

the goals of treatment are to increase the dog's ability to move around, to limit the progression of the disease, and even to help repair the tissue within the affected joints. Some or all of these goals might be achieved by weight control, moderate exercise, extra bedding or padding, and added warmth during cold or damp weather. Excessive exercise should be avoided because it causes further strain on the joints. Treatment with certain protec-

tive agents, such as chondroitin sulfate or glucosamine, may help heal the cartilage, prevent further breakdown of the cartilage, and stimulate cartilage regrowth. However, the effectiveness of these agents is still being reviewed and may vary based on the specific product used, how it is administered, and the animal's overall condition. Acupuncture and physical therapy have had some success in relieving osteoarthritis pain.

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CHAPTER

## Travel with Pets

### ■ INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides basic information on traveling with your pet, both within the United States and internationally. While the focus is on the United States as the “home country,” many of the principles and suggestions are applicable to travel within or between other countries. Some of the issues facing owners who want or need to travel with their pets will also be addressed. Where complete discussion of a particular issue is not possible, places to obtain additional information are suggested. Alternatives to traveling with your pet are also discussed, because sometimes it is not possible or in your pet's best interest to bring it with you on your travels.

Cats and dogs are the most common pets to be taken along on trips. Most other pet animals are not routinely taken along on travels, so we have not included other specifics here. (For a more detailed discussion of ALTERNATIVES TO TRAVEL WITH PETS, see page 1226.)

### ■ TRAVEL WITH SERVICE ANIMALS

People who travel with service animals—for example, guide dogs for the visually impaired, or assistance dogs for those who

### Daily Health Check

Regardless of the destination, you should perform a daily health check on your pet when away from home. In unfamiliar surroundings, the pet's appetite, energy level, and disposition may change. Signs of possible illness include any unusual discharges from the nose and eyes, excessive scratching or biting of any body part, abnormal urination or defecation, lack of appetite for longer than 24 hours, disorientation, or excessive water consumption. The pet should be checked by a local veterinarian if you become concerned about any physical or behavioral changes or if you note anything out of the ordinary.

are mobility impaired—do not have the choice of leaving their pet at home. In the United States, the Americans with Disabilities Act guarantees reasonable accommodations for the mobility of individuals using service dogs. Canada has similar laws in place that ensure the rights of its citizens with disabilities. However, even with service animals, advance planning for travel within the US is wise and sometimes essential. For example, travel to Hawaii with a service dog requires documentation of the animal's status and training, proof of cur-

rent rabies vaccination, microchipping, testing for immunity to rabies, and other documentation. Although these requirements are less stringent than those for non-service animals (described later), they still require advance planning to ensure that the animal is not delayed upon arrival.

Individuals with disabilities should remember that beyond the borders of their home countries, accommodation needs should be approached creatively. If you anticipate foreign travel with a service animal, you should provide the destination country with as much advance notice as possible (at least 30 days) to avoid having to enter the country without these vital helpers. Sometimes it is necessary to be flexible about trying another nation's disability-related supports and services. When traveling internationally with an assistance dog, individuals with disabilities should contact organizations for the visually impaired and/or guide or service dog schools in the destination country to determine how practical international travel might be. It is important for disabled travelers to understand the laws and cultural norms of their destination.

## ■ PLANNING YOUR TRIP

Travel with a pet can be as short as a car ride into town for a veterinary appointment or as lengthy as a permanent relocation to another country. Regardless of the type of travel, adequate planning and preparation will help avoid surprises and make the trip less stressful for both you and your pet.

### Planning for US Travel

Even travel within the United States (especially between states) will be easier if you plan ahead. Remember to consider both the journey itself and the final destination when making plans. In all cases, your pet's vaccinations should be up-to-date; in particular, evidence of rabies vaccination may be needed for interstate travel.

