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Happy Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day Pet Dos and Don'ts: 5 Tips all Pet Families Need to Know!

By Dr. Charlotte Flint

Senior Consulting Veterinarian, Clinical Toxicology

**Roses are red
Violets are blue,
My pet deserves
A happy Valentine's, too!**

Valentine's Day is all about love, and we know how much you love your pet! Chances are your furry family member is going to get some Valentine's snuggles this year and maybe even a gift of its own. The human family members of your house may also be getting gifts this year, some of which may be **highly toxic to your furry friends**. Check out our tips on how to show your love without spending Valentine's weekend in the ER.

Do keep Valentine's Day chocolate away from pets!

Who doesn't love a big box of chocolate for Valentine's Day? Unfortunately, dogs are more than happy to help themselves to [chocolate](#) if given the opportunity! Calls involving pets ingesting milk chocolate, dark chocolate, and chocolate baked goods were the top three most common exposures handled by Pet Poison Helpline in February of 2014 and 2015. Chocolate ingestion by dogs can result in agitation, vomiting, diarrhea, tachycardia, tremors, and seizures, depending on the dose ingested.

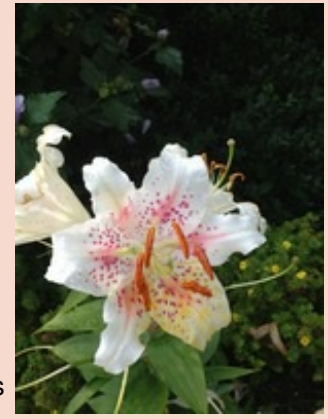
If your pet gets into chocolate, don't despair! Know that Pet Poison Helpline's veterinary experts are available 24/7 to help assess the risk and, if needed, to help your veterinarian set up an appropriate and individualized treatment plan for your love.

Don't forget the less obvious Valentine's Day dangers!

Cat owners should check all flower bouquets closely for [lilies](#) (i.e. *Lilium*), such as Easter lilies, stargazer lilies, tiger lilies, Asiatic lilies, and Oriental lilies as **these flowers can be deadly to cats** (although they are safe for dogs). Even exposure to lily pollen and water from a vase of lilies can result



in rapid onset kidney failure when ingested by cats. Learn more about lily poisoning by visiting our website, 'No Lilies for Kitties!' (www.noliliesforkitties.com). Here you'll find a short video about lily poisoning, lists of toxic and less-toxic lilies, and safer cut-flower options. Also be careful with **ribbons and bows** on flowers and balloons, as they can cause dangerous intestinal foreign bodies when ingested by pets.



We all know chocolate can be toxic to dogs, but there are other people foods which can also be harmful for our canine companions. **Macadamia nuts, coffee beans, grapes, and raisins** are particularly dangerous for dogs with the latter two causing kidney failure. The toxicity of these foods increases they're chocolate covered. Also, be aware of the potential for **xylitol in sugar-free candies, chocolates, and baked goods**. While this natural sweetener is not toxic to people, it's highly toxic to dogs, resulting in rapid onset hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) and potentially, liver failure.

Finally, all pets can be sensitive to **alcohol**, so keep alcoholic drinks out of reach. If you overdo it on Valentine's Day, be certain to put the **ibuprofen** and other NSAIDs away and out of reach, too. Ibuprofen was a top five toxin in both February of 2014 and 2015.

Do find safe gifts to show your pet Valentine's Day love!

A new collar, treats, or toys can all be great gifts for pets on Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day can also be a great time to try a new dog or cat treat recipe or make a new toy. Also consider giving toys, bedding, food, or a donation to an animal shelter or rescue group in your pet's name!

Don't forget that many pets appreciate the gift of time and love more than anything!

An extra walk and some extra time cuddling or playing costs nothing and will be greatly appreciated by your cat, dog, or other pets. The extra exercise and snuggle time is a healthy, happy choice for you as well.

Do share the love!

Valentine's Day can be a lonely holiday for many people. This could be a great time to visit an animal shelter and donate your time and attention to rescued pets. While I do not recommend giving pets as gifts, if you have been thinking about adding a furry friend to your household, Valentine's Day could be a great time to adopt. Maybe a visit with your pet could help brighten the day of someone you know who is unable to have their own dog or cat. This could also be a great time to look into getting your dog certified as a Canine Good Citizen or therapy dog to help others.

Happy Valentine's Day from Pet Poison Helpline!

When ordering Valentine's flowers for your sweetie, remember 'No Lilies for Kitties!'

Less than 30% of the 36 million cat owners in the U.S. know that the beautiful stargazer and Asiatic lilies lurking in their Valentine's Day bouquet can kill their cats. Ingestion of just one petal, leaf, or even the pollen, can cause kidney failure in less than three days. This lack of awareness, coupled with the popularity of the flowers, results in thousands of feline poisonings and deaths each year. Learn more about lily poisoning from our 'No Lilies for Kitties!' campaign (www.noliliesforkitties.com). Here you'll find a one minute video about lily poisoning, photos of toxic lilies, and safer cut-flower options.



Pet Poison Helpline, an animal poison control center based out of Minneapolis, is available 24 hours, seven days a week for pet owners and veterinary professionals that require assistance treating a potentially poisoned pet. The staff provides treatment advice for poisoning cases of all species, including dogs, cats, birds, small mammals, large animals and exotic species. As the most cost-effective option for animal poison control care, Pet Poison Helpline's fee of \$49 per incident includes follow-up consultation for the duration of the poison case. Pet Poison Helpline is available in North America by calling 800-213-6680. Additional information can be found online at www.petpoisonhelpline.com.

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Pet Poison Helpline
3600 American Blvd W.
Suite 725
Bloomington, Minnesota 55408
US

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