

Halloween Safety

There are many ways to keep children safe at Halloween, when they are more prone to accidents and injuries. The excitement of children and adults at this time of year often means that safety is forgotten. Simple common sense can do a lot to stop any tragedies from happening.

- Help your child pick out or make a costume that will be safe. Make it fire proof, the eye holes should be large enough for good peripheral vision.
- Make sure that if your child is carrying a prop, such as a scythe, knife or pitchfork, that the tips are smooth and flexible enough so as not to cause injury.
- Kids always want to help with the pumpkin/turnip carving. Small children shouldn't be allowed to use a sharp knife. It's best to let the kids clean out the pumpkin/turnip and draw a face on it, which you can carve for them.
- Treating your kids to a spooky Halloween dinner will make them less likely to eat the sweets they collect.
- Teaching your kids basic everyday safety such as; not getting into cars or talking to strangers, watching both ways before crossing the road and crossing at a safe place, will help make them when they are out and about.



And don't forget the members of the household that can't speak for themselves. Rescue shelters and animal pounds around this time are overflowing with dogs and cats lost during Halloween celebrations.

Dog Tips: Halloween Safety Tips for Pet Owners

Halloween can be a frightening time for family dogs. Each Halloween, vets surgeries nationwide see animals with injuries that could have been avoided. Here are some ways we can protect pets:

- Walk your dog before the little witches and ghosts start their visits. Keep a firm grip on the leash; many dogs are frightened by people in costumes.
- Find a secure place in your home to keep your dogs, especially if you're giving out sweets and treats. Many dogs get loose when the door opens, and the presence of little (and big) costumed people often frighten them, increasing the chance of dogs running away.
- Make sure your dog is wearing an up-to-date I.D tag.
- If your dog has any aggressive tendencies, fear of loud noises, or a habit of excessive barking, place him in a quiet room as far away from your front door as possible at least a half-hour before callers arrive.
- Consider crating your pet, which can make him feel more secure and reduce chances of accidental escapes. Provide chew toys, a favourite blanket, a piece of clothing with



your scent on it, or whatever comforts the animal. Play soft music or a recording of soothing sounds.

- If you want to have your dog near the door to greet visitors, keep him on a leash. Pets can become very stressed by holiday activities and unwelcome interruptions in routine. A nervous dog might feel threatened and growl, lunge or bite.
- Keep dogs indoors. It's a bad idea to leave dogs out in the yard; in addition to the parade of holiday celebrants frightening and agitating them, there have been reports of taunting, poisonings and pet thefts.
- Do not leave dogs in cars.
- Halloween costumes can annoy animals and pose safety and health hazards...so think twice before dressing up the dog. Make sure the dog can breathe, see and hear, and that the costume is flame retardant. Remove any small or dangling accessories that could be chewed and swallowed. Avoid rubber bands, which can cut off the animal's circulation or, if accidentally left on, can burrow and cut into the animal's skin.
- If the animal is very high-strung, consult your vet about tranquilising for the night.



Remember, Halloween is a time for fun and games for all the family. Spending time in the preparations and being mindful of your family and pet's safety can make a difference to everyone's enjoyment. Watch out for the ghouls!

