



Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween is a frightening time for some family dogs. Veterinarians nationwide experience pet injuries, and dog bite incidents that can easily be mitigated.



Halloween costumes can annoy animals and pose safety and health hazards. Think twice before dressing up your dogs. Make sure the dog can breathe, see and hear, and that the costume is flame retardant. Remove any small or dangling accessories that could be chewed and swallowed. Avoid rubber bands, which can cut off the animal's circulation or, if accidentally left on, can burrow and cut into the animal's skin. Most of us actually do dress-up our dogs, so, when you do, holding these principles above constant, plus doing it to collect pictures for that special contest, or that special visit

should be goal. Avoiding prolonged costume wear.

We have created a list of items that should be kept handy during this time.

- Take your dog for a walk before trick-or-treaters start their visits. Keep a firm grip on the leash; most dogs are frightened by people in costumes.
- When walking dogs during or after Halloween, watch carefully for what they might pick up and choke on. Bits of candy and wrappers abound on sidewalks and streets after holidays.
- Do not allow your dog to bark and go off on kids in costumes. If it's not controllable, then take them home and protect them from all the little monsters.
- Make sure your dog is wearing an up-to-date I.D. tag.
- Place a dog gate in front of your front door to block access in case someone accidentally lets your pet out of the place where he's confined. Many dogs will run after trick-or-treaters (it also keeps the little visitors OUTSIDE of your door).
- Find a secure place in your home to keep your dogs, especially if you're handing out candy to trick-or-treaters. Many dogs get lost when they escape out of a door during your visitors, and the presence of little (and big) costumed people often scares them. Besides that, when does your normally receive that many visitors in one single night. The constant visitors and doorbell alone is enough to drive them into a different state; often a negative one.
- If your dog has any aggressive tendencies, fear of loud noises, or a habit of excessive barking, place him in a quiet room as far away from your front door as possible at least a half-hour before trick-or-treaters arrive. Play your favorite radio station or tunes to minimize his hearing. You could also consider your favorite dog-care or veterinarian for an overnight stay.



- If your dog is indeed aggressive, then you should consider having him evaluated by your local dog behaviorist to see if the condition is treatable. That would be us ([K9 University](#)).
- If the animal is nervy, jumpy, skittish, consult your vet about tranquilizing the dog (or cat) for the evening. Better to tranquilize than dealing with a missing or terrorized pet.
- Consider crating your pet, which can make him feel more secure and reduce chances of accidental escapes. Provide chew toys and play music for him.
- Keep your dogs indoors or in the garage (even if they are typically outside dogs). It's a bad idea to leave dogs out in the yard; in addition to the little monsters visiting, frightening and agitating them, there have been reports of taunting, poisonings and pet thefts.
- Do not leave dogs in cars during this holiday, nothing good will result from that experience.
- Make sure pets can't reach candles, lanterns, decorations or ornaments.
- Keep dogs out of the candy bowl. Dispose of candy wrappers before your pets get to them. Make sure the dogs can't get into the trash. Sugar and chocolate can be fatal, as chocolate contains Theobromine, which can cause nerve damage and even death in dogs. The darker the chocolate, the more concentrated it is, the worst it is for them. Explain to everyone in your home (including kids) how dangerous treats are to pets. Sugar cannot be processed by dogs, therefore is also dangerous.
- If you notice the symptoms below, you could be seeing chocolate poisoning; call your vet or an emergency clinic right away (your pet's life may be in danger):
 - *Hyperactivity*
 - *Excessive drooling*
 - *Pupil dilation*
 - *Muscle tremors and seizures*
 - *Vomiting and diarrhea*
 - *Excessive urination*
 - *Rapid heartbeat*
 - *Coma*
- As for cats, keep cats indoors at all times. No doubt that the traffic alone will be enough to scare them and cause stress. Stressed kitties can do much damage. The other issue is that cats historically have been targets of much abuse during this holiday by uncaring visitors. Why chance it.



Happy Halloween