

## ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME HOLIDAY MATCH-UP MEANS DANGER FOR PETS

*Veterinarians at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center  
provide advice to keep pets safe.*

**CHICAGO, ILL., November 21, 2013...** This year, Thanksgiving and Hanukkah fall on the same day. Thanks to the Jewish calendar's drift, (about four days' shift over a thousand years on the Western calendar), the last time this occurred was in 1888 and the next time this rare event will occur is 77,798 years from now. This year's dual celebration is a once-in-a-lifetime event and a day of extra danger for pets, warn the doctors at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center (<http://www.ChicagoPetEmergency.com>).

Family gatherings and big feasts can be hazardous to pets, sometimes leading to an emergency visit to a veterinary hospital. Pet owners should be aware of potential hazards associated with both holidays. Veterinarians at the Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center urge pet owners to be aware of the following hazards during Thanksgiving and Hanukkah celebrations:

### ***Thanksgiving Pet Hazards***

This Thanksgiving, be aware of:

***Bones.*** Cooked bones are brittle and easily splinter when chewed by pets. Bone fragments can become lodged in a pet's throat or intestines and can cause a serious, or even fatal injury.

***Turkey (and other meats).*** It can be tempting to offer pets a sample of the holiday dinner. Be aware of the size difference between pets and humans. A small sliver of turkey may be fine for cats and dogs who are not allergic to poultry, but much more than that can lead to stomach upset or more serious health problems such as pancreatitis. Never feed pets the skin or other fatty meats.

**Scavenging.** Pets will be tempted by unattended food. Even pets that don't normally try to grab food off the table or counter may do so when the house is filled with people and activity. Keep food away from the edge of counters and tables and take garbage out immediately to reduce the danger.

**Batter and dough.** Raw dough is surprisingly appealing to pets, especially if it contains salt. Avoid leaving dough unattended. Ingested yeast dough can rise inside a pet's digestive tract, blocking or rupturing internal organs.

**Herbs & spices.** Some savory herbs and spices are poisonous to pets, so don't feed your pet any food seasoned with herbs and spices.

### **Hanukkah Pet Hazards**

In addition to the Thanksgiving dangers listed above, pet owners celebrating Hanukkah should also be aware of dangers such as . . .

**Latkes.** . Onion, which is commonly found in many latke recipes, can harm cats and dogs. Add in the high salt and fat content of most latkes and there are many bad things for pets in these tasty treats.

**Chocolate coins.** Chocolate is poisonous to dogs and cats, so keep a careful eye on any chocolate Hanukkah *geld*. Metallic wrappers can also be a hazard, blocking airways and digestive tracts.

**Donuts.** Donuts contain fats and sugars in quantities that are problematic for pets. They can cause stomach cramps, vomiting, and diarrhea.

**Menorah and candles.** Candle flames generate very little heat, so pets won't feel any physical warning until they are quite close. Never leave a menorah or other candles burning unattended when pets are nearby. Cats in particular may be attracted by the

movement of the flame, and can burn their face or knock the candle over before they realize that there is a danger with fire.

### ***Other Hazards***

***Jerky Treat Hazard ...*** The FDA has announced that it is aware of “an increasing number of illnesses in pets associated with the consumption of jerky pet treats.” Out of an abundance of caution, the veterinarians at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center recommend avoiding all jerky-style treats for pets until the situation is resolved.

(<http://www.fda.gov/animalveterinary/safetyhealth/productsafetyinformation/ucm295445.htm>). A carrot, a couple of cooked green beans or a cooked asparagus stalk can be a healthy alternative. All treats should be given in moderation.

### ***Who To Call***

Pet owners whose pets get into any of the above items should immediately contact their veterinarian, a veterinary poison control center or Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center at 773-281-7110. Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center is open 24 hours, every day of the year.

### ***About the Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center***

Chicago’s oldest and largest pet emergency facility, the Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center provides advanced emergency, critical and specialty care for cats and dogs. Each year the center 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, every day of the year.

In addition to emergency veterinarians and staff, Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center offers board-certified veterinarians who specialize in cardiology, dentistry, dermatology, diagnostic imaging, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology and surgery. This state-of-the art facility includes ultrasound and MRI

equipment, specialized surgical suites, a blood bank, specialized oxygen cages, heart monitors and more. Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center has been providing emergency care for cats and dogs since 1978.

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