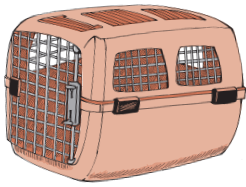
## Pet Travel Kit

- Brush or comb
- Favorite toy or pillow
- First-aid kit (commercially available or assembled on your own)
- Food
- Health certificate (issued within 10 days of trip)
- Leash
- Medications and prescription information
- Owner contact information
- Rabies vaccination certificate
- Veterinarian contact information
- Water (when possible, bringing a familiar source of water can help your pet avoid stomach upset)
- Any other records or forms required by the destination country

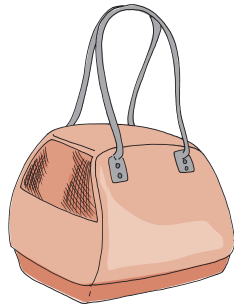
Check your pet carrier or crate to ensure that it is in good condition, large enough for your pet, and (if traveling by plane) approved for use on an airplane. Note that there are significant differences between carriers for use in the cabin, which are soft-sided, and those for use in the cargo hold, which are rigid. If possible, let your pet become accustomed to the carrier while you are still at home by feeding your animal in the carrier, having it take naps in the carrier, or leaving a favorite blanket or toy in it.

Make sure your pet's collar has identification tags including current contact information. If possible, attach a tag with your cell phone number, the phone number of where you will be staying, or the number of someone who can quickly locate you. Collars for cats should be of the breakaway type to avoid strangulation if the animal accidentally snags its collar.

Both libraries and online listings have phone numbers for veterinary clinics along travel routes or at destinations. The appropriate state veterinary association may also have listings. Knowing where to call for emergency veterinary care could save your pet's life.



Hard-sided  
(for cargo hold)



Soft-sided  
(for passenger  
compartment)

Pets traveling by plane must travel in an approved carrier.

If your travel is part of a relocation, your moving company may be able to provide helpful advice for transporting your pet and supplies (such as a fish tank), as well as how to help your pet adjust to its new home.

## Planning for International Travel

The United States has become a nation of international travelers. In 1995 almost 19 million US citizens traveled to overseas sites. There are no records kept as to how many of these people traveled with pets; however, taking companion animals on overseas travel has certainly increased over the last several decades.

If you are considering taking your pet on a trip outside the US, you should first consult your veterinarian. The best advice that any veterinarian might give is simply to avoid, if possible, traveling abroad with your pet. Even with careful planning, traveling with a pet can be difficult. A pet traveling abroad can become separated from its owners or face a lengthy quarantine period. Even worse, the pet can acquire an unfamiliar disease or parasite. The danger of bringing these “uninvited guests” back into the US or other home country is a constant concern. For this reason, most countries have developed

complex restrictions for the introduction (or reintroduction) of animals, animal products, and contaminated articles to prevent exotic infections from entering the country.

Some recent data show that during international trips, travelers from the US spent an average of 18 nights outside the country. For short trips such as these, the duration of overseas travel is far shorter than the length of the pet quarantine period often required by foreign countries. Thus, it makes sense that for short trips, pets should usually remain at home. The situation is far different for citizens temporarily residing outside of the country (for example, military personnel, consular personnel, missionaries, or expatriates). These citizens sometimes live outside of the US for months or years—and they often own dogs or cats that were either acquired in the US and transported to that foreign country or acquired in the foreign country.

If you decide to travel internationally with your pet, you should contact the embassy or consulate of the nation(s) to which you will be traveling to ensure that all necessary import requirements have been fulfilled and that the quarantine requirements (if any) are clearly understood. This should be done at least 9 months in advance of travel. Embassies are usually located in large metropolitan areas, such as New York City, Los Angeles, or Washington, DC. The US Department of State maintains a list of consulates and embassies on its web site.

As you are planning the details of your trip, be sure that the airports you intend to use will be able to provide the necessary customs and/or quarantine services you may require. If quarantine will be needed for your pet, find out whether a reservation is required and what the cost will be.

