

EASTER AND THANKSGIVING

All of us enjoy Easter and Thanksgiving. A time well spent with our family, friends and last but not least, our very important pets. These events usually mean heaps of food, candies, chocolate and of course, turkey. Then there are the leftovers!

Left-overs can be lethal. At this time of year, our homes are filled with candies, chocolates, turkey and turkey bones. If your pet is allowed free access to these foods, you could run into potential serious medical problems.

Keep the chocolate out of reach: Most dogs and some cats love chocolate, but chocolate contains a compound that is toxic, if eaten in sufficient quantities. The quantity needed to be poisonous is related to the body weight of the cat or dog. The symptoms vary from gastrointestinal disturbances, abnormalities in the heart function, brain disturbances (seizures) and, in very severe cases, death. I have treated more dogs for chocolate poisoning and hospitalized more dogs for potentially fatal pancreas inflammation at this time of year. Even more than at Easter Time If you suspect that your pet has ingested chocolate, I would urge you to contact your veterinarian immediately. It is helpful if you are able to report the quantity eaten and the description of the product.

Apply the same caution with “Trick or Treat” candies too!

Turkey Bones: I have performed more surgeries on dogs at this these times of the year, to remove bones and other foreign objects from stomachs. Turkey bones and carcasses, or other meat bones can make your pet very sick. In addition, your pet may require very intensive care, with or without surgery. My advice to readers is, that after you have stripped the meat off the bone, done whatever it is that you do with your carcass, wrap it up, and dispose of it, securely, in the garbage. Regardless of your pet’s age treat them as if they are toddlers- no matter how well trained your dog is, turkey is turkey’ Assume that your pet has a nose that is much more powerful than yours. Do not let them anywhere near the garbage.

On a slightly lighter note, your pet is probably a very important part of the family –and in keeping with the family festivities you will probably want to fill a little “pet bowl” with gravy, stuffing and turkey meat. Just pause there a while! Be aware that we also see many “upset stomachs” in the following days after the festive seasons - remember, this food is very rich in comparison with their normal diet.