

Halloween Pet Safety

Halloween can be fun, but it can also present challenges for keeping your pet safe as families enjoy the festivities. Below is a summary of suggestions from Camelot Animal Hospital and Boarding Kennel, Broward County Animal Care and Regulation, and the ASPCA on how to keep your pet healthy and happy during this time of tricks and treats!

- 🍂 The best way to keep pets safe is to keep them inside the home, not outside in the yard.
- 🍂 If you take your pet trick-or-treating, use a short leash to keep it safe and under your control.
- 🍂 Inside, confine pets away from the front door in a separate room to prevent them from getting out – especially cats, who may slip out unnoticed.
- 🍂 Pets, especially dogs, are easily excitable by doorbells or threatened by strangers. Confining dogs will also reduce the chances of accidents with trick-or-treaters and getting into the Halloween candy. Consider boarding options.
- 🍂 Candy, particularly chocolate, is toxic for animals and can cause vomiting, restlessness, heart disturbances and even death. Tell other family members, especially children, not to share their candy with the family pet. If you suspect your pet has eaten chocolate or other candy that causes discomfort or worse physical reactions, consult your veterinarian immediately.
- 🍂 Mythology about black cats can lead people to do strange things to them. Even children who mean no harm may yell at or chase a black cat, scaring the cat much more than the cat scares them. Take extra precautions if you own a black cat by confining it in your house several days before and after Halloween. This will reduce the chances of someone abducting or harming your cat.
- 🍂 Wires and cords from electric lights and other decorations should be kept out of reach of your pets. If chewed, your pet might suffer cuts or burns, or receive a possibly life-threatening electrical shock.
- 🍂 A carved pumpkin is festive, but do exercise caution if you choose to add a candle. Pets can easily knock over a lit pumpkin and cause a fire. Curious kittens especially run the risk of getting burned or singed by candle flames.
- 🍂 While your companion animal may look cute in a costume, please be sure your pet loves being in costume before you dress him up. If you do dress him up, make sure the costume isn't annoying or unsafe. It should not constrict the animal's movement or hearing, or impede his ability to breathe, bark or meow. Also, be sure to try on costumes before the big night. If your pet seems distressed, allergic or shows abnormal behavior, consider letting him go au naturale or donning a festive bandana.
- 🍂 Take a closer look at your pet's costume and make sure it does not have dangling or easily-chewed-off pieces that he could choke on. Also, ill-fitting outfits can get twisted on external objects or your pet, leading to injury.
- 🍂 IDs, please! Always make sure your dog or cat has proper identification. If your pet escapes and becomes lost, a collar, tags and/or a microchip can be a lifesaver, increasing the chances that he or she will be returned to you.