

OCTOBER 2024



# SITS & WIGGLES

The Newsletter of the Animal Clinic of Chardon

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*How can we make Halloween safer for pets?*

*Halloween Dangers*

Zoetis Rewards - now includes Librela and Solensia



## HOW CAN WE MAKE HALLOWEEN SAFER FOR PETS?

Costumes and masks, lights and decorations, and a constant parade of strangers coming to your door—Halloween can be a downright spooky experience for pets. You can protect your pets by taking these steps to reduce the risk of them being hurt, poisoned, or lost.

- Don't feed pets Halloween treats. Raisins can cause your pet's kidneys to fail, and candy may contain substances toxic to pets, such as chocolate or xylitol (a common sugar substitute found in sugar-free candies and gum). Often, you won't be able to tell what a treat or piece of candy contains just by looking at it.
- Make sure your pets have identification (microchip, collar, and ID tag) that will make it easy for someone to contact you and return them home in case they escape through an open door while you're distracted with trick-or-treaters.
- Keep lit candles, jack-o-lanterns, and other Halloween decorations out of reach of pets.
- Keep all human costume pieces away from pets, along with glow sticks, decorations, batteries, and other holiday items. When chewed, glow stick items can release liquid that tastes really bad and can make pets drool excessively or act strangely (though it isn't likely to be harmful). Other costume parts and decorations might cause choking, internal injury, or illness.
- If you plan to put a costume on your pet, make sure it follows these guidelines:
  - Fits properly and is comfortable
  - Doesn't have any pieces that easily can be chewed off or cause choking
  - Doesn't block your pet's sight, hearing, breathing, mouth, or movement
- Take time before Halloween to get your pet accustomed to the costume, and never leave a costumed pet unsupervised.
- If your pet is wary of strangers or has a tendency to bite, put them in a room away from the front door during trick-or-treating hours, or provide them with a safe hiding place.
- Keep your pet indoors.



# HALLOWEEN DANGERS

During the week of Halloween, calls to the veterinarians at Pet Poison Helpline increase by 12 percent, making it the call center's busiest time of year. "Each year we experience a sharp increase in calls around Halloween, especially during the weekends surrounding the holiday," said Ahna Brutlag, DVM, MS, assistant director at Pet Poison Helpline.

"Most often, these calls involve pets accidentally ingesting Halloween candy or décor. Chocolate is one of the most problematic candies as dogs and cats cannot metabolize it as well as people. Thus, it places them at risk for poisoning."

The four most common food-related Halloween hazards for pets are chocolate, candy overindulgence, raisins and candy wrappers.

## **Chocolate**

Of all candy, chocolate is one of the most toxic to pets. Over the past year, more than 1,100 calls to Pet Poison Helpline involved exposure to chocolate and 98 percent of them involved dogs. Many dogs are inherently attracted to the smell and taste of chocolate, making it a significant threat. In general, the darker and more bitter the chocolate, the more poisonous it is. The chemicals in chocolate that are dangerous to pets, methylxanthines, are similar to caffeine and more heavily concentrated in the darker varieties. In fact, a 50-pound dog can be sickened by ingesting only one ounce of Baker's chocolate! To avoid issues, keep Halloween candy well out of the reach of pets at all times. If you think your pet may have ingested chocolate, symptoms to watch for include vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, agitation, increased thirst, an elevated heart rate, and in severe cases, seizures.

## **Candy**

Pets are indiscriminate when it comes to eating tasty treats and can gorge themselves on snacks and food meant for humans. Large ingestions of sugary, high-fat candy can lead to pancreatitis in pets. Potentially fatal, pancreatitis is inflammation of the pancreas and very painful. It may not show up for two to four days after the pet ingests the candy. Symptoms include decreased appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, abdominal pain, and potentially, kidney failure or organ damage.

## **Grapes and Raisins**

Some people prefer to distribute healthy snacks instead of candy on Halloween, such as mini-boxes of raisins. These are extremely poisonous to dogs! Very small amounts of raisins (and grapes) can cause kidney failure in dogs and, potentially, cats. When it comes to your pets, raisins deserve the same pet-proofing treatment as chocolate – stored in secure containers far from their reach. Unfortunately, some dogs develop idiosyncratic reactions at any dose – in other words, they can ingest any amount and potentially be poisoned. Therefore, any ingestion of raisins or grapes should be treated as a "poisoning" case. Symptoms include vomiting, nausea, decreased appetite, lethargy, abdominal pain, and severe kidney failure.

## **Candy Wrappers**

Generally when pets eat candy, they don't bother to remove the wrappers. Ingestion of foil and cellophane wrappers can cause a life-threatening bowel obstruction, which if severe, can require surgical intervention to correct. Watch for vomiting, decreased appetite, not defecating, straining to defecate, or lethargy. X-rays may be necessary to diagnose this problem.

## **Glow Sticks and Glow Jewelry**

Pets, especially cats, love to chew on these items. Over the past year, Pet Poison Helpline received nearly 80 calls concerning pets that punctured glow sticks or glow jewelry, and 70 percent of the calls involved cats. While not usually life-threatening, their contents can cause pain and irritation in the mouth, as well as profuse drooling and foaming at the mouth.

## **Costumes**

Pets look cute dressed in costumes, but they might not enjoy it as much as their owners. If you dress your pet in a costume, be sure it doesn't impair his vision, movement or air intake. If the costume contains metallic beads, snaps or other small pieces, be aware that if ingested, some metals (especially zinc and lead) can result in serious poisoning. Also, don't be tempted to dye or apply coloring to your pet's fur. Even if the dye is labeled non-toxic to humans, it could still be harmful to pets.

## **Candles**

Keep candles out of the reach of curious noses and wagging tails. Sometimes pets don't realize something is hot until they get burned.

During this Halloween season, help keep your pet safe. If you think your pet has ingested something poisonous, the veterinarians at Pet Poison Helpline suggest that you get help sooner than later. It's always easier, less expensive, and safer for your pet to be treated earlier, versus when he's showing severe symptoms. Contact your veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline immediately at 855-764-7661.

# Zoetis Rewards

Now includes Librela and Solensia!

## Earning Points is Easy

**Earn Points** - You'll earn points with every eligible product purchase you submit within 30 days.

**Redeem for Rewards** - When you reach 100 points, you can redeem for a Zoetis Petcare Rewards card.

**Spend Rewards on Vet Care** - Use your Rewards card to help pay for any product or service at the vet.



Sign up or learn more at <https://www.zoetispetcare.com/rewards>

## Qualifying Products:

Librela

Solensia

Apoquel

ProHeart

Convenia

Cerenia

Simparica Trio

**“You cannot share your life with a dog...or a cat, and not know perfectly well that animals have personalities and minds and feelings.”**

**— Jane Goodall**

## ACOC Birthdays

Jada - 10/13

Jill - 10/19

Belinda - 10/28

