

# Safety Sense

## Unleash Pet Worry



Our pets are part of our family. Whether you have a dog, cat, bird, iguana, fish, or any other animal, pets are loyal companions that bring a source of joy, love, and support. Pets can provide a sense of purpose, make our lives just a bit richer, and even provide unexpected health boosters – like stress relief, lower blood pressure and cholesterol, and increased physical activity. Of course, owning a pet comes with responsibilities for the entire family – providing proper nutrition, exercising, bathing, veterinary appointments. The overall care of your pet is like managing a small, living household member. For those who love their pets, it's all worth it. So, you want to make sure you're taking precautions to keep your pets safe. With all the different kinds of pets people own, it would be impossible to list every precaution, but here are a few basic tips to keeping your pet safe.

- Always keep identification on your pet. A collar with their name, your name, address and phone number is an easy way for someone to identify them.
- Microchip your pet. Go that extra mile and have your pet microchipped. It doesn't hurt them and anyone can take them to the local humane society or veterinarian and easily access their information.
- Secure your trash cans. Make sure the lid is closed or the cabinet latched, because a pet that gets into the trash can eat poisonous items or choke on something they should not eat.
- Keep dangerous liquids and items away. Medicine, cleaning supplies, and other liquids could all be toxic if ingested. Items like string, batteries, and food wrappers are also potentially deadly if eaten.
- Keep electrical cords out of reach. If your pet chews – think rabbit or hamster – a cord (even unplugged) can be harmful. The wiring inside can tear their gastrointestinal tract and cause internal damage. If your pet is a "gnawer", watch them when they're roaming the house.
- Plant non-poisonous plants inside and out. You may not realize that a plant is highly toxic, so it's important to research plants before bringing them into your home or adding them to your garden.
- Lock your gates. If your yard has gates, make sure they're locked so your pets can't get out.
- Keep your pet cool indoors and out and limit their outdoor time on hot days. Always have cool fresh water handy, make sure there are shaded areas for them to lay in, and consider keeping a cooling mat.
- **Never ever** leave your pet in a parked car. According to the Humane Society, on an 85° day with the windows slightly open, a car can reach 102° in 10 minutes or less.
- Thump or knock on your car hood before you start the engine to flush out any animals that may have found shelter in your engine or wheel wells. Cats love to curl up into these places.

Enjoy the pets in your life and do all you can to make certain they live a long, healthy, and loving life.

