

Travelling with Your Pet



It seems a nice idea to take your pet on holiday with you - after all, you consider them part of the family. But it is really important to consider carefully the health and welfare implications of travelling abroad with your pet.



Tick and tapeworm controls

- Ticks carry a range of diseases which can affect humans or animals. Some of these diseases currently occur in the UK (such as Lyme disease), but others are carried by ticks which are more common in other parts of the world, including Central and Southern Europe. In order to protect yourself and your pet, it is important that you discuss appropriate tick prevention measures with your vet.
- Tapeworms are common in animals in the UK but there is a particular tapeworm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*) which is not found here. Although this tapeworm may not cause illness in your dog, it can cause serious illness in people. It is important that you discuss with your vet how you can prevent tapeworms in your dog when travelling abroad.

Rabies and vaccination

The UK is currently free from rabies, but rabies is still present in much of Europe and the rest of the world. Rabies is a disease that affects humans and animals, and which proves fatal in all who develop the disease. However, it can be prevented through vaccination. It is essential therefore to have your pet vaccinated against rabies before travelling abroad. Please discuss this with your vet to make sure that you allow enough time for this before travelling.

Always think about your pet's welfare

It's important to think about how your pet will be travelling and whether the transport, the time taken, and the confinement during travel will be stressful for your pet. Remember also to consider the accommodation that will be available for your pet while you are abroad.

Visit your vet for up-to-date advice

There are regulations which need to be followed if you plan to travel with your pet outside the UK. Your vet will be happy to discuss with you the steps you need to take to comply with the regulations, and to keep your pet healthy and happy. Please make sure to allow plenty of time, and seek advice well before you plan to travel.

Exotic diseases

When travelling abroad, we tend to think about rabies as the only risk. But your pet may also be at risk from a number of diseases which don't normally occur in the UK. Your vet will be able to advise you on how to minimise the risk for your pet, and what signs to look for.

- Leishmaniasis is an infectious disease transmitted by sandflies. This occurs commonly throughout the tropics and in Mediterranean coastal areas.
- Heartworm is a disease transmitted by certain mosquitoes, and has a world-wide distribution including Southern Europe.
- Babesiosis, Ehrlichiosis and Hepatozoonosis are all transmitted by ticks. These diseases are all common in warmer climates, including Southern Europe.

Leave your pet at home

If you are not sure it is in their best interests to travel then you might want to consider alternative arrangements for your pet whilst you are away. Your vet will always be happy to discuss any concerns you may have.

