Keeping Your Home and Yard Safe for Your Pet

As smart pet owners, we are always on the lookout for things that can endanger our beloved animals. Before heading out the door for a walk, we grab our dogs’ leashes. When taking our cats for well visits with their veterinarian, we use pet carriers. Simple steps like these help to keep our pets safe. But what about the dangers that threaten our pets’ well-being when they are at home?

PET-PROOFING YOUR HOME
Having a pet is a lot like having a young child. Just as you need to childproof certain areas of your home for a toddler, you must protect your dog or cat from the things that he could chew or swallow inside your home. Much like human youngsters, pets tend to put everything in their mouths.

Household Objects
Small objects present choking hazards to pets, so keep tiny items like sewing materials, craft supplies, and game pieces put away. Some dogs and cats love to chew electrical cords; areas of particular concern are computer desks and entertainment centers, where multiple cords are present. Keep them out of your pet’s reach by investing in chew-proof sheaths or multi-cord enclosures.
Furniture is too big to put away, but you can prevent it from hurting your pet. Inspect the undersides of all your chairs, sofas, and tables for exposed nails, staples, or splinters, and make any necessary adjustments. You can prevent sharp corners from hurting your pet by attaching corner guards made for childproofing.

**Kitchen and Bathroom Cabinets**
Both cats and dogs can be surprisingly adept at opening cupboard doors and drawers. Once your pet gains access to these areas, he could consume anything he finds inside them, including:

- cleaning products
- food that is poisonous to pets, including chocolate and onions
- human medications, including acetaminophen, ibuprofen, and prescription drugs

Keep dangerous items in areas where your pet cannot reach them. When this isn’t possible, use childproof locking mechanisms on your cabinets. These simple attachments prevent pets from opening doors and drawers, but human family members will be able to bypass them easily.

**Take Out the Trash!**
Getting into garbage is one of the most dangerous things a pet can do. Expired medications, sharp objects, and spoiled food are just a few of the things that can be found inside household trash cans. Using receptacles with secure covers will help, but a crafty dog or cat can get around these barriers. The best approach is to transport hazardous trash directly to an outdoor garbage pail.

**Fleas and Ticks**
Parasites like fleas and ticks pose enormous risks to your pet’s health. Although these pests usually catch a ride on a pet outdoors, they make themselves right at home indoors remarkably quickly.

Fleas can infest your carpets, furniture, and pet bedding even before you notice your pet scratching from their bites. Not only do fleas cause external problems like skin infections, but when swallowed, they can also lead to internal issues such as tapeworms. Ticks are even more insidious. While feeding on your pet, these tiny arachnids can spread afflictions such as Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

Prevent fleas and ticks from taking up residence on your pet by administering a monthly dose of Adams™ Flea & Tick Spot On® for Dogs or Cats. If fleas or ticks have already accosted your pet, an Adams™ Flea & Tick shampoo can help, while Adams™ home sprays, carpet sprays, and carpet powders will rid your home of these creatures. (Check individual product labels for specific instructions.)

**DON’T FORGET YOUR YARD!**
One of the best things you can do for your pet is to give him time outdoors. Before heading to
your backyard, however, you must make sure that it too is a safe place for your four-legged companion.

**Pests**
Ticks often wait in tall grasses before attaching themselves to dogs and cats. Regular mowing can help lessen your tick population, but pests can lurk in short grass and on shrubbery as well. If your pet has already experienced a flea or tick infestation, it is essential that you treat both him and his environment. Adams™ Yard Spray kills fleas, ticks, and fire ants; Adams Plus™ Yard Spray kills mosquitoes, silverfish, spiders, and many other pests as well.

**Fencing**
If you have a fenced yard, be sure that the structure is secure. A single breach could allow your dog to escape the safety of your property. Regular maintenance checks can help prevent this from happening. It is also important to keep an eye on your pet when he spends time outdoors—certain dog breeds are notorious for climbing over or digging under fences!

**Identification, Please**
No matter which type of fence you use, make sure that your pet always has some form of identification in case he does get beyond its borders. A tag including your name and contact information is a smart step, but it is wise to microchip your pet as well. This simple device, which is about the size of a grain of rice, can be implanted under your pet’s skin in a procedure as simple as a vaccination. Veterinarians and animal shelters around the country are equipped with handheld scanners that can read microchips to effectively identify lost or stolen animals.

**Landscaping**
Before planning flower gardens or other landscaping projects, make sure that all the plants you choose are safe for your pet. Ask your veterinarian for a list of the most toxic plant species. Also, beware of lawn care chemicals, fertilizers, and even certain types of mulch. Cocoa mulch, for example, contains theobromine—the compound that makes chocolate toxic to cats and dogs. Finally, remember that trees and shrubs also provide sanctuary for pests, but Adams™ Plus Yard Spray will help rid your landscaping of numerous insects and arachnids.