

We've got Winter all wrapped up

Keep your cat safe this winter
by avoiding these hazards



OUT AND ABOUT



Road traffic

During darker months, our emergency vets see a proportionate rise in the number of road traffic accidents. Consider keeping your cat indoors around the morning and evening rush hours.



Antifreeze

Ethylene glycol, as it's officially known, is highly dangerous. It is sweet tasting and palatable and even a relatively small quantity can cause potentially fatal kidney damage.



Ice, snow & grit

Ice and snow may get caught in the space between cats' toes which can cause frostbite. Salt and other chemicals used to grit roads and pavements can also be an irritant to your cat's pads, especially if they have any small abrasions.



Freezing temperatures

Short hair breeds can feel the cold and you may find that as your cat gets older they start to feel the cold more. Cats are just as sensitive to cold weather as people, and hypothermia is a risk if they're exposed to extreme temperatures.



FOOD AND DRINK



Chocolate

Chocolate contains a stimulant called theobromine, a bit like caffeine, that's poisonous to cats.



Alcohol

Alcohol is significantly more toxic to cats than humans and may cause vomiting, diarrhoea, difficulty breathing, tremors, coma and even death.



Christmas pudding and mince pies

All grapes, raisins, currants and sultanas and food that contain them are toxic to cats.



Artificial sweeteners

One sweetener in particular, xylitol, is found in many foods, including some cakes. Ingestion can lead to potentially fatal hypoglycaemia, acute liver disease and blood clotting.



Macadamia nuts

Can cause weakness, tremors, vomiting and hyperthermia within 12 hours of ingestion.



Cooked bones

Once cooked, bones become brittle and splinter easily. They can pierce your cat's digestive tract or cause obstructions.



Onions

Can cause stomach irritation and lead to red blood cell damage and anaemia.



FESTIVE DECORATIONS



Christmas trees

Pine needles can cause mild stomach upset, cuts to the mouth and, in severe cases, even perforation of the intestines.



Fairy lights

Cats often try to eat cables, including fairy lights. These can cause electric shocks if chewed.



Glass baubles

These tend to smash into shards when eaten, causing irritation, perforation or blockages.



Snow globes

Some versions can contain antifreeze, otherwise known as ethylene glycol, as little as one tablespoon can be fatal to cats.



Tinsel

Can cause blockages, or even worse - work its way into the intestine, which can be extremely serious.



Candles

Popular around Christmas, candles can burn curious paws and noses and can fall over when brushed against.



PRESENTS



Toys

Some cats will swallow anything that looks appealing, including children's toys, even if it's likely to put them at risk.



Wrapping paper

While toxicity is low, eating a large amount of paper may cause an obstruction in the stomach.



Batteries

Ingestion of batteries is more common at Christmas and can cause chemical burns and heavy metal poisoning.



Silica gel

Commonly found in packaging and typically non-toxic, these can cause blockages in the gut.

