

## Media Release

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DoveLewis



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## Keep Pets Healthy This Thanksgiving Weekend

Thanksgiving weekend is always a busy time for DoveLewis. Our medical staff treats approximately **20% more patients during the holiday weekend** than on an average November weekend. Animals often get sick because of distracted or careless pet owners. Most of the problems are gastrointestinal and can be prevented.

The most common hazard is **turkey bones**. They are hollow and easily splinter into sharp pieces. The splinters can lodge in your pet's throat or intestine or cause punctures to the intestinal tract and create blockages. They may stay lodged in your pet's body for days before there are symptoms. Signs of serious problems may include loss of appetite, depression, vomiting or diarrhea. Sometimes the bone will pass by itself. Other times, surgical removal is necessary.

### **Make sure to secure garbage cans with food scraps & bones inside!**

Sharing the rest of what's on the Thanksgiving table is not a good idea either. Although it may seem cruel to withhold **fatty meats, turkey carcasses, gravies, or baked goods** from your pets, feeding "people food" often results in problems ranging from mild gastrointestinal upset to severe pancreatitis and even potentially life-threatening obstructions. The fat, sugar and chocolate in baked goods can also pose serious problems.

Watch out for turkey that has been sitting out or parts that may be undercooked. It could be infected with **salmonella**, a bacterial organism that may be present in the turkey's intestinal tract. The cooking process usually destroys all the organisms, making the turkey safe to eat. If the meat sits out at room temperature for too long, the salmonella organisms can return, multiply and cause contamination. Pets may become ill if they eat any of the turkey that has been sitting out.

Adding a teaspoon of white turkey meat or broth to your pet's food should allow you to share the "Thanksgiving experience" with your pet.

DoveLewis is Portland's 24-Hour Emergency and ICU Animal Hospital, offering advanced veterinary care in a state-of-the-art facility in Northwest Portland and in Southeast Portland's Plaza 205. DoveLewis also shares several 100% donor-funded programs with the community including one of America's largest volunteer-based animal blood banks, an award-winning animal assisted therapy program, a nationally recognized pet loss support program offering five free group therapy sessions each month, 24-hour stabilizing care for lost pets, stray and wild animals and financial assistance for low income families and abused pets.