

# Protect Your Pets Against a Spooky Halloween



Like most holidays, Halloween comes with its own set of concerns for our cats and dogs. Candy can be toxic, costumes can be restricting, and cats and dogs can sneak out of the house during the commotion that trick-or-treating brings to your front door. (CNW Group/Canadian Animal Health Institute)

GUELPH, ON, Oct. 3, 2016 /CNW/ - As far as your pets are concerned, Halloween is just another day. They won't understand the reason for extra visitors coming to the door; nor the concept of costumes and masks.

Like most holidays, Halloween comes with its own set of concerns for our cats and dogs. Let's break those concerns down into three main categories: candy, costumes and trick-or-treaters at the door.

## Candy

The last thing you want is to spend October 31<sup>st</sup> in the emergency room at your local veterinary hospital because your dog got into your candy bowl.

Chocolate is the biggest culprit. Chocolate poisoning in cats or dogs can be dangerous, even deadly. Xylitol, an artificial sweetener found in some candies, can also be poisonous to dogs.

While **you** may know that chocolate (and xylitol) are no-nos for pets, others may not. When your kids come home with their loot for the night, remind them that candy is for people only!

## Costumes

It may look cute when dogs and cats are dressed up as superheroes or other animals, but if you plan on dressing up your pet for Halloween it's important to ensure the costume was actually intended to be worn by animals. The costume shouldn't be too restrictive; your pet should still be able to move and breathe.

Festive bandanas can be a safe choice for dogs that just aren't comfortable wearing a costume.

### Trick-or-Treaters

Let's face it: dogs get excited (and sometimes territorial) when strangers show up ringing the doorbell. Consider keeping your front door open or sitting outside on your porch so that your doorbell isn't ringing over and over again.

You may want to keep your pet in their crate in a closed room during trick-or-treating hours to avoid them sneaking out the door during all the commotion. You should also make sure your pet has their collar on that night with correct identification tags, just in case it runs out the door.

The most important thing is to know what you are going to do with your pets on Halloween night before the big day arrives. Talk to your veterinary healthcare team ahead of time for more information on how to keep your pets safe during all of the Halloween festivities.

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