In addition to the regulations discussed below, you will want to know where to locate veterinary help if it is needed. If possible, research ahead of time (or ask a

**Table 27. Government Agencies and Other Organizations with Information on Pet Travel**

Organization	Scope	Web Site
American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)	Professional association for veterinarians	<a href="http://www.avma.org">www.avma.org</a>
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)	Preservation of health of animals and agriculture in the US	<a href="http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/pettravel.html">www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/pettravel.html</a>
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Prevention of human disease	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.htm">www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dq/animal.htm</a>
Department for Environmental, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	United Kingdom agency responsible for agricultural issues	<a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm">www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/quarantine/index.htm</a>
International Airline Transport Association (IATA)	Standards for transportation of animals by air	<a href="http://www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live_animals/index.htm">www.iata.org/whatwedo/cargo/live_animals/index.htm</a>
US Department of State	Provides web sites of embassies and consulates	<a href="http://usembassy.state.gov/">http://usembassy.state.gov/</a>

friend or colleague in the destination country) to find contact information for local veterinarians or a veterinary association that can provide referrals. If you do not speak the language of the country you are traveling to, search for veterinarians that speak English or another language you understand. Phrase books often have sections for human medical emergencies and may be helpful if you need to explain your animal's condition to a veterinarian who speaks a different language.

## ■ REGULATIONS REGARDING TRAVEL WITH ANIMALS

The regulations for travel with animals are extensive and may seem burdensome (see TABLE 27). Remember, there are good reasons for such regulations: protecting your pet's health, protecting pets and other animals in the destination state or country, and protecting humans from diseases (such as rabies) that can be acquired from animals.

### Travel within the United States

Each state has its own set of regulations for movement of animals across its borders. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection

Service (APHIS) web site provides links to the regulations for each state. In general, the pet owner should carry proof of current rabies vaccination and a current health certificate when traveling between states with dogs and cats.

A particular situation to take note of is travel to Hawaii, even from other US states. Because Hawaii is rabies free, its government has instituted a quarantine law to ensure that rabies is not introduced. This law covers all dogs and cats regardless of age or purpose. As an alternative to lengthy quarantine, a detailed process involving vaccination at specific times, microchipping, a blood test for rabies, and a 120-day waiting period may be followed. Successful completion of these requirements will allow the animal to be quarantined for 5 days or less; if not, the animal may be quarantined for up to 120 days. A similar requirement is in place even for animals originating in Hawaii and later returning, although the timing and waiting periods are different. The rabies requirement does not apply to horses, but the horse must originate in an area or county free of equine encephalomyelitis and be vaccinated prior to import. Please check the state of Hawaii's Agricultural Gateway web site for more details.

The island of Guam is also rabies free and has a quarantine period for import of dogs and cats. As with Hawaii, the quarantine time can be shortened significantly if specific microchipping, vaccination, and testing requirements are met prior to travel.

## International Travel

If you plan to travel to other countries with your pet, you will need to research possible travel restrictions, vaccination requirements, quarantine, and other policies of the country or countries you will visit. The nearest consulate or embassy for that country and/or the country's government web site are places to begin your search for information. Your veterinarian may also be able to assist you by providing information on the federal and international agencies that should be contacted prior to foreign travel and/or possible re-entry with pets. Some countries require a health certificate and proof of rabies vaccination signed by a US government official.

If there are still questions or concerns about exporting animals to a foreign country, you should contact the US Department of Agriculture's Veterinary Services Area Office. Your veterinarian should be able to help you get in touch with the correct officials.

Required quarantine periods in some countries might be quite lengthy—as long as 6 months in some cases. Animals must be kenneled or stabled during the quarantine period, which also can be expensive, so owners might consider leaving the pet behind should the cost and effort (not to mention the stress of quarantine) outweigh the benefits of pet companionship. In particular, the United Kingdom's requirements for importation of pets are quite rigorous and can be found on their web site. It is important to remain up to date on requirements for importation, as they can change from one year to the next.

Various US federal agencies have rules for importing (or re-importing) pets, especially the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention (CDC) and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, a unit of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Both the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the individual state veterinary services should be contacted regarding the importation of horses into the US and its territories. In addition, the US Customs Service also issues licensing and health requirements for both pets and wildlife. Neither the CDC nor the USDA requires a health certificate for routine pet importation; however, the CDC does require proof of current rabies vaccination for all imported dogs. The CDC also has rules dealing with other imported animals, including horses, cats, turtles, birds, snakes, fish, monkeys, civets, rodents, rabbits, and others. Furthermore, each state within the US has its own requirements for health and rabies vaccination certification.

