



DECEMBER  
2024

# The Better Pet Gazette

highlandsveterinaryhospital.com.au



The holiday season often inspires warm, heartfelt gestures, including surprising loved ones with gifts. While many presents bring joy and smiles, pet gifting should be handled cautiously. The decision to bring a new furry family member into a home should be a thoughtful, well-planned process. Here's why:

**Pets Are a Lifelong Commitment** – Owning a pet is a lifelong commitment spanning a decade or more. The recipient must be fully prepared for the responsibilities that come with pet ownership.

**Matching Lifestyles and Personalities** – The choice of pet should align with the recipient's lifestyle and personality. A mismatch can lead to stress, both for the owner and the pet.

**The Importance of Choice** – Selecting a pet is a personal choice that requires research and careful consideration. A pet is not like a scarf or a book; it's a living being with needs and preferences.

**Financial Responsibility** – Pet ownership involves financial responsibilities, including food, healthcare, grooming, and more.

## HOLIDAY HOURS

We will be open over the Christmas/New Years break with the exception of the public holidays: **Wed, 25 Dec; Thur, 26 Dec and Wed, 1 Jan**. If you have an emergency with your pet when **HIGHlands** is closed, please call the Animal Referral Hospital in Wollongong at 4283 8432.



Wishing you joy, love,  
wagging tails and a

**Merry Christmas!**

Thank you for your  
wonderful support  
throughout the year!



*The Better Pet Gazette is a monthly newsletter full of informative articles and tips on pet health as well as updates on what's happening at the practice. We hope you enjoy the read!*

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need an appointment?  
**BOOK ONLINE**

# upcoming f LIVE TALK

special  
**DENTAL  
OFFER!**

Did you know that **80%** of dogs and **70%** of cats show signs of dental disease by age 3?

That's why it's so important to maintain your pet's dental health! Take advantage of our special offer - Highlands Veterinary Hospital is offering **\$100 OFF** all dental services for your dog or cat. This special finishes at the end of November. You can even schedule your pet's appointment up to 6 months in advance! But it must be booked before 31 December.

## NexGard SPECTRA®



### save on parasite protection!

We've had 6 tick cases in the last few weeks, indicating that parasite protection is more important than ever this season! Therefore, we are currently offering a great deal on NexGard Spectra: if you purchase one packet, **you'll get another 2 months extra for free, plus a pet toy!**

Nexgard Spectra provides full protection for your dog from parasites, which include fleas, ticks, mites, heartworms and intestinal worms.

**soothing  
the  
stressed**

easing your pet's anxiety over the holidays

facebook.com/highlandsveterinaryhospital

**f LIVE** Highlands Veterinary Hospital  
04 · DEC · 2024 · 12:30PM

Veterinarian Dr Diederik Gelderman will share tips on understanding and alleviating pet anxiety during the busy Christmas and New Years season. Help your furry friend find calm amidst the celebrations!

HIGHLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Join us on your lunch break:  
**04.12.24  
@ 12:30pm**

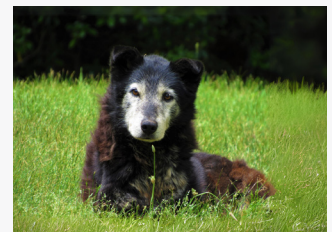
Stress during the Christmas and New Year holidays can greatly impact pets, causing behaviors like excessive barking, hiding, shaking, or changes in eating habits. Common triggers include loud noises, changes in routine, and extra visitors. Dr. Diederik will discuss ways to help pets feel secure, sharing tips on creating a calm space and maintaining exercise or training routines. For added support, he may suggest managed strategies, such as temporary medications or setting up a "pet-only" zone during large gatherings to reduce anxiety.

Please listen in on Wednesday, 6 Dec at 12.30pm on our Facebook page [here](#). All of our previous talks can be found in the Live section under the More menu.

## NOVEMBER FACEBOOK LIVE TALK RECAP

### "Your Golden Oldie: Health Strategies for Your Senior Pet"

In this talk, Dr Diederik offered some valuable advice about caring for an ageing pet. As pets age, more frequent vet visits - ideally every 6 months - become essential for early detection of health issues and updated vaccinations.



To support senior pets, ensure they have a balanced diet, manage their weight, provide gentle exercise, and maintain dental care. Dr. Diederik suggests that supplements or medication can help with joint aches, especially in winter. For mobility issues, consider ramps or steps, and make sure they have a cozy bed away from drafts.

You can follow up with Dr Diederik's great suggestions by listening to his talk, by clicking [here](#).



**Helping Paws**  
HIGHLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

## Christmas Raffle!

HIGHlands is proud of our *Helping Paws* initiative, aimed at supporting pet owners who face urgent medical attention for their beloved animals but lack the necessary funds.

This Christmas we are offering an amazing raffle prize, so be sure to buy a ticket! It's a gift basket full of fantastic pet products:

- \$100 Voucher: Bails Paw Dog Training
- \$40 Voucher: Valerie Van cookies
- \$25 Big W gift card
- Cat anti-hairball bowl
- Ceramic pet food bowl
- Oral health bowl
- Dog treats
- Pigs ears
- Dog toys
- Travel water bottle
- Prime100 pet food
- Prime100 pet treats

Tickets are \$3 each or 3 for \$10. The prize will be drawn on Christmas Eve. All proceeds will directly assist those in need, ensuring that pets receive the critical care they deserve. Every contribution, no matter how small, can help save a life and provide comfort to both pets and their owners during difficult times!



