

Planning Keeps Dogs Safe for Halloween

Candy, decorations, and frequent visitors on Halloween can pose a threat to dogs.

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As Halloween approaches, so do holiday safety hazards for dogs. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) offers a few tips to ensure a safe Halloween amidst full bowls of sweets and trick-or-treaters at the front door coming to collect.

Shiny wrappers and sweet smells can attract dogs to chocolates and other candies, but accidental ingestion can be hazardous to their health. Dog owners should be on the lookout for signs such as vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, hyperactivity, and increased thirst, according to the ASPCA.

In addition, aluminum foil and cellophane candy wrappers are a danger as they may cause intestinal blockage and induce vomiting. And Halloween accessories – such as pumpkins and decorative corn – may cause upset stomachs if ingested.

“It’s extremely important to ensure that Halloween treats are out of reach of your pet,” said Dr. Stephen Hansen, senior vice president of the ASPCA’s Animal Poison Control Center. “Animals are very good at sniffing out the treats they shouldn’t have, so it’s up to us to make sure they stay happy and healthy.”

Pet owners should keep tabs on dogs’ whereabouts, as Halloween festivities may allow dogs ample opportunities to stray from home.

“Halloween brings a flurry of activity with visitors constantly arriving at the door, and pets may escape the safety of their home,” said Gail Buchwald, senior vice president of the ASPCA Pet Adoption Center in Manhattan. “Be sure your pet has identification tags should he or she accidentally get loose.”

For dogs who will join the festivities and don Halloween costumes, pet owners should inspect costumes for choking hazards and ensure that costumes do not limit dogs’ movement, hearing, sight, or ability to breathe and bark.