

## **Holiday Pet Tips**

Tis the season to be jolly. Fa la la, bark, meow, bark, la. While your pets may not be dreaming of sugar plums, they have their own idea of what the perfect Holiday Season entails. And, it may not include having strange people, food, decorations or toys in your house. Here are a few tips on how to make the Holidays stress free.

### **Socializing With People**

Holidays can be a stressful time for people, but also for our furry friends. Some pets love people and guests coming in and out of your home. However, for those pets that the thought of a new person sends them running, make sure they have a safe quiet place away from company. Do not force your pet to allow people to hold them; this could turn into a bad situation and lead to a bite. Forcing pets to engage in social situations that they are not used to can lead to a bad situation for the pet and guest. To improve your pet's social behavior, you may want to consider professional pet training with your pet in the future as well.

### **Watch Your Pet's Diet**

The Holidays can be a tempting time for pets to put new foods and items in their mouth. Besides the normal risks of eating chocolate, tinsel, and other upsetting items, it is also time to pay special attention to what guests may try or accidentally feed your pets. Unusually items in the diet can upset your pets and are not good for a nutritionally-balanced diet, either. If your pets are stressed, they may also act out by eating or destroying items like decorations, which they normally would not. Keep a special watch over your pets during the Holiday and monitor their regular diet as well. Pets who become stressed or are eating too many treats may not have as much of an appetite as normal.

### **Stick to a Schedule**

Pets are used to your normal daily schedule. During the Holidays, your schedule may change frequently, which could cause your pet to stress. One of the ways to avoid added stress is to help your pet stick to their regular schedule as much as possible. This includes keeping meal times and bathroom breaks at the same time. You may also need to plan your schedule in advance. Do you like to be out celebrating with family until late at night. Who wants to miss holiday parties because they need to run home and let the dog out? You can also plan around your pet's schedule by considering a Pet Hotel or by asking someone to let your dog outside for you, during a portion of the Holiday. By planning additional help, your pet can stay on their schedule and you can enjoy the Holidays as well.

### **Stress Free Alternatives**

Over the Holidays, do you have as much time to spend walking and exercising our pet? If your pet starts to be over active, or seems to have too much pent-up energy, you may want to consider other exercise options for them. One stress-free option for you and your pet could be a pet daycare option. A professional, personalized pet daycare can socialize your dog with other dogs and people, while exercising them to meet their normal exercise needs. Extra exercise during the Holidays will also help maintain your dog's energy level at the right balance when guests come to play and visit.