

- Cats should be confined to a cage or in a cat carrier to allow them to feel secure, prevent them from crawling under the driver's feet, and prevent escape from the car while driving or during stops.
- Providing a familiar toy or blanket can help make your pet more comfortable in the carrier.
- Regardless of the length of the trip, pets should not be left unattended in a car.
- On long trips, feed your pet small portions of food and water and plan to stop every two hours for exercise and relief.

### TRAVELING BY BUS OR TRAIN

Most states prohibit animals from riding on buses and similar regulations restrict travel on trains. Exceptions are made for service animals accompanying their person in need. Consult your local carriers for current information.

### TRAVELING BY AIR

- Reconfirm your flight arrangements the day before you leave to ensure there have been no unexpected flight changes.
- Certain breeds, such as brachycephalic (short-nosed) dogs and cats, may have difficulty with air travel; use caution when transporting these pets by air.
- It is recommended that you not give tranquilizers to your pet when traveling by air because the medication can increase the risk of heart or respiratory problems. Your veterinarian may determine that tranquilization is recommended for individual pets, but this should be based on a careful assessment of the risks and benefits.

**Defective kennels are the most common cause of escaped or injured animals during air travel.**

- Consult your veterinarian about when you should feed your pet prior to, during, and following air travel.
- Arrive at the airport early, exercise your pet, personally place him/her in the travel crate, and make sure it's securely closed.
- When boarding the plane, let the flight attendant know that your pet is also on the plane. If your pet will be traveling with you in the cabin, arrange to check-in as late as possible to reduce the amount of time your pet will have to spend in the busy terminal.
- Pick up your pet promptly at your destination.
- If you are traveling internationally or to Hawaii, consult your veterinarian and/or your state's USDA Veterinary Services District Offices or the destination country's embassy or consulate about additional travel restrictions or quarantine requirements.

### TRANSPORT CRATES USED WHEN FLYING PETS MUST:

- Be large enough to allow the animal to stand (without touching the top of the cage), sit erect, turn around, and lie down in a natural position.
- Latch securely.
- Be strong and free of interior protrusions, with handle or grips.
- Have a solid, leak-proof bottom covered with plenty of absorbent material.
- Be appropriately and clearly labeled. Include your name, home address, home phone number, and destination contact information, as well as a designation of "Live Animals," with arrows indicating the crate's upright position. In addition, carry your pet's photo and health information with you on the plane for easy identification in the event the cage label is lost.
- Be adequately ventilated so that airflow is not impeded.

**For more information, visit:**

[www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)



[www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org) | 800.248.2862

# TRAVELING WITH YOUR PET

*Brought to you by your veterinarian and the American Veterinary Medical Association*



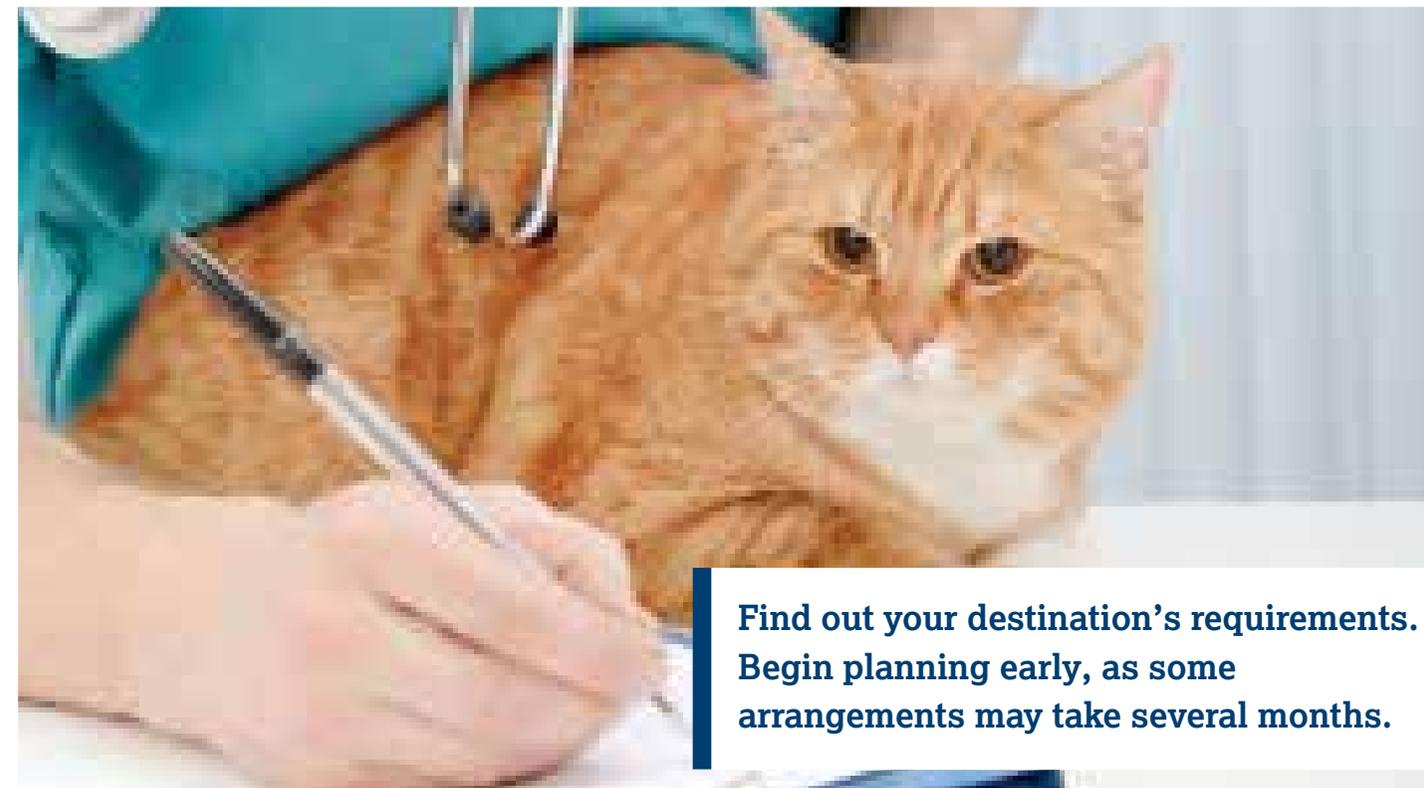
# PLANNING AND PREPARATION ARE IMPORTANT WHEN TRAVELING WITH FAMILY PETS.

