

Dangerous Foods for Dogs at Christmas

Christmas is a great time of year and should be fun for all the family, dogs included. Many of us are already aware of some of the potential toxic foods our dogs can come across and take steps to avoid them. However, the festive period is one where we often introduce all manner of exciting items into the house that we don't normally have. Some of these things can be potentially harmful to our dogs and it's worth knowing some of the common pitfalls.

We have tried to give you a few of the most common Christmas poisonings below. If in doubt, contact the surgery on 01566 772211 and we will be able to advise you.

Grapes

Exactly why and how these are poisonous to dogs is unknown and the exact volume needed to cause symptoms is difficult to predict. Some dogs will eat one or two grapes and become seriously ill but others can eat many of them without apparent problems. The only way to be safe is to keep them out of reach of your dog.



Christmas Pudding, Christmas Cake and Mince Pies

These Christmas fancies are bad for dogs for a number of reasons:

Firstly - they are jam-packed full of currants, raisins and sultanas. These are all a variation on the grape and as such have the same serious health risks. It is common for them to ingest far more grapes in this form than they would fresh grapes because there are so many packed into these cakes and they are smaller.

Secondly - they are full of fat, suet etc which can often give them severe stomach troubles, vomiting etc but also, more worryingly high fat meals are one of the high risk factors leading to pancreatitis. This can be a very serious and costly disease to treat.

Thirdly – they are usually laced with large amounts of alcohol which can cause many of the symptoms of intoxication seen in people.

Chocolate coins and Decorations

Most people are aware of the dangers for dogs from eating chocolate and take steps to avoid leaving any near their dogs. However, it is not uncommon for people to forget about the chocolate coins or decorations and leave them in an irresistible location. As well as the dangers of the chocolate, the actual

wrapping foil can be problematic as it works through the gut system.

Bones

At this time of year we often cook far more meat joints than usual and this normally results in many more bones lying about. Once cooked, all bones become brittle and splinter easily. This can lead to larger fragments getting 'stuck' causing obstructions but also smaller pieces can cause gut irritation and perforation or even just difficulty toileting.

Most people avoid the initial pitfall of your dog 'borrowing the bones off the work surface' only to get caught out later on by putting the deliciously tasty smelling carcass/bone into the bin where it gets raided in the night. Make sure you dispose of the string from any meat joints as this can be a tempting toy for your dogs and could be harmful if ingested. The best thing is to take it straight outside into a sealed bin.

N.B. Birds (turkey/chicken/goose) are all hollow boned animals and as such these bones will splinter either raw or cooked and so must never be given to your dog under any circumstances.

Macadamia Nuts

Within 12 hours of ingestion macadamia nuts can cause dogs to experience weakness, depression, tremors, vomiting and hyperthermia (increased body temperature). These symptoms tend to last for approximately 12 to 48 hours, and as with all the other food groups mentioned if you suspect your dog has consumed macadamia nuts, note the possible quantity consumed and contact your vet.

Alcohol

We tend to use much more alcohol in our cooking at this time of year and so even normal tidbits can be potentially problematic over the Christmas period. Alcohol is intoxicating for dogs and can cause similar unpleasant side effects as it would for people.

If your dog does get into mischief and consumes any of these things then the first thing to do is contact the surgery for advice. Often the quicker treatment is sought the easier and more successful it is.

Don't forget you can contact us in an emergency over the Christmas period on 01566 772211.



Christmas Gifts for your pets

We are now stocking a lovely new range of Christmas toys for cats and dogs.



Fun Corner

Below is a list of 12 popular Christmas carols – with the consonants taken out. Can you guess the name of the carol just from the vowels? Bonus points if you have a little sing along once you've got it!

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_ e _ o _ _ _ A _ _ _ e I _ _
_ i _ e _ _ e _ e _ _ _ a _ _ e _
O _ o _ e A _ _ e _ a _ i _ _ u _
_ i _ _ o _ _ _ e _ i _ _ O _ i _ _
O _ i _ _ e _ o _ _ O _ e _ _ e _ e _
_ e _ _ _ e _ a _ _ _
O _ _ i _ _ a _ _ e e
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November Quiz Answer:

The anagram from November's wordsearch was "The Houses of Parliament".

Margaret Green Animal Rescue (Wingletang) Shoe Box Appeal

Bring joy to a rescue pet this Christmas by filling up a shoebox with toys and treats!



Ideas for Dogs:

Tennis balls, Nylabones, Squeaky toys, Treat balls, Peanut butter, Hot dog sausages (Kong toy fillers), Dog biscuit treats, Liver treats.

Ideas for Cats:

Catnip mice, Ping-pong balls, Brushes, Feliway, Play tunnel, Bag of catnip or catnip spray, Scrunchie ball, Toy on a string.

You can drop your filled shoe boxes off to us at Castle Vets. Please remember to make sure they are here in time for Wingletang to be able to collect and give out to the animals on Christmas Day.

Updating Your Client Records

Please remember to advise us when you change your address, phone number or email address, as we now generally use text or email to send reminders and other items of importance. We rely on holding your up-to-date information to be sure we can get in touch with you. Please take a moment when you are next in, to check with reception if you think any of your contact details may be incorrect.

As we move into electronic means of contacting you, we are aware many of you are missing our newsletters which used to be sent out with written reminders. We will be sending these out to you via email in 2016 (to those we hold an email address for). Please let us know if you do not wish to be sent information other than reminders by email. Please be aware that this may mean you would miss out on other special offers or important news that we want to pass on to you. Likewise, if we don't have your email and you would like newsletters please let us have your email address. Thank you.