

## Keep Dogs Stress-Free for New Year's Eve

**Veterinarians offer tips to help dogs cope with festivities that accompany New Year's celebrations.**

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As the year comes to a close, celebrations to ring in the new year can often frighten dogs – particularly the loud noises and boisterous entertainment that come with traditional New Year's Eve parties.

Veterinarians at the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania are encouraging pet owners to pay particular attention to their dogs and watch for signs of anxiety, as well as offering a few suggestions for New Year's Eve. They are:

1. Don't take dogs to community fireworks displays or other noisy events.
2. If fireworks or other loud noises can be heard from home, keep dogs indoors, preferably in a quiet area they consider a "safe haven."
3. Play with dogs rather than encouraging their fears. When pets show early signs of anxiety, such as pacing or trembling, try to distract them with play and treats. In the long term, this may teach dogs to associate the stressful event with positive rewards. However, simply petting or soothing the dog isn't likely to make a difference and could reinforce nervous behavior.
4. Do not give dogs onions, macadamia nuts, alcohol, or chocolate, as these items are toxic to pets.

Keep these tips in mind to help dogs ring in a happy, healthy – and less stressful – New Year.