

[www.chicagovma.org](http://www.chicagovma.org)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 17, 2022

Contact:

Ray McGury, Executive Director, Chicago Veterinary Medical Association, 630-461-0095, [rmcgury@chicagovma.org](mailto:rmcgury@chicagovma.org)

### **Keep Your Pet's Safety a Priority with Mindful Thanksgiving Planning** *CVMA encourages happy holiday celebrations by understanding dos and don'ts for pets*

Holidays are wonderful times for creating memorable celebrations with family and friends –including beloved pets. However, with a variety of rich foods being prepared and large gatherings, take time to plan ahead for your pets and be aware of how they can safely take part in Thanksgiving celebrations.

The Chicago Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) advises pet owners of the potential dangers of various holiday foods and decorations, but also suggests ways that dogs and cats may enjoy a little taste of what makes the holidays special:

- 1. Turkey is okay – but only in very small amounts.** A small bite of turkey won't hurt your pet but be sure that it's fully cooked and boneless. Undercooked turkey may contain salmonella bacteria that could make your pet sick. Bones or a turkey carcass can cause choking and digestive issues and should never be given to a pet to chew on. Also, too much of a good thing can be harmful to your pet, so don't overdo it on the turkey or other treats. You don't want your dog or cat to end up with an upset tummy.
- 2. Keep yeast and batter out of the reach of pets.** The holidays are a great time for making and enjoying baked goods, but yeast doughs can make pets extremely sick. When dogs or cats ingest raw dough, the yeast continues to expand and ferment; this can cause bloated, drunken pets, which can become a medical emergency. Additionally, raw eggs in batter could make your pet sick with salmonella. Be sure to keep the 24-hour ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center hotline readily available (888-426-4435) as well as your veterinarian's phone number in the event of an emergency.

3. **There are many other holiday foods (and decorations) that can be problematic to pets.** Ensure safe and happy gatherings by keeping these foods and other items far away from furry friends: ham and other sodium-rich meats; turkey twine; fatty foods; corn on the cob; garlic and onions; grapes and raisins; chocolate, nuts, and artificial sweeteners (Xylitol) and products containing them – and this is only a short list of foods that could be harmful to your pet. Additionally, beware of floral centerpieces containing Autumn Crocus, Chrysanthemum, or acorns from oak trees, which all are poisonous to pets.
4. **Taking Fido on the road?** Do you love holiday road trips? If so, keep in mind that what’s fun for you might be stressful for your pet companion. Consider several factors like means of travel, accommodations and how your pet copes with new situations before you take off. For air travel, be sure to have a copy of your pet’s medical records and be sure their ID tags are secure and visible.

“During the holidays, unfortunate incidents can occur with pets, especially because celebrations and everything that goes with them can present unique issues,” explained Dr. Kirsten Plomin, CVMA Board President. “That’s why it’s so important to keep your pet’s safety in mind when hosting gatherings, traveling, or enjoying holiday time at home. If you have questions about how best to include pets in your celebrations, reach out to your veterinary provider; they are there to assist you.”

“The best advice I can give is to plan for some downtime during the holidays,” said Ray McGury, CVMA Executive Director. “The month between Thanksgiving and Christmas is always busy and it’s important for everyone – people and pets alike – to slow down, take a break and acknowledge what makes the holidays special. Most often, that’s simply time spent with family and friends. It’s also a great opportunity to enjoy some calm and quiet connection time with your dog or cat.”

###

**About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association:** Chicago Veterinary Medical Association is a professional network with a longstanding tradition that connects more than 1,000 veterinarians with comprehensive resources that support their continued development as champions of animal health while encouraging the fostering of the human-animal bond.

**About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Foundation:** The CVMF, established in 2009, is a 501<sup>c</sup>3 charity that works with Chicagoland veterinarians to provide financial assistance to pet families in need by helping with the costs of their pet’s urgent, unexpected medical and surgical bills. The Foundation’s work plays a vital role in strengthening the human-animal bond by helping sick and suffering pets get well again.