Nearly every country has a different set of rules and regulations for the importation of pets, and these rules change periodically. For those reasons, it is difficult to summarize all the pertinent regulations here. However, some guidelines and examples of current regulations are provided below. In general, countries that are rabies free have the most stringent requirements for importation of dogs and cats.

## Travel in Europe

European communities have become more open to international travelers. However, some countries in Europe, including the United Kingdom (UK), Sweden, and Norway, continue to require lengthy quarantines for animals from other countries. In these countries, most dogs and cats must be quarantined for 4 months (Sweden and Norway) or 6 months (United Kingdom), although the United Kingdom has recently implemented a program called the UK Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) that may eliminate the quarantine period for some qualified animals. However, like other "abbreviated quarantine" programs, it does require several months of prepara-

tion prior to travel. Dogs and cats may travel freely within other European countries if they are vaccinated against rabies and blood tests demonstrate adequate levels of antibodies. Dogs must also be vaccinated against canine distemper and leptospirosis.

The United Kingdom's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is an important resource for people traveling to the UK or throughout Europe with pets. DEFRA also sponsors the Dog and Cat Travel and Risk Information (DACTARI) surveillance scheme. DACTARI provides for the reporting of exotic disease in dogs or cats whether they have been abroad or not. DEFRA encourages all pet owners to consider the potential risks of traveling in areas where exotic diseases occur and to seek veterinary advice before traveling overseas.

The European Union (EU) has recently instituted a "pet passport" program that makes it easier for pet owners to transport dogs, cats, and ferrets between member countries (and between the EU and certain other countries). This passport does not apply to animals first entering the EU from the United States; however, once an animal has met the requirements for entrance into an EU member country, its owner can contact a veterinarian in that country to apply for a passport.

A number of regulations cover import of horses into the UK and other parts of the EU. These depend in part on how long the horse will be in the destination country and the purpose of import. For example, the owners of horses present in the UK for longer than 30 days must obtain a "horse passport," a document that permanently identifies the animal and the medications it has received.

### **Travel to Asia and Africa**

Regulations vary from country to country, although current health certificates and proof of rabies vaccination are near-universal requirements. Check with the appropriate embassy or consulate for specific information.

### **Travel to Australia**

Australia is a rabies-free country and requires a 30-day quarantine of dogs and cats entering the country from the US. Horses must be quarantined in the US in an approved facility for 21 days, followed by quarantine in Australia for at least 14 days. These quarantine requirements are in addition to the various vaccinations and documentation required prior to import. Australia does not allow certain breeds of dog (such as American Pit Bull Terriers) into the country at all.

## **VACCINATIONS AND PREVENTIVE MEDICATIONS**

Vaccination requirements vary from country to country. All dogs and cats should be vaccinated against rabies before they leave the United States. Rabies may be a nonexistent threat in some areas of the world, for example, in the United Kingdom, but may become an imposing problem in some remote areas of Africa or South America. The American Veterinary Medical Association recommends that pet owners travel with a rabies vaccination certificate if they cross international borders (including travel to Canada or Mexico).

While you are abroad with your pet, it is especially important that all vaccinations and preventive medications (such as those taken to prevent infection with heartworms or other parasites) be continued.

## **RETURNING TO THE UNITED STATES**

There are a multitude of diseases and parasites that might be encountered in a foreign environment. The disease-causing organisms that animals may harbor have the potential to produce serious consequences. For example, in 2003 an outbreak of monkeypox in people in the United States was traced to Gambian giant rats, which carried the virus from Africa. The rats infected prairie dogs intended for the pet market, and the prairie dogs, in turn, infected people.

When citizens return to the United States, their pets—which may be infected with foreign diseases or parasites—are also presented for re-entry into the country. Dogs, cats, and certain other pets are subject to measures designed to prevent the introduction and spread of rabies and other zoonotic diseases (diseases that humans can acquire from infected animals). If an animal is found to have one of these diseases, the case must be reported to the appropriate state authorities, who in turn, will notify the proper federal agencies.

