

PRESS RELEASE

Insurance claims for poisoned pets spike by 85% around Christmas, according to MORE TH>N

- Trips to the vet, caused by pets eating toxic Xmas food or decorations, cost £195 on average.
- One in ten (9%) have delayed contacting their vet due to the fear of high costs over Xmas.
- MORE TH>N has provided tips to help you keep your [cat](#) or [dog](#) healthy this festive season.

Insurance claims for poisoned dogs spike in December each year, data from pet insurer MORE TH>N has revealed.

In December 2018, the pet insurer received 85% more of these claims compared to the monthly average across the whole year, most likely caused by the presence of festive food and decorations in the home.

In addition, a MORE TH>N survey of 2,000 pet owners shows that a third (37%) do not consider their pet's health and wellbeing when purchasing festive decorations.

As a result, two in five (39%) said their pets get into trouble over the festive period. One in ten (12%) have seen their furry friend steal Christmas food, such as chocolate or pudding, while one in ten (9%) have seen their pet eat decorations. Additionally, a fifth (19%) of pets have caused the Christmas tree to fall over on themselves, potentially causing them harm. This rises to 26% for cats.

HOW WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH OUR PETS

- Three quarters buy Christmas presents for their furry friend, spending £10 on average.
- By comparison, we spend £345 on immediate family.
- A fifth have dressed their pet up in a Christmas-themed outfit, with reindeers being the most popular choice.
- However, 17% of those pets ended up eating part of their costume.

Three fifths (60%) of pet owners also admitted they share their Christmas dinner with their pets, despite the fact that it could be harmful.

Those who had to take a trip to the vet as a result of a Christmas mishap ended up paying an average of £195 in fees. Worryingly, one in ten (9%) admitted to delaying contacting the vet due to the fear of high costs over the festive season.

The types of Christmas food and decorations most likely to have made pets ill include:

1. Chocolate (27%)
2. Mince pies (22%)
3. Tinsel (18%)
4. Dried fruit (15%)
5. Mistletoe berries (13%)

To help keep your [cats](#) and [dogs](#) safe over the Christmas break, MORE TH>N has re-written the lyrics to the Twelve Days of Christmas to help owners remember the most important holiday risks.

Andrew Moore, Director of Pet Claims at MORE TH>N, and a qualified vet, said: "Though three quarters of pet owners buy Christmas presents for their pet, the best gift you can give them is a safe home. Christmas is a time best spent with family rather than at the vet's, so you should check before

feeding your pet anything to avoid accidentally making them ill. Chocolate, raisins, onions and alcohol can be particularly harmful. We all love to decorate our homes to get into the festive spirit, but pet owners should also try to keep decorations like tinsel and baubles out of harm's way."

Veterinarian Dr Bobby Palmer said: "Sadly, vet surgeries are awash with pets being treated for consuming Christmas-related foods or decoration during the annual holiday. The festive season is expensive enough, without the added cost of visiting a vet too, so before offering out your mince pie leftovers, I'd highly recommend researching the specific foods most poisonous to your pet."

-ENDS-

For more information please contact Cow PR – morethan@cowpr.com / 020 7234 9150

About MORE TH>N

MORE TH>N is the direct financial services brand of RSA. Established in 2001, the company offers car, home, pet, business and travel insurance

Notes to editors

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from an online survey of 2,000 pet owners conducted by Opinium on behalf of MORE TH>N in November 2019.