



# Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center

**NEWS RELEASE**  
**For Immediate Release**

## **HOLIDAY FUN CAN LEAD TO DANGER FOR PETS**

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**CHICAGO, ILL., June 29, 2011...**Hot dogs, corn cobs, fireworks and bug spray. They're part of many 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations and all of them present significant dangers to our pets. Each July 4<sup>TH</sup>, Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center (CVESC) ([www.ChicagoVeterinaryEmergency.com](http://www.ChicagoVeterinaryEmergency.com)), located at 3123 N. Clybourn in Chicago, treats numerous pets whose holiday activities lead to a medical emergency. In fact, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July is one of the busiest days of the year at Chicago's first and largest 24-hour emergency clinic, which is open every day of the year.

Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center encourages pet owners to take steps to prevent veterinary emergencies over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday and throughout summer. "Many of the pet emergencies we see over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday could have been prevented," said Dr. June LaFave, Medical Director of Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center. "We hope that pet owners will be aware of the dangers and protect their pets during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, and in fact, all summer long."

CVESC offers simple tips to help pet owners protect their dogs and cats, especially over the holiday weekend.

- **Leashes:** Keep your pet on a leash when outdoors. CVESC sees many pets that got away from their owners and were hit by cars. Unfortunately, depending on the severity of the accident, CVESC veterinarians and staff can't always put them back together.
- **Identification:** Pet owners should make certain that pets are micro-chipped and have up to date identification tags. Pets often escape when startled by loud noises such as fireworks, or as guests are coming and going. Proper identification will help reunite owners and pets.
- **Location:** The best place for a pet during the July 4<sup>th</sup> festivities is at home where they are most comfortable. If a pet is crate trained, keeping him or her crated during fireworks and periods of heavy activity can help reduce the pet's anxiety and lower the risk of him or her running away.
- **Balconies and windows:** Balconies and open windows present real dangers to pets. Both cats and dogs are known to jump off balconies and through open windows. Screens can help prevent some pets from jumping through windows. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks can cause even usually calm pets to jump. Be watchful when your pets are around open windows and on balconies.
- **Food:** Hot dogs, corn cobs, hamburgers and sausage can all cause serious health problems for your pet. Corn cobs can get lodged in your pet's intestine and require surgery to remove. High fat foods such as hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages often cause stomach upset and can lead to pancreatitis, a serious health problem for dogs. Chicken bones, rib bones and steak bones can splinter and cause numerous problems. Many foods, including chocolate, grapes and onions, can be poisonous to pets. The best bet is to keep pets on their usual diet during the holidays.
- **Alcohol:** Pets should never be allowed to drink alcoholic beverages. Alcohol can be poisonous to pets and lead to coma or death. Alcoholic beverages should be kept out of your pet's reach.

- **Fireworks:** Dogs and cats are often afraid of the noise associated with fireworks. This can lead to anxiety and may cause them to try to run away. Dogs should be given their evening walk before the fireworks start. Both dogs and cats should otherwise be kept inside. A television or radio can provide a contrasting sound to the fireworks. Time-consuming treats such as a Kong toy, chew bone or similar item can also help distract pets during fireworks.
- **Sunscreen and bug spray:** Sunscreen and bug spray should never be used on pets unless the item is specifically approved for use on animals. Bug sprays are particularly problematic because they often contain DEET, a product that can cause neurological problems for pets.
- **Heatstroke:** Heat stroke can lead to kidney failure, brain damage, and in severe cases, death. Keep pets cool when temperatures rise. Leaving pets in an unattended vehicle is especially dangerous this time of the year because car temperatures increase dramatically in just a few minutes.
- **Hydration:** Pets should always have fresh water available to them.

**Media Availability:** Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center will make every effort to provide credentialed members of the media access to a staff veterinarian for interviews and to our facility. To arrange an interview or to shoot footage at the facility, please contact Virginia Mann, 312-420-3344 or [Virginia@VirginiaMann.com](mailto:Virginia@VirginiaMann.com)

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

The oldest pet emergency center in Chicago, the Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center (CVESC) provides Chicago area cats and dogs with the most advanced emergency and specialty care available. Staffed by highly-trained specialists and equipped with the latest technology, Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center is always open – 24 hours each day, every day of the year. In addition to emergency veterinarians and staff, CVESC has highly-trained veterinarians who specialize in cardiology, dentistry, dermatology, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology, radiology and surgery to treat pets with special medical or emergency needs.

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