



ORANGE VILLA
VETERINARY HOSPITAL
BOARDING & GROOMING
714 - 637 - 3660

Dr. Richard E. Dahlem :
drdahlem@orangevillavet.com
Dr. Jeffrey Horn :
drhorn@orangevillavet.com
Dr. Sage:
drsage@orangevillavet.com

This article and many others can be found at:
www.orangevillavet.com

Tinsel: a holiday nightmare

How many of us have watched our cats play with string, tinsel, or ropes. They can have a lot of fun with these objects as toys, but these objects can be deadly if swallowed. While both dogs and cats can get a serious, life-threatening intestinal obstruction from tinsel and other string-like objects, cats are notorious for doing this. What happens is they swallow a small piece and/or it wraps around their tongue. They then continue to swallow more in an attempt to clear the object. The tinsel then gets caught up in the intestinal tract. The intestines are quite long and a long straight object cannot pass, especially if one end is hooked around the teeth or the tongue. With time, the tinsel would start cutting through the intestines, causing bowel perforation, peritonitis, and death. This condition, called a linear foreign body, require immediate surgical intervention to remove the object. Early signs of obstruction are vomiting, anorexia, abdominal pain, and lethargy. The best thing is to keep tinsel and other string-like objects out of reach and to never let your pet play with them unattended. If your pet swallows one, please get veterinary attention immediately. Ribbons can cause the same problems as the tinsel.