Before returning to the US, pets must undergo a complete physical examination, including blood tests to detect the presence of certain parasites. Pets should be dipped in a medicated solution to remove any fleas, ticks, or mites that may have infested the animal while overseas. A thorough examination of the feces is necessary to look for worms and other parasites. If the animal is found to be infected, suitable medications to kill the specific parasites will be administered.

Upon arrival in the US, owners must schedule another physical examination by a veterinarian. This examination should also include blood tests. Pets should again be dipped in a medicated solution to resolve any infestations that may have occurred while the animal was in transit. There may be additional restrictions if you enter the United States through Puerto Rico, Guam, or Hawaii. Before returning through these ports, travelers should contact animal health inspectors for additional information.

The general re-entry requirement is that all dogs and cats imported into the US be visually inspected by US Public Health Service personnel. Only those animals that are free of any evidence of infectious disease may be admitted. Animals showing signs of illness such as emaciation, skin sores, disturbances of the nervous system, jaundice, or diarrhea, must be examined, tested, or treated at the owner's expense by a licensed veterinarian designated by the agency.

### Entry/Re-entry of Cats

Cats are subject only to the general requirements for entry as stated above. Rabies vaccination of cats is not a federal requirement; however, some states require vaccination prior to entry.

### Entry/Re-entry of Dogs

Regardless of their age, dogs may be admitted to the US without restriction if they appear healthy and have been in a rabies-free area for at least the 6 months immediately preceding arrival in the US or since birth. The US Public Health Service provides a current list of rabies-free areas.

Dogs arriving from countries other than those listed as rabies-free may be admitted to the US if they are 3 months of age or older, free of any evidence of infectious disease, and accompanied by a valid certificate of rabies vaccination. All 3 requirements must be met. Vaccination certificates must identify the dog, be signed by a licensed veterinarian, and specify the expiration date, which must be after the date of arrival. If the expiration date is not indicated on the certificate, the certificate is considered to be valid for only 1 year from the date of issue. Vaccination certificates should also specify the date of vaccination, which must be at least 30 days before the arrival date.

For dogs that are at least 3 months old, are subject to the rabies vaccination requirement, and appear to be healthy but do not have a valid rabies certificate as outlined above, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Form 75.37 must be completed (generally at the point of entry) and submitted to the appropriate Quarantine Station for distribution. The form may be signed by the owner or agent.

The US Public Health Service may release the dog if the owner agrees to place it in confinement for 30 days immediately upon arrival at the destination and to have it vaccinated against rabies within 4 days. Confinement is defined as restriction of an animal to a building or other enclosure, in isolation from other animals and peo-

ple except for contact necessary for its care. If the dog is allowed out of the enclosure, the owner must muzzle the dog and use a leash.

The CDC Form 75.37 must also be prepared if the dog is older than 3 months of age and has a certificate showing a vaccination administered less than 30 days before arrival. The owner is required to confine the dog for the remainder of the 30 days.

Finally, Form 75.37 must be prepared for dogs younger than 3 months of age at the time of entry or re-entry. The owner is required to confine the dog until it is 3 months of age and then have it immunized against rabies. The dog must then be confined for an additional 30 days. A vaccination certificate presented for a puppy less than 3 months of age cannot be accepted.

The USDA should be contacted for requirements specific to dogs used for working livestock to prevent importation of *Echinococcus* species, which are tapeworms associated with the development of hydatid cysts in livestock and humans.

### Entry/Re-entry of Horses

The CDC does not regulate importation of horses into the US unless the horse is known to carry a disease transmissible to humans. The USDA requires quarantine of horses for various time periods (3 to 60 days), depending on which country the horse is entering from. The owner or transporter should contact the port veterinarian at one of the USDA Animal Import Centers to reserve space at the quarantine facility.

### ■ WHERE TO STAY

If you will be staying in motels, hotels, or campgrounds along the way, check ahead of time to ensure that the establishment will accept pet visitors and what (if any) extra fees or restrictions there might be. Sources of information include the hotel's phone or web site, web sites dedicated to travelers with pets, or your travel agent. Travel associations such as the

American Automobile Association (AAA) can provide information on accommodations for members wishing to travel with a pet.

