




# Haunting Holiday: No Treat for the Family Pet



Halloween's tradition of candy, costumes and trick-or-treating can be a threatening and potentially dangerous time for pets, according to the American Hospital Animal Association (AAHA).

What is a fun time for children can be a very stressful time for the family pet. It's natural for families, especially children, to try to include their family pets in the fun; however, this is one holiday the family pets should probably forgo.

There are a number of hazards that pet owners should consider during Halloween.

-  Loud and excessive noise created by trick-or-treaters can frighten your pet. Pets, especially dogs that are easily excitable or threatened by strangers, should be kept away from the front door to keep them from biting strangers or running into the street.
-  Candy, especially chocolate, is toxic for animals and can cause vomiting, restlessness, heart disturbances, and even death. Candy should be kept out of the pet's reach and young children should be told not to share Halloween "bounty" with their pet.
-  Halloween costumes for pets are cute, but owners should be wary of costumes that contain rubber bands to keep them in place on the animal. If rubber bands are mistakenly left on the pet after the costume comes off, they can quickly burrow into the animal's skin. Pets are better off left at home during trick-or-treat excursions; however, if they are taken along, it is best to keep them on a very short leash to keep them from fighting with other animals or biting strangers they encounter.

Each Halloween, veterinarians around the country see scores of pet injuries that could have been easily avoided. Pet owners should keep in mind that pets are creatures of habit and can become very stressed when their environments suddenly change. They are really much better off if they are protected from all the 'traditions' of Halloween.

AAHA and the staff of Louisville Family Animal Hospital wants you and your pet to enjoy a safe and healthy Halloween. If you suspect your pet has eaten chocolate, or other treats that cause discomfort, please call us immediately.



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