

grill master, avoid disaster!

Oh baby, it's happening. Summer parties. Soft and breezy backyards, porches, and beaches. You and your friends, together again. It's fire-up-the-grill time, but when you're cooking outside, you gotta keep things safe for the pets you love.

What's cooking?

Plant-based food is trending way up, but we know people are still cooking meat, too. If that's you, and you've got a dog, they're going to be VERY interested. Meat gets those noses going and tongues wagging.

But even if you're grilling veggie burgers, the grill and its odors can be irresistible to pets. And if they get too close, they could get burned or knock the grill over, which can lead to a fire. Bad, bad, bad. So you've got to watch for danger, keep your pooch on a leash and at a safe distance, and generally just be a responsible grill master.

- **Burgers and (hot) dogs.** What happens when your BFF catches a whiff of these party faves? It's crazy time, right? And then your cousin slips a dog to your dog ("just one, c'mon, he wants it so bad"). OK, cuz, but did you know that [obesity can increase a dog's risk for certain diseases](#) like diabetes and can also worsen arthritis? And just one beef hot dog can account for 13 percent of the recommended daily caloric intake for a 50-pound dog (even more if you've got a smaller pooch). So keep it in the bun, bro.

Hot dogs and hamburgers can also cause intestinal upset in pets. People-food, especially the food we eat at barbeques, can lead to severe vomiting and diarrhea as well as pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), causing severe disease and even death. And if any of your picnic foods are undercooked or raw, you're risking Salmonella or E. coli infection for dogs and people.

- **Rib tips.** If your dog gets a hold of a BBQ rib, they can injure their mouth or throat. In addition to the same problems caused by burgers and dogs, bones can also cause damage to the throat, intestines, or even result in a blockage, which can require surgery to correct. In some cases, it can even be fatal. Sorry, no ribs for you, doggo. Not even a lick.
- **Drip tips.** Make sure you use a drip pan for your grill or smoker. If the meat juices reach the ground, pets might (and probably will) lick or eat the drippings, which can lead to burns or injuries to

the mouth. Vomiting, diarrhea and pancreatitis can follow. Pets will most likely eat anything that is covered with the drippings, including rocks or sticks, which can also cause intestinal injury or an obstruction.

We waited a long time for this summer. So have fun, be safe, and when you're finished, pack away the garbage so your pets can't get into any trouble after the party, either.



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