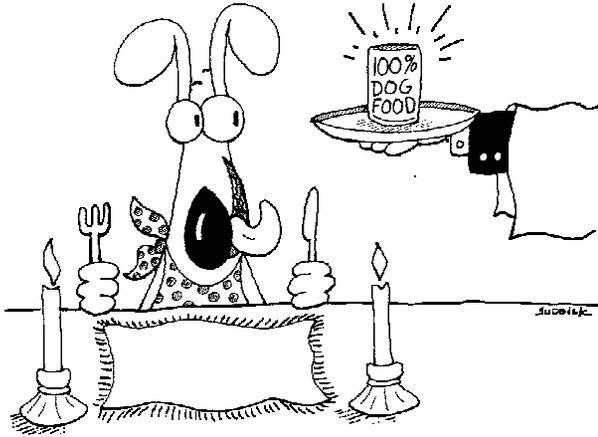


General Health Tips for Your Pet.



No Table Scraps !

Resist the urge to clear the dinner plate into your pet's food dish. The meal you cooked may be nutritionally sound for you and your family, but not for your family pet. They don't need a variety of foods to maintain good health. In fact, feeding pets different foods usually leads to a stomachache. In fact, some foods, like chocolate, can actually be fatal. Or foods that we think pets need—like cats needing milk—can cause upset stomachs. Bones, too, are very dangerous as they can lodge in passageways or cut the intestines.

So provide your pets with a consistent diet of name-brand pet food, and keep some dog biscuits or cat treats on hand for when you want to reward them with a special morsel.

PERFECT NAILS

Just like us, pets need regular nail trims. This grooming ritual also helps you, your floors, and furniture from being unintentionally scratched and your clothes from being snagged. In dogs, long nails can even become painful and interfere with their ability to walk.

Cutting nails is easier than it sounds. Since cats have retractable nails, you'll need to gently squeeze the toe to push the nail out. Using pet nail clippers (available from any pet supply store), snip off the tip of the nail. Be careful not to clip the pinkish part, called the quick, which is a blood vessel and very sensitive (This is not visible in black nails!).

Before you even cut the first nail, however, you'll need to get your pets used to being held and having their paws handled. Begin by speaking softly as you massage each paw, gently separating the toes. Your pets may instinctively pull away. Repeat whatever it was they did not like, but do it more slowly and gently until they begin to accept it. When you think they're ready, cut one or two nails.

When they're accustomed to the snipping and sound, they'll begin to relax, and nail clipping will become just another routine to them—especially if they get a special treat or playtime afterwards. But if you're uncomfortable with this procedure, let your veterinarian show you how, especially on animals with black nails, as you can't see the quick.

Keeping Track Of Your Pet

Whether lost or stolen, losing a pet is an agonizing experience. Yet most people fail to put any kind of identification on their pets to ensure their safe return home. In fact, only about 16% of lost dogs

and 2% of lost cats at shelters are ever reunited with their owners.

An ID tag on your pet's collar is essential, since anyone can use it to get your pet home. The tag should include your name, address, phone number (day and evening is best), and the pet's name. If you're willing to pay a reward, then put the word reward on the tag too. Put the number (day and night) of a friend on another tag if you're traveling.

Tattooing is a permanent ID system that involves marking pertinent information on the skin of the pet. The finder must call a database and use the code tattooed on your pet to get your current address and phone number. This is invaluable ID should your pet be stolen for research, since laboratories will instantly know the animal is not abandoned, but a beloved pet.

Implanting a microchip—a tiny electronic capsule—into the pet enables anyone with a scanner (like many animal care and control agencies, veterinary clinics, and research labs) to quickly identify a code which, when the database is called, will identify you as the owner. However, both tattooing and microchipping only work if you keep the information stored at the database current.

In addition to ID methods on your pets, keep clear photos of them handy, along with a written description of their appearance. This will aid you and others in searching for your lost friend.



Puppy or Kitten Proofing Your House

If anything is in reach, your puppy will sniff, chew, and probably play with it. So to protect your puppy in her new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, puppy-proof your house.

As for kittens, well, they are naturally curious. They are capable of leaping onto high surfaces or squeezing into the smallest of spaces. To protect your kitten in his new environment, and to safeguard your belongings, kitten-proof your house.

To protect the new addition to the family follow these guidelines:

Kitchens and bathrooms

Use childproof latches to keep curious muzzles from prying open cabinets · Keep medications, cleaners, chemicals, and laundry supplies on high shelves · keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn't harmful, the wrapper could be. And some foods, like chocolate, can be fatal to dogs) · Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet · Keep toilet lids closed to prevent drowning

Living/family room

Place dangling wires from lamps, VCRs, stereos, TVs, and phones up and out of chewing reach · Keep kids' toys put away · Move plants out of reach (some houseplants are poisonous to animals) · Check all those places where your vacuum cleaner doesn't fit, but your puppy does, for dangerous items, like coins and pens · Put away all sewing and craft notions, especially needles and thread · Make sure all heating/air vents have a cover

Garage

Move all chemicals to high shelves or behind secure doors · Clean up all antifreeze from the floor and driveway—one lick of most antifreezes can be lethal to a puppy · Keep fishhooks and other sharp objects and tools out of reach

Bedrooms

Keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors (drawstrings and buttons can cause major problems) · Keep any medications, lotions, or cosmetics off accessible surfaces (like the bedside table which can be reached by jumping on the bed) · Move wires out of reach of chewing

And look out for paws, noses, and tails when you shut doors behind you or scoot chairs.