# keeping pets safe

*this holiday season: essential tips*

As the Christmas season approaches, it's essential to ensure that our furry friends remain safe amidst the festivities.

Here are some crucial pet safety tips to help you ensure your pet remains safe and well during the holidays...

### decorations

Many holiday decorations can pose hazards to pets. Tinsel, ribbons, and ornaments appeal to pets, but can lead to choking or intestinal blockages if ingested. Opt for pet-safe decorations and keep fragile items out of reach. If you have a Christmas tree, secure it to the wall or ceiling to prevent it from tipping over and consider using pet-friendly ornaments. Also, be cautious with lights; ensure that cords are not accessible to pets, as chewing on electrical cords can result in serious injuries.



### food

The holiday season often involves an abundance of food, but many traditional holiday treats can be harmful to pets.

Foods such as chocolate, grapes, raisins, onions, and garlic are toxic to animals. Instead, provide your pets with a selection of their special treats that are safe for them. If you're hosting gatherings, remind guests not to feed your pets table scraps, as this can lead to digestive issues or more severe health problems.

### plants

Holiday plants such as poinsettias, mistletoe, and holly, can be toxic to pets. If you decorate with these plants, ensure they are placed out of reach or consider using artificial plants as a safer alternative.

### stress and the environment

The holiday season can be overwhelming for pets due to increased noise and activity. Create a quiet space where your pet can retreat if they feel stressed. Additionally, be mindful of open doors during gatherings – pets are curious and may escape from the noise at home only to get lost or injured during peak traffic times.

### travel safety

If you are taking your pet with you while you travel, ensure they are secured in a carrier or with a seatbelt harness. Bring along their bedding, food, water, and any necessary medications to maintain their routine.

Taking these precautions will ensure a safe and enjoyable holiday season for both you and your pets. Prioritising their wellbeing will help create a festive atmosphere that everyone can enjoy.





# 7 Holiday Foods That Are Dangerous for Pets

Not all holiday treats are safe for pets! Here are 7 foods to keep out of their reach, no matter how persuasive those big eyes may be! Here's some foods to keep your pet away from:

- 1. Onions** - Onions contain thiosulfate, which is toxic to cats and dogs, leading to anemia due to red blood cell damage. It doesn't matter if the onion is raw, cooked, fried, or powdered they are dangerous.
- 2. Fatty Turkey and Bones** - White turkey meat is generally safe in small amounts. However, dark meat and skin can lead to pancreatitis. Turkey bones can splinter, causing choking or damage to the digestive tract.
- 3. Cinnamon** - While cinnamon offers health benefits for humans, it can cause issues for pets, especially when ingested in large quantities or as an essential oil. It can lead to symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea, low blood sugar, and even heart problems.

**4. Garlic** - Similar to onions, garlic contains thiosulfate - but in even higher concentrations, making it more harmful to pets. Garlic can damage red blood cells and cause anemia.

**2. Nutmeg** - Nutmeg is a holiday spice that adds flavor to seasonal dishes, but it contains a compound called myristicin that can upset your pet's stomach.

**5. Chocolate** - Chocolate contains theobromine, a stimulant similar to caffeine, which is highly toxic to both cats and dogs.

**7. Foods with Xylitol** - This artificial sweetener, common in sugar-free foods, gum, and candy, can be fatal for pets. Xylitol can lead to dangerously low blood sugar levels, liver failure, and even death in dogs.

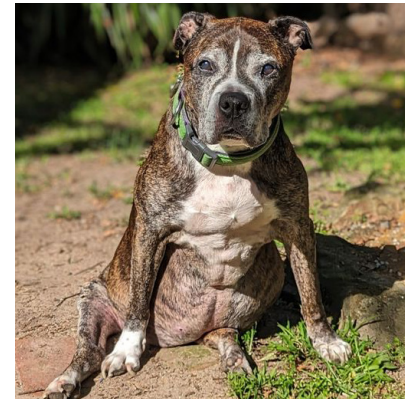
Keeping these foods away ensures a happy and healthy holiday season for your furry family members!



## afterpay

We now offer clients the option to pay using the Afterpay system. This means that payments can be spread over a 4-6 week timeframe. There are no fees when you pay on time and it is as simple as downloading the Afterpay App to get set up.

We all have those moments when the unexpected can blow our budgeting to pieces, such as a health issue with our beloved pets. Being able to use the Afterpay system can act as a short-term solution to enable us to get back to normal.



### When it comes to heroes, Barney must surely be near the top of the list!

He has faced some amazing health issues with dignity and resilience. From Lymphoma and three rounds of chemotherapy to severe muscle myositis which is a painful and debilitating condition. However, Barney made a full recovery with a lot of devoted care from us and his always supportive owner.

But it didn't stop there... he is a diabetic and suffers from multiple bulging discs in his spine, which tragically left him unable to walk for nearly twelve months. But did that stop this lovable pooch? Not a bit!

With the unwavering dedication of his devoted owner, Barney has conquered every challenge that's come his way. His owner's heroic commitment - pouring in time, care, and love - has been vital to Barney's journey. Their extraordinary bond is a testament to the power of the human-animal connection, making their story one of true hope and inspiration.



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