

# Holiday Small Pet Stress Relief

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The holidays are a happy time of the year, but present special challenges to owners of small pets. Being an instinctive creature of habit, your small pet might not cope well with the holiday season transformation in your household. The sights and sounds you enjoy might well disturb your pet. With attentive care, you can prevent or minimize the stress and remove potential hazards.

## Sources of stress

- Any change can result in stress for your small pet. Decorations. Trees and lights. Music. Foods. The distinctive sights, sounds, and smells of the holidays represent big changes, even if your small pet never leaves his cage. In addition, many of the decorations could be potentially harmful to your pet (see below).
- The increased activity in your household during the holidays could keep it illuminated up to 18 hours a day, disrupting your pet's schedule and sleep. Nocturnal animals may find it difficult to sleep with all the daytime activity.
- The coming and going of strangers and relatives can be very intimidating. Your small pet will react to their voices and body language, and may be emotionally charged when approached.
- Because you are busy shopping, entertaining, or traveling, time with your pet may be limited. Play, feeding, and maintenance routines might be disrupted. Your small pet might feel left out or even experience separation anxiety.

## Signs of stress

Small pets that are stressed may show a variety of signs including:

- Eating less, or not at all
- Changes in the character or quantity of droppings
- Unwillingness to come out of hiding
- Biting

## Holiday stress relievers

Follow these tips to make a difference in your pet's stress level.

- Maintain feeding and hygiene routines. A [treat](#) here and there should be just that. Do not make big changes in diet during the holidays.
- Provide your pet [toys](#) to pass the time and chew, especially if he is unable to exercise outside of his cage as much as usual.
- Limit your pet's exposure to strangers and activity. This may mean relocating his

cage, but this change may be less stressful than exposure to a roomful of loud party goers and interrupted sleep.

- If an accident does occur, be prepared. Make sure you have a first aid kit ready and veterinarian contact information where it is easy to find. Also, remain calm. Your pet can sense your emotions. If you react strongly, your pet will too.
- Spend quality time with your pet each day. This will provide reassurance, and also give you time to closely watch your pet for signs of stress.

**The following products may be helpful in alleviating some of your small pet's stress over the holidays!**

Silent Spinner

Oxbow Bungalow

Chewbular Play Tube