings that can choke. Pets should never be left unattended in a costume.

**Candles and Open Flames.** Candle flames give off very little heat, and most of it channels directly upward. Pets may not feel the danger until they're close enough to burn fur and whiskers. Cats in particular are attracted to the flickering motion of the flame. Candles should be kept out of reach of pets. Scented candles can also cause respiratory trouble for pets.

### **About Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center**

**[www.ChicagoPetEmergency.com](http://www.ChicagoPetEmergency.com)**

Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center provides advanced emergency, critical and specialty care for cats and dogs. Each year, the hospital treats more than 11,000 cats and dogs in its emergency room, and thousands more are cared for by veterinary specialists.

Staffed by highly trained specialists and equipped with the latest technology, Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center is always open – 24 hours a day, every day of the year. In addition to emergency veterinarians and staff, the facility offers board-certified veterinarians who specialize in anesthesia and pain management, cardiology, dentistry, dermatology, diagnostic imaging, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology, rehabilitation and surgery.

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