

TRAVELLING WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND

Before considering traveling with your favorite four-legged person, think about your pet's general health. If the journey requires long distance travel or flying, think about how stressful travel is to you. A pet with health problems; without exception should be examined by a veterinarian for a full professional physical and possible laboratory tests. After consultation and evaluation, an educated opinion can be made that will be in the best interest of your family friend. Ask your veterinarian how to monitor your pet's normal vital signs and reactions so you can periodically check for changes that might indicate developing problem. If possible ask for a recommendation for a veterinarian in the locality of the area you will be visiting. Ask for a copy of your pet's medical records, vaccination and health certificate. You might also request an idea of what might be important to pack for a pet first aid kit. Leave enough time prior to departure to get all necessary documentation; and begin routine periodic medications such as heartworm and flea preventatives etc. Remember to also get refills of medications if your pet is being treated for a chronic medical condition and you may also need motion sickness medications.

The safest way to travel with your pet is by car. You will lessen your pet's exposure to temperature extremes and stress, and prevent stiffness of joints by periodic stretching of the limbs. Your companionship will also prevent separation anxiety and your pet will also help relieve your own travel related stress.

The biggest problems with car travel are restraint and overheating. Never leave your pet loose without restraint. Even at minimal speeds, an accident could seriously hurt your pet. In a high-speed collision your pet can become a lethal object to you during the momentum of an accident. At the very least, a loose pet underfoot is a great nuisance and can cause an accident. Both you and your pet should buckle up! Restraint is best with an appropriately sized pet carrier. Do not leave any pet unattended in a car, even if it is in the shade. Increasing indoor automobile temperatures can cause heat stroke and possible death much faster than people assume. A damp towel over the carrier will help maintain bearable temperatures. Do not let your pet travel with their heads outside of a car window. It is dangerous and can cause eye problems as a result of airborne debris.