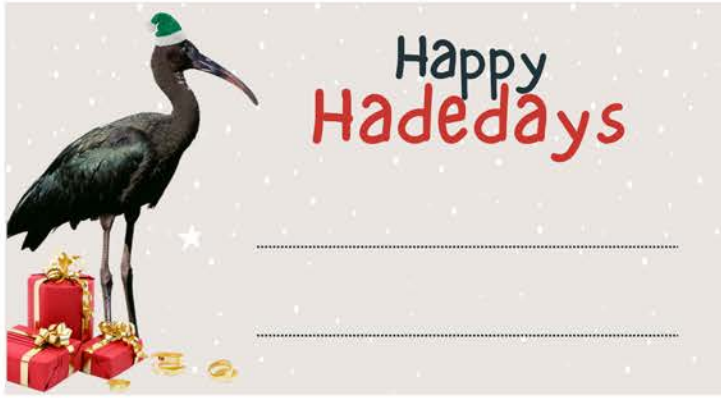




KLOOF &
HIGHWAY
SPCA

CHRISTMAS CARE BOOKLET







Holiday Care Tips

Christmas Tree Hazards

- Secure the tree to prevent it from tipping over.
- Avoid tinsel, small decorations, or edible ornaments that pets might chew or swallow.
- Use pet-safe lights and cords to avoid electrocution risks.

Festive Foods

Holiday celebrations often involve festive treats, but many of these can be harmful or even fatal to pets. Here's what to avoid and why:

- **Chocolate:** Contains theobromine, a compound that pets cannot metabolise effectively. Dark chocolate and cooking chocolate are particularly toxic and can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, an increased heart rate, seizures, or even death.
- **Raisins and Grapes:** These can cause sudden kidney failure in dogs and some cats. Even small amounts can lead to vomiting, lethargy, and severe kidney damage.
- **Xylitol:** Found in sugar-free sweets, chewing gum, and baked goods, this artificial sweetener can cause a dangerous drop in your pet's blood sugar levels, leading to seizures, liver failure, or worse.
- **Onions and Garlic:** Common in stuffing and other dishes, these can cause anaemia in pets by damaging their red blood cells.
- **Fatty Foods and Leftovers:** Rich, fatty meals or scraps can lead to pancreatitis - a painful and potentially fatal inflammation of the pancreas.
- **Alcohol:** Even small amounts can be dangerous to pets, causing intoxication, low blood sugar, and breathing difficulties.

What You Can Do:

- Keep festive foods well out of reach, and remind guests not to feed pets table scraps or treats.
- Secure bins and leftover storage, as pets may sniff out and consume scraps like foil or toxic leftovers.
- Dispose of meat bones (like braai leftovers) properly, as they can splinter and cause harm.
- Provide pet-safe alternatives, such as special festive treats made for dogs or cats, to include them in the celebration safely.

If you suspect your pet has ingested a toxic food, contact your vet immediately, as early treatment can be life-saving.

The header features a dark blue background with several festive illustrations. On the left, a dog's head is shown wearing a red and white polka-dot scarf and green earmuffs. In the center, there are various holiday items including a red and white striped candy cane, a snowflake, a brown reindeer head, a white bird with a red bow, and a brown dog's head wearing a green headband with red antlers. On the right, another dog's head is shown wearing a red and white polka-dot scarf and green earmuffs.

Holiday Care Tips

Plants and Flowers

- Watch out for poinsettias, holly, and mistletoe - they are toxic to pets if ingested.

Travelling with Pets

- Safe Transport: Use a secure carrier or harness for car journeys. Never leave pets alone in a parked car - it can become dangerously hot within minutes.
- Comfort on the Road: Take breaks during long trips for water and bathroom stops. Keep the car well-ventilated.

Fireworks and Loud Noises

- Create a Safe Space: Prepare a quiet, secure room for your pet with their favourite bedding and toys during fireworks or loud celebrations.
- Soothing Sounds: Play calming music or white noise to muffle the sound of fireworks.
- Microchip and ID Tags: Ensure pets' microchip details are up to date and that they wear ID tags in case they escape.

Keep Pets Cool in the Heat

- Hydration is Key: Always provide fresh, cool water. Place extra water bowls around the house and garden, and add ice cubes to keep the water cooler for longer.
- Shade and Shelter: Ensure pets have access to shaded areas, especially when outdoors. Avoid leaving them in direct sunlight for extended periods.
- Avoid Hot Surfaces: Pavements and sand can become scorching during summer. Walk dogs early in the morning or later in the evening when it's cooler.
- Cooling Mats and Wet Towels: Invest in a cooling mat or place damp towels for pets to lie on to help regulate their body temperature.