## PLANNING YOUR TRAVEL

- Should you take your pet? Some pets should not travel due to illness, injury or temperament. If this is the case, look into options such as hiring a reliable pet sitter or housing your pet in a clean, well-managed boarding facility.
  - Take time to accustom your pet to the crate in which it will be traveling as well as any harnesses or other restraints designed to keep your pet safe during travel.
  - Accustom your pet to car travel prior to taking any long car trips.
  - Schedule a veterinary exam to have your pet's health assessed and to make sure your pet is healthy enough for travel.
    - Ask your veterinarian about flea, tick, and heartworm prevention and make sure your pet is vaccinated against rabies. Also discuss what other vaccines may be important for areas you will be visiting.
    - If you are traveling to another state or another country, or if you are flying with your pet, you will need a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (health certificate) issued within 10 days of travel.
    - Certain countries or states (e.g., Hawaii) may also require microchip identification and additional testing, such as a rabies vaccine titer.
  - If you will be staying with friends or family along the way, be considerate and ask them in advance if your pet is welcome.
  - If you plan to stay in a hotel, motel, park or campground, find out if pets are welcome; if there are breed or size restrictions; if any paperwork is required; and what facilities are available to meet your pet's needs.
- If you are flying with your pet, make sure you're aware of the carrier's requirements when you book the flight.
    - Federal regulations require that pets be at least 8 weeks old and weaned at least 5 days before flying.
    - The airlines occasionally update their pet travel regulations regarding restrictions on breeds and size, weather conditions and time of year, and charges for checked kennels.
    - Book a nonstop flight and avoid plane changes and busy holidays.
    - During warm weather months, choose early morning or late evening flights, when the temperatures are generally not as hot. In colder months, choose midday flights, when the temperatures are generally warmer.
  - Consider having your pet bathed or groomed, including nail trimming, prior to your trip.

## PACKING FOR TRAVEL

- Proof of vaccination (esp. rabies) and copies of relevant medical records
- Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI) if crossing state or international borders
- Identification – collar, tag, microchip number / registration documentation
  - If possible, include a travel tag with information on where you are staying while away from home
  - Recent photograph of pet for identification purposes
- Leash
- Portable kennel
- Bowls
- Enough food for the duration of the trip



**Find out your destination's requirements. Begin planning early, as some arrangements may take several months.**

- Water, in case there is none available at a stop
- All medications that your pet will need during the trip. Do not expect to be able to get refills while on your trip.
- First aid kit
- Emergency information: phone numbers of your veterinarian, a national poison control hotline, and a 24-hour emergency veterinary hospital at your destination

## DURING THE TRIP

- If your pet must be left alone in a hotel room, place a "Do Not Disturb" sign on the door and inform the maid and the front desk.
- Perform a daily health check on your pet when away from home.
- In unfamiliar surroundings, your pet's appetite, energy, and disposition may change.
- Visit a local veterinarian if you are concerned about any physical or behavioral changes.

- During the trip, maintain your regular feeding and relief routines as much as possible.

## TRAVELING BY CAR

- If your dog has a problem with carsickness, let your veterinarian know. Depending on your pet's health, your veterinarian may prescribe medication that will help him/her feel more comfortable during long trips.
- Safely restrain dogs. Dogs riding in a car should not ride in the passenger seat if the car is equipped with an airbag, and should never be allowed to sit on the driver's lap. Harnesses, tethers, and other accessories to secure pets during car travel are available at most pet stores.
- Don't let your pet ride with his/her head outside the car window; airborne dirt or other debris can injure your pet's eyes, ears, nose or mouth.