Moving to a new home can be just as stressful on your pet as it is on you. So help your pet through this change of address by:

Knowing beforehand if your pets will need medication for nervousness or car sickness.

Keeping your pet away from all of the moving-day activity by confining her to a room, your car, or her crate. It's hard to pack, move furniture, and keep an eye on your pet who, if frightened, could bolt out the door unnoticed.

Moving small animals—like birds, hamsters and lizards—in their covered (with a lightweight fabric, like a sheet) cages, but remove the water, food, and any other objects that might fly around and hurt them. And remember that these animals need the temperature to remain constant in order to survive.

Unpacking and settling in a bit at your new home before turning your pets loose in the house. Set out their food and water bowls, bedding, and other toys.

Orienting your pets to their new surroundings. Walk your dog around the house, yard, and block. Sit quietly for few moments and pet your cat. Don't be surprised if your cat hides for a few days until the noises and smells become familiar.

Simply be patient and reassuring with your pets, and they'll adjust quickly to their new home.

When the temperature soars, follow these tips to keep your pet happy & safe!

Dogs and cats can suffer from the same problems that humans do in hot weather. These health concerns include overheating, dehydration and even sunburn. By taking some simple precautions, you can keep your animal companions healthy and happy in higher temperatures.

Your pet may slow down when the weather heats up, so the best time for exercise is in the early morning or evening, but never when it's especially hot or humid. Take care not to let your dog stand on hot asphalt-his body can heat up quickly and his sensitive paw pads can easily burn. Owners of canines with heavy coats can help prevent them from overheating by cutting the hair to a one-inch length. Never trim your pet's coat to the skin, which can rob your dog of his protection from the sun. Always provide plenty of shade and cool, clean water for animals kept outdoors. A properly constructed doghouse is a must if your dog lives outdoors. Bring your cat or dog inside during the hottest part of the day. Let him rest in a cool part of the house, but first make sure there are no unscreened windows or open doors in your home through which dogs and cats can fall or escape.

When traveling with your pet during hot weather, make it a habit to carry a gallon-size thermos of water. Never leave your animal alone in a vehicle. Overheating can be fatal. Even with the windows open, a parked automobile can quickly become a furnace. And summer's the time when gardens, lawns and trees are sprayed with insecticides, so avoid walking your dog in suspect areas. Some animals will need

extra special care in hot weather, especially those who are old and overweight or have heart or lung disease. Certain breeds of dogs, including pugs, bulldogs, Boston terriers, Lhasa apsos and shih tzus, also need extra attention on hot days. If your pet is showing signs of heat stroke or exhaustion, take him to the veterinarian immediately.

Follow these guidelines to protect your companion animal when the temperature drops.

Keep your cat inside. Outdoors, cats can freeze, become lost or stolen, or be injured or killed. Cats who are allowed to stray are exposed to fatal infectious diseases, including rabies. During the winter, outdoor cats sometimes choose to sleep under the hoods of cars, where it is warmer. Then, when the motor is started, the cat can be injured or killed in the fan belt. To prevent this, bang loudly on the hood of your car and wait a few seconds before starting the engine, to give a cat a chance to escape.

Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm. Dogs frequently lose their scent in snow and ice and easily become lost. They may panic in a snowstorm and run away. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season. Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when he/she comes in out of the rain, snow or ice. Check their sensitive paw pads, which may bleed from snow or ice encrusted in them. Also, salt, antifreeze or other chemicals could hurt your dog if they ingest them while licking their paws.

If you own a short-haired breed, consider getting a warm coat or sweater for your dog. Look for one with a high collar or turtleneck that covers your dog from the base of her tail on top and to the belly

underneath. While this may seem like a luxury, it is a necessity for many dogs.

Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold. Your companion animal could freeze to death. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only long enough to relieve himself. Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as adult dogs and may be difficult to housebreak during the winter. If necessary, paper train your puppy inside if he appears to be sensitive to the weather.

If your dog spends a lot of time engaged in outdoor activities, increase his supply of food, particularly protein, to keep his fur thick and healthy.

Antifreeze, even in very tiny doses, is a lethal poison for dogs and cats. Because of its sweet taste, animals are attracted to it. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle. To prevent accidental poisonings, more and more people are using animal-friendly products that contain propylene glycol rather than the traditional products containing ethylene glycol. Call your veterinarian if you suspect your animal has been poisoned.

Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter. Leave the coat in a longer style, which provides more warmth. Remember that such a style will require more frequent brushing due to dry winter air and static electricity. When you bathe your dog, make sure he/she is completely dry before you take them out for a walk.

Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep far away from all drafts and off the floor, such as in a dog or cat bed or basket with a warm blanket or pillow in it.