Extra Summer Care Tips

Flea and Tick Prevention

Warm weather provides ideal conditions for fleas and ticks, making summer a high-risk period for infestations. These parasites can cause discomfort and serious health issues for pets, including:

- Fleas: Their bites lead to itching and skin irritation. Pets with allergies may develop flea allergy dermatitis, which can result in hair loss and inflamed skin. Fleas can also carry tapeworms and other diseases.
- Ticks: These parasites can spread serious illnesses, such as tick-bite fever, Lyme disease, and Ehrlichiosis, which may be life-threatening if left untreated.

To protect your pets:

- Use vet-recommended flea and tick preventatives, such as spot-on treatments, collars, sprays, or oral medications. Avoid over-the-counter products unless advised by your vet, as some may be ineffective or unsafe.
- Regularly inspect your pet's coat for fleas, flea dirt (tiny black specks), or ticks, especially after walks or outdoor play. Pay attention to areas like under the collar, between toes, and behind ears.
- Keep your home and garden clean by vacuuming regularly and treating areas your pet frequents with pet-safe pest control products.

Watch for Overheating

Pets are more vulnerable to heatstroke than humans, as they cannot sweat to cool themselves effectively. Heatstroke can be life-threatening if not treated promptly.

Signs of overheating in pets include:

- Heavy panting or rapid breathing.
- Excessive drooling.
- Weakness, lethargy, or collapse.
- Bright red gums or tongue.
- Vomiting or diarrhoea.

If you notice these symptoms:

1. Move your pet to a cool, shaded area straightaway.
2. Offer them cool (but not ice-cold) water to drink.
3. Cool their body by wetting them with a damp towel or using a fan, focusing on their paws, armpits, and belly.
4. Avoid using ice or very cold water, as this can shock their system.
5. Contact your vet immediately for further advice.

Emergency Card

Print out this handy emergency details card, for each of your pets, fill in the important details and leave it on your fridge or somewhere safe over the holiday season.

Emergency information.

Pet's name:

.....

Microchip number:

.....

Veterinarian's Name:

.....

Veterinarian's contact details:

.....

Emergency pet hospital contact details:

.....

List of allergies or medical conditions:

.....

Pet medical insurance details:

.....

.....

Your local SPCA's contact details:

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Dog Biscuits

 20-40 minutes  30-40 small biscuits

Your dogs will love this homemade dog biscuit recipe. It is so easy to make and they are filled with healthy ingredients that your dog will love.

Ingredients

2 ½ cups whole wheat flour

2 large eggs

½ cup cooked and mashed pumpkin

2 tablespoons peanut butter

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon water, or more if necessary



Method

- Preheat the oven 180°C
- Combine flour, eggs, pumpkin, peanut butter, salt, and cinnamon in a bowl; stir with a spatula until smooth.
- Transfer the mixture to a work surface and work it with your hands until the mixture starts to come together into a dough. Add 1 teaspoon water at a time (only if needed) to help make the dough workable.
- Roll the dough to a thickness of 1cm. Cut into shapes with cookie cutters and transfer to a baking sheet.
- Bake in the preheated oven until dog treats are golden brown and crunchy, about 20-40 minutes depending on the size of the biscuit. Let them cool before serving to your dog.



Cat treats

 30-40 small biscuits  15 minutes

*These feline treats are the purr-fect treat for your cat.
They are so quick to make and are filled with nutritious ingredients.*



Ingredients

120g of canned tuna (make sure it's been tinned in water with no added salt), well-drained and flaked

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon dried catnip

1 large egg

Method

- Preheat oven to 180°C.
- Process all of the ingredients in a food processor, or mash them with a fork until a smooth, thick dough forms.
- Form dough into small bite sized balls. Place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, and slightly flatten each ball.
- Bake until golden and crisp, about 10-15 minutes. Let them cool before serving to your cat. Store in air-tight container up to 5 days, or freeze them in batches to retain freshness.

THANK YOU!

With December and the holidays coming up, the number of animals being surrendered to our Kloof and Highway SPCA can exceed over 700 a month.

What does this translate to – an increase in our costs for:

- Food
- Medical treatment
- Increased overheads
- Vehicles and fuel
- Staff
- Beds, toys and treats

If you would like to show your support of The Kloof and Highway SPCA, you can copy the link below into your browser or scan the Zapper code below.

<https://www.kloofspca.co.za/online-donations/>

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