If at all possible, do not leave your pet unattended in a hotel or motel room. Putting a "do not disturb" sign on the door will help to ensure that your pet is not accidentally released by housekeeping staff. Keeping the animal in its kennel will also help to ensure that it does not escape the room.

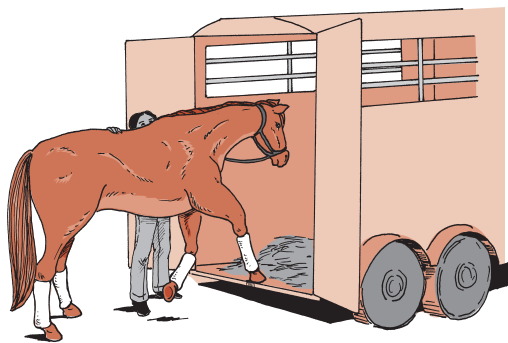
Even if you are planning to stay with friends or relatives, be sure to check whether they will be able to keep your pet in their home and, if so, whether it will need to be caged during its stay. Allergies, other pets in the home, and your pet's reaction to an unfamiliar environment should not be taken for granted.

If you are camping with your pet, do not allow it to wander unattended. Animals in unfamiliar surroundings can easily become lost or injured; wild animals such as skunks, raccoons, porcupines, and snakes can all be potential hazards for your pet. Remember to check for fleas and ticks during and after the trip. If you have any concerns, have your pet examined by a veterinarian upon return.

### ■ TRAVEL BY CAR

Before taking a long trip by car, it is helpful if you can take your pet for short rides in its carrier so that it becomes accustomed to being confined. Some pets have only been in their carriers during trips to the veterinarian, so they associate the carrier and car ride with an unpleasant experience. Enjoyable destinations such as a dog park can help your pet feel better about trips in the car.

Small animals should be kept within a travel carrier while riding in the car. This is the safest method not only for your pet, but also for other car passengers and even other drivers on the road. Within a carrier, your pet is more protected from sudden car movements. In addition, an excited animal can jump out of a car window or



Before traveling with a horse, practice entering and exiting the trailer.

distract (or even impede) the driver. Dogs that are too large to ride in a carrier should be kept in the back seat, ideally with an appropriate restraining harness. This minimizes their chances of interfering with the driver; in addition, it protects them from injury during an accident.

As much as they enjoy it, dogs should not be allowed to put their heads out of car windows. In addition to the risk of jumping out, they may suffer injury from flying debris or from their ears being flapped around. Similarly, a dog in the back of a pickup should be in a carrier.

A car can heat to dangerous levels in a very short time, even when the weather seems mild. Animals should not be left in a parked car if outside temperatures are above 72°F or below 55°F.

Animals (like their owners) should take frequent breaks while traveling by car. Stop about every 2 hours for a water and “potty” break. Be sure to keep your animal on a leash when leaving the car for such breaks. Feed your pet on its regular schedule if possible. Dry food is most convenient if the animal will take it; if moist food is needed, refrigerate or discard any leftovers.

Speak to your veterinarian if you know that your dog or cat does not travel well by car. For some animals, a small meal about 30 minutes before the trip will alleviate carsickness. If this does not work, your veterinarian may be able to recom-

mend an appropriate prescription or over-the-counter medication to help with nausea. Prescription tranquilizers are available as a last resort for animals that must travel by car but have difficulty doing so.

There are 2 general methods for transporting horses on the road. One is to tow the animal yourself; the other is to hire a horse transport company. Horse trailers can be rented; however, if you have not driven one before, you should practice with it before the trip. If your horse is not accustomed to trailering, you will need to spend time getting it used to entering and exiting the trailer. As with other pets, overnight accommodations should be thought out in advance. Some hotels and motels may allow a horse trailer to be parked overnight, or overnight boarding may be available along the route. Web sites dedicated to the traveler with horses are a good source for information about accommodations along the way.

