

Pets Column *with PDSA*

Happy, safe holidays for pets

Stay at home pets - Dogs
 Although a dog will always be the first into the car when it looks as if something exciting is going on, it may not be possible to take your dog on holiday with you. Many owners are fortunate to have dog-loving family and friends who know how to look after their dog and are prepared to do so. Alternatively, professional pet sitters can move into your home to take care of them.

A stay in kennels is another option. It is essential to check kennels before booking to make sure they are licensed, clean and that the dogs are well cared for. Your dog will need up-to-date vaccinations to stay in kennels and your dog's vaccination record will be checked. Any dietary considerations or medical problems and treatment should be discussed with the kennel staff before you make the booking.

Ask about exercise and feeding routines and bring some familiar

bedding, toys and food with you, to help your dog settle in.

Contact details

Leave contact details of your vet with the person looking after your pet and how they can get in touch with you while you're away. You'll also need to leave a letter that gives permission for the carer to take your pet to the vet and to authorise any treatment.

Cats

You may decide to ask trusted family members or friends to pop in and care for your cat overnight. For longer breaks it is best to use the security of pet sitters or a licensed cattery.

The best catteries fill up quickly, especially during the school holidays, so early booking is essential. Your cat won't be accepted into a reputable cattery unless it has up-to-date vaccinations and you'll be asked to show your cat's current vaccination record.

Visit the cattery yourself before booking to make sure you're happy with it. Look for bright clean surroundings, warm sleeping quarters and adequate exercise areas. Staff should be happy to answer your questions as well as being friendly and knowledgeable.

Ask whether you can bring along a favourite toy or familiar blanket to keep your cat company and also what diet your cat will be fed. Make sure the cattery knows about your cat's dietary needs and preferences, as well as any medical considerations.

PetCasts

Check out PDSA's PetCasts on www.pdsa.org.uk - video clips of PDSA vets advising how to prepare your pet for holidays at home, including what to look for when choosing kennels or a cattery.

Small furies

Many owners of small furies, such as hamsters, guinea pigs, gerbils, mice and rabbits, ask a friend or neighbour to look after their pet during the holidays. Write down your pet's usual routine and food requirements, because these can be difficult for someone else to remember.

Make sure the carer has met your pet and will spend time grooming, playing and generally fussing over them! You can leave a list of your pet's likes and dislikes, too.

Sitting pretty

Find a pet sitter through The National Association of Registered Pet sitters on 0870 3500 543 or visit www.dogsit.com

Pets on holiday

Many people wouldn't dream of going on holiday without their dogs. But there are a few things you need to consider before you set off.

Unfamiliar surroundings

Remember that your pet is on unfamiliar territory, and may easily become lost or disoriented. It is always best to keep a dog on a lead until you

have both become familiar with the area.

Also, ensure that your dog has an identification tag and is microchipped. Fewer than half (around 47 per cent) of all lost dogs are reunited with their owners, since only a third of dogs carry the legally required identification tag and only ten per cent are microchipped.

Hidden hazards

Wherever you are, always check for hazards that could injure your pet, including barbed wire, broken glass, poisonous plants, chemicals, busy roads or unfenced cliffs.

Accommodation

Many hotels and campsites will accept dogs, but you must check this first, and book early. They may charge extra if your dog comes with you. Some coach, rail, ferry and air travel companies will also accept dogs but require that you make special arrangements to transport them. It pays to find out about these details well in advance.

For a guide to pet friendly holidays in the UK, try the internet or order a copy of *Pets Welcome* (World Leisure Marketing) from your bookshop.

Beach safety

A trip to the seaside can be full of hidden hazards for your pet. Every year the papers cover stories of dogs accidentally falling over cliffs or getting swept out to sea. They can also cut their paws on broken glass, or injure themselves by fetching sticks rather than frisbees or suitably-sized balls.

Often dogs may only be allowed to walk on the beach outside the holiday season, and even then, only on a lead.

Sun risk

To avoid sunburn and a type of cancer, protect the nose, ear

tips and any white or hairless areas with pet sunblock.

Sunburn

Like humans, pets need protection from intense sunshine. Protect the nose, ear tips and any white or hairless parts of cats or dogs with high factor pet sunblock.

Try not to exercise pets during the hottest hours of the day but instead early in the morning or in the evening. Encourage pets to seek shade and never leave a dog tied up in the sun.

Check water supplies frequently and discard any uneaten food, replenishing it with fresh supplies as required.

