

RESCUE INC.

REBELS FOR THE PAWS

HOW NOT TO HURT OR KILL YOUR DOG, REALLY.

Let's keep your pup out of the ER and instead, set up for a lifetime of health and happiness. You will fall head over heels for your 4-pawed friend and we know you want them around for their full lifetime! In that spirit, there are many everyday hazards and food stuffs that could cause injury or death, and many that are seemingly benign. This is an instance where google is your friend. Not sure if your dog should eat raisins? GOOGLE IT. Dog bones from your family feast? GOOGLE IT. This could save you thousands at the ER and also could also save your dogs life.

Collars

Do you know that a collar could strangle your dog? Avoid these common dog collar dangers. Even the best looking collars have the potential to cause harm to your dog if not used wisely. Never use a traditional (belt buckle) type collar - only use a quick release buckle. Following are other additional best practices:

- **DON'T LEAVE COLLARS ON UNATTENDED DOGS.** Any collar left on an unattended dog has the potential to catch on something and hang / strangle the dog. In fact, some agility and hunting venues don't allow dogs to wear collars while they are running the course, or training, for fear that the collar will get caught. It is also possible for a dog to get their lower jaw caught in the collar when playing (expanded on below). While hanging potential is greatest with a choke collar or MARTINGALE COLLAR, it can also happen with regular flat collars too. We do leave flat collars on our dogs – the tradeoff is that if you remove collars, your dog has no visible

identification and may be harder to capture if they do somehow escape. You have to decide what hazard is a more likely threat to your dog's safety.

- **DON'T LEAVE COLLARS ON PLAYING DOGS.** Dogs who are playing together can get tangled in each other's collars, especially if they engage in mouthy play. We've witnessed this firsthand and it's not something we'd prefer to ever do again. The first was between two 20 pound dogs playing - the lower jaw of one got caught under the collar. The response of one pup pulling away while the other choked was desperate to watch. It took two people, a knife, and stitches (to one of the humans) to untangle the jaw and collar. The second was between two 45 pound dogs, belonging to neighbors, that were having their morning game of "wrestle" when a jaw was accidentally caught under the other's collar. It took FIVE adults, a knife, and for the "strangled" dog to finally lose consciousness, for us to cut the collar free. She lived, but dogs have broken their jaws, and others have choked to their death in this way. If you feel you must leave a collar on your dog when he's playing with other dogs - make sure it has a quick-release buckle, or better yet is a safety or breakaway collar, which will release under pressure.
- **WATCH OUT FOR TAGS ON COLLARS.** Dangling tags can catch on crate wires and heater vents. You can tape tags to the collar so they don't dangle, or look for a dog tag "pocket" that holds the collars flat against the collar. Slide-on ID tags are available from a variety of sources (again, Google is your friend!). Alternatively, you can use a collar with your number stitched on it, or use a light-weight ring for the tags that will bend and release under pressure.
- **NEVER CRATE YOUR DOG WITH A HARNESS OR COLLAR ON.** Period. This is an absolute hazard, Naked dogs only when crated!

Toxic Foods

There are so many toxic foods that will land your pup in the ER and some that will cause death. Be smart. Feed food and treats made for dogs or if you are feeding raw, or a version of, do your homework. Table scraps are no bueno. A fairly comprehensive list of toxins is [here](#).

A newer issue is Xylitol. Use Kongs stuffed with PEANUT BUTTER? Check your food label - with the awareness of increased sugar in human diets, Xylitol is being added to some of your favorite foods, including your favorite PB. This additive can cause death to canines. Sugarless gum is in that category too. Keep bags and purses out of reach.

Choking

We are rescue people so of course we recommend taking a dog CPR course! We understand that all may not have that same level of commitment. However, give this a [quick watch](#) which may encourage you to learn more (it has a happy ending, promise!). And here is [link](#) to show you what to do if your dog is choking. Online first aid for animal companions is available through the [Red Cross](#). Some of us on the Rescue Inc team have taken the course offered locally. You can too by searching for class offerings near you, [here](#).

Ingesting foreign objects

You need to dog proof / puppy proof your home just as you would for a toddler. From a pup's perspective - chewing is fun, amazing actually! Hours of entertainment can be had from chewing your favorite designer shoe, a rope toy, or the leg off of a cherished piece of period furniture. Sometimes fragments of what they are chewing can break off, and become OBSTRUCTIONS in the digestive track. Sometimes these obstructions cannot be passed and equate to 3- 6k in emergency surgery at the ER clinic on a

weekend night. This is inconvenient at best but with the potential to be devastating. Crate training keeps your pup safe from these hazards.

DO NOT FEED RAWHIDE, GREENIES. OR TREATS FROM CHINA

Again, Google is your friend here and giving these to your pup, along with many other dangerous chews, will cause intestinal blockages. SAFE TO CHEW - Kongs with Peanut Butter (frozen is awesome!), marrow bones that are not cooked, antlers or similar but for “power chewers” watch for pieces that could break off and never leave a dog chewing, unattended. NEVER FEED COOKED BONES!

Issues with treats that have ingredients sourced from China, isn't new. Here is a more recent update from the [FDA](#). Only feed treats when the ingredients and sources are clearly listed.

How not to lose your dog

If you think that losing a pup can't happen to you, take a scroll through [Missing Dog Massachusetts](#) and you may gain some new perspective. Dogs get lost everyday and some never come home. At Rescue Inc we are huge fans of GPS collars. The modest monthly fee for the service is priceless when compared to the permanent loss of your dog. WHISTLE is our #1 choice for GPS service and they are also generous - [for every purchase of a collar made through this link](#), they donate back to our rescue. It's a win win for everyone!

IF YOU LOSE YOUR DOG - your first phone call should be to your Police Department and then the Animal Control Officer. When somebody sees a loose dog, reports are most often reported there first. Post on your local town page on Facebook. If you are in Massachusetts, reach out to [Missing Dogs Massachusetts](#) through their website ASAP, and if in New Hampshire, contact [Granite State Dog Recovery](#). Both of these groups

are seasoned and have protocols that are proven to increase the chances of dog recovery.

Just like we are reminded to change the batteries in our smoke detectors when we change our clocks forward or back seasonally, this is also a great time to double check that your contact information on your pup's microchip is up to date. Your current address and phone will be critical if a vet's office, shelter, or municipality is trying to locate the owner of a found dog.

Essential Oil Diffusing

We like to smell good too but many essential oils are unknowingly toxic to dogs (and cats!). Here is a [link to safe oils](#) to use around your pup to keep you smelling fresh, safely.

Feeding Raw

The growing popularity of feeding raw has left some question about where to buy the meat. Since nearly half of supermarket chicken is tainted by feces, feeding your dog even "human grade" raw meat raises concern for transmitting potentially harmful bacteria to you and your dog. Some of the commonly-known pathogens that can be present in meat include Salmonella, E. coli, and Campylobacter. Other pathogens that may contaminate raw meat include Toxoplasma gondii (the parasite that causes toxoplasmosis), Cryptosporidium, Echinococcus, Clostridium, Neospora and Sarcocystis. The same applies to raw meat fed to pets.

If you feed raw, only purchase meat processed for raw consumption. Most specialty pet stores have a freezer with many safe options.

Insurance

Now that we've talked about all the things to avoid to keep your pup safe - let's talk about the back-up plan should the unexpected happen. Insurance. We love it. All of our adopted pups come with the option to purchase insurance within 30 days of adopting through a dedicated sign-up link. There are price structures, deductibles and coverage options.