## ■ AIR TRAVEL

The American Veterinary Medical Association provides thorough recommendations for air travel with pets; these apply to travel both inside and out of the US. Their recommendations include having a complete, physical examination before departure to determine whether your pet has any medical conditions that might make air travel dangerous, such as a heart condition that might not respond well to the changes in temperature or pressure that can occur on airplanes.

Pet owners should also contact their airline well in advance to check regulations and services. Most airlines that accept animals will have information on their web page about animal transportation, including travel tips. Many animal welfare organizations have similar information on their web sites.

US federal regulations require that pets be at least 8 weeks old and weaned for at least 5 days before flying. Federal Animal Welfare Act Regulations prohibit airlines from accepting dogs and cats for shipment

if the airline cannot prevent exposure of the animal to temperatures less than 45°F (7°C) for more than 45 minutes while transferring the dog or cat between the terminal and the plane. This prohibition may be waived if a veterinarian provides an acclimation certificate stating that the dog or cat can be exposed to lower temperatures. However, a veterinarian cannot give a certificate allowing exposures to temperatures above 85°F (29°C) for more than 45 minutes. Some airlines will allow small dogs or cats to be transported in the passenger section if the carrier can fit under the seat and if the animal is able to sit quietly during the flight.

In order to minimize the chances of a pet getting lost or misdirected in transit, pet owners should try to book a direct flight or one with a minimal number of stops. Midweek flights tend to be less crowded and less stressful, providing favorable conditions for both owners and pets. The ages and size of pets; the time, length, and distance of the flight; and pet feeding routines must be considered. During warm months, the risk of overheating pets (in the cargo hold) can be reduced by selecting early morning or late evening flights. Some airlines will not ship animals when the temperatures are too hot or too cold to ensure safe travel in the cargo hold.

Travelers should arrive at the airport early, exercise the leashed pet lightly before the flight, and place the pet in a secure carrier or crate that is approved by the Federal Aviation Administration. The words “live animal” should appear on the crate in lettering at least 1 inch high, and the crate should be labeled with the owner’s home and destination contact information. In general, tranquilizing pets is not recommended prior to flights. Consult your veterinarian regarding his or her specific recommendation for your pet.

Absorbent bedding or a comfortable pad should be placed in the carrier, and a favorite soft toy may be added. An item that has your scent (for example, an old shirt that you have worn overnight during

sleep) can be placed in the carrier to help reassure your pet during travel. Pets should be familiarized with the crate well before the flight. This can be done by encouraging them to sleep, eat, and drink while in the crate.

Pets should be fed a light meal no less than 6 hours before departure. A handy way to provide your pet with water during the flight itself is to freeze water in its bowl prior to the trip and place the frozen bowl in its crate immediately prior to departure. This works best if the bowl can be affixed to the wire crate door. For trips lasting longer than 24 hours, provide some dry food in a durable plastic bag, contained in a cloth or mesh bag, attached to the outside of the crate. This can be fed by flight personnel should the need arise.

Pets should always be picked up promptly upon arrival at the destination. However, pets should not be let out of the carrier until you are in a quiet and secure area where there is no chance of escape.

When entering a country with a different language or dialect, it is wise to translate information (for example, the “live animal” notice and owner contact information) into the appropriate language so that local workers and baggage handlers will comprehend the importance of the contents of the pet carrier. A manila envelope containing copies of the pet’s medical records should be taped to the outside of the carrier. Travelers should also carry a copy of these records with them at all times, together with contact information for the animal’s veterinarian, color photographs of the pet, both with and without the owner (as a safeguard if pets are accidentally released or stolen during transit), and any pet medications.

Microchips implanted under the skin have recently become popular for identification of pets, and in some cases are required for travel. However, not all foreign countries have microchip scanning capabilities. Also, most of the microchips used in the United States operate on different frequencies that may not be picked up by

scanners in other countries. Tattooing may still be beneficial in some foreign locales. Social security numbers should never be tattooed on animals as these numbers can be used to gain access to confidential personal information. Tattooing an email address is more suitable. In addition to a standard identification tag (which should be labeled with your name, home address, and phone number), the pet's collar should include a travel tag with information detailing where you are staying while away from home. Should your pet become lost, this will allow you to be contacted at your destination.