Bon voyage

If you are planning to take your pet overseas, this requires a great deal of planning, preparation and paperwork. It is a good idea to contact the Pet Travel Scheme Helpline on 0870 241 1710. There are free fact sheets available from www.defra.gov.uk and you currently need to contact your vet about seven months before you travel to ensure there is plenty of time for the relevant procedures to be completed.

Don't assume that your pet insurance covers accidents and illness overseas. Most pet insurance policies only cover pets while they are in the UK. Check your policy before you go!

Pets on the road

For most dogs, going on holiday means a car journey. This requires careful planning to ensure that your canine companion is safe and happy.

Safety in the car

PDSA recommends using car safety harnesses for medium-sized and large dogs, and pet carriers for small dogs. The harness fits around the dog's chest, back and shoulders, and is then attached to one of the

rear safety belts. You can find out from the car manufacturer whether the belts are suitable for holding a harness. Make sure you put your dog on his lead before you open the car doors and that he gets in and out on the pavement side.

To prevent eye injuries from stones and insects, don't let your dog put its head out of the window.

The journey

It is very important to carry plenty of drinking water and a bowl for your pet, even on short journeys. Build in frequent comfort stops, again making sure your dog is on his lead. Avoid feeding your pet just before the journey.

Travelling with pets

Should you need to transport your cat or small furry to and from a friend's house, the cattery or the vet, always use a secure pet carrier. It should be either wedged into the footwell and adequately ventilated or held safely with a seat belt. Never have a pet loose in the car, and only use a cardboard cat carrier in an emergency.

Never leave a dog alone in the car ... not even for a short time with the windows open.

Make holidays happy for pets - Car training for dogs

Early training is helpful to accustom your dog to the inside of a car, but older dogs can also be 'travel trained'.

Let the dog or puppy explore the car's interior in a safe environment without turning on the engine. When your dog feels comfortable, take him on a short journey, held securely in a dog seat belt. Use a pet carrier if he is too small for a safety harness.

Reward your dog at the end of this short trip with a game or savoury treat so that he associates car travel with fun. Gradually lengthen the journeys.

NOTICE

Take Notice That
 Anne Glover, Alison Robertson and Adele Alexandra Ferns
as Personal Representatives and next of kin of
 Sarah Glover Deceased
intend to make application to the Recorders Court for the Division of Belfast for an Order vesting the property at
 25 Glenwood Street, Belfast
 in them as Persons entitled.
Would any person having Title Deeds for the said property please contact Fisher & Fisher Solicitors, 165 Sandy Row, Belfast, BT12 5ET.
 In the event that no such claim in respect of said property at 25 Glenwood Street, Belfast is received within twenty-one days from the date of this advertisement Take Notice that the above named Anne Glover, Alison Robertson and Adele Alexandra Ferns intend to proceed to make application for the Order referred to.

NOTICE

Queen's University Belfast **University of ULSTER**

SUICIDE AND YOUNG MEN IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Queens University of Belfast and the University of Ulster are conducting research into the experiences of young men and suicide in Northern Ireland. The geographical areas that this stage of the study will focus on are North and West Belfast. If you are male, aged between 16 and 34 years, have thought about or acted with the intention of killing yourself and live in North or West Belfast, we would like to hear from you.

Being involved in the research will mean talking to us during an interview about your views and experiences on:

- things that have happened in your life that have influenced your thoughts about suicide
- the types of help and support that you have used when you have been feeling suicidal.

The interview will take place at a time and a place that suits you. The researcher and you will agree all the arrangements before the interview.

Taking part in this study means that you will:

- have the opportunity to have your voice heard about an important issue affecting many people in Northern Ireland today
- get information about local support services and groups which you may choose to use now or in the future
- help to improve services for people who are suicidal.

If you take part in the study, you will be offered counselling free of charge with a qualified and accredited counsellor (British and Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy).

Anything that you tell us will be confidential, meaning that your name will never be known to anyone outside of the study.

If you have any questions about this study or would like to take part please contact Iain on 07894 646690 or email us at menssuicidestudy@ulster.ac.uk

HSC Public Health Agency **r&d office**

VACANCY

ATTENTION STUDENTS!!!

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Financial help is available for students on full-time & part-time Further Education Courses.

Apply now before it's too late!!

Closing date for F/T courses **30 JUNE 2009** Closing date for P/T courses **30 SEP 2009**

Application forms and more detailed information can be obtained by:

1. Logging onto the website www.welbni.org, click on Students and Young People and select Student Financeneni - Further Education.
2. E-mailing feawards@welbni.org
3. Applying in writing to the following address:
Student Finance NI, Further Education Awards Section, 1 Hospital Road, Omagh, Co. Tyrone, BT79 0AW
4. Contact Student Finance on: (028) 8225 4546

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