A number of companies specialize in air transport of horses and some have international experience. These companies may include door to door service and handling of much of the appropriate paperwork. Their fees will include the costs of the attendant required to travel with the horse.

### ■ TRAVEL BY SHIP

Today, only one ocean liner provides regular voyages between the United States and England—Cunard's Queen Mary 2. For those individuals traveling by ocean liner, Cunard should be contacted for travel requirements and the amenities of their on-board kennels. Pet owners traveling on the Queen Mary 2 may take their dogs, cats, or birds with them in air-conditioned comfort. A valid health certificate from a veterinarian is required for the pet to be brought aboard. Dogs may be brought on board on a leash, but it is recommended that cats board in carriers or baskets. After embarkation, pets reside in kennels and are not permitted on any of the passenger decks, but owners may take their pets for walks on a designated area of the open deck. Interactions between owners and their pets are allowed daily. Owners should contact Cunard Lines for exact kennel dimensions; however, space limitations make it impossible to accommodate

dogs larger than a German Shepherd. There are no staff veterinarians aboard the ship.

Pets are not allowed on most other cruise lines, with the exception of service animals. If you are planning to cruise with a service animal, contact the cruise line as far in advance as possible in order to make sure that no problems arise. Most lines require you to provide food for your animal while on board the ship. In addition, some ports of call may have strict regulations and may not allow your animal to leave the ship.

### ■ TRAVEL BY TRAIN

In the US, Amtrak does not allow animals aboard their trains, with the exception of service animals. In Europe, however, animals are often allowed to travel by train with their owners. You should check with the individual country to determine their regulations and restrictions. In some cases dogs are allowed to travel on leash, while in others they must travel by carrier. For other animals, appropriate carriers or cages are generally required.

As with air travel, it is important to make sure your pet has appropriate identification, and that you travel with copies of medical records (including vaccination history) and a health certificate, if required.

### ■ ALTERNATIVES TO TRAVEL WITH PETS

If you decide that your pet should not travel with you, a number of alternative arrangements can be made. These vary in cost, quality, and convenience, so be sure to investigate the possibilities well before your trip to ensure that you are satisfied with the arrangement and that your desired facility or pet sitter will be available during the period of travel. Whether your pet stays in a boarding facility or in your home, be sure to provide accurate contact information, veterinarian infor-

mation, medical records and proof of vaccinations if required, and any special care instructions to the caregiver.

Other than dogs and cats, most small pets are not routinely taken along on trips, so these travel alternatives may really be the only possibility for care during normal travel. If an unusual type of pet must be transported (for example, if the family is moving and intends to take the pet along), consult your veterinarian for advice. In the case of tropical fish, an aquarium supplier dealing in tropical fish may be able to help with properly “packing” the fish for a move.

### **Boarding Facilities (Kennels, Stables)**

Your veterinarian is an excellent resource when looking for a boarding kennel, stable, or facility for your pet. Some veterinary clinics will board pets on site; this situation has the advantage that if your pet becomes ill, its normal veterinarian and records are close at hand. Check with friends who travel to see whether they can provide any recommendations.

Once you have located a boarding facility, be sure to visit it before boarding your pet to see whether the quarters appear to be comfortable, clean, and well-staffed. Facilities range from the bare-bones minimum cage or pen to elaborate “spa” or “day care” setups. Ask how often animals are fed and exercised. If you have particular concerns—such as a special diet or medicine for your pet that must be given daily—check to see whether the staff can accommodate your needs. For additional reassurance, some newer facilities even have cameras that allow owners to view their pets over the Internet. Facilities may also offer extra play time and special treats (usually at an additional cost).

The conditions under which horses are stabled and the treatment they receive is important and should be verified by the owner. At a minimum, the horse must be

kept clean, suitably fed and exercised, and comfortably housed. The horse owner should pay close attention to the prospective stable environment and its overall construction. As with small animal boarding, it is important to seek recommendations from the veterinarian or other horse owners in the immediate area for suitable stabling facilities.

If you have a pet other than a dog, cat, or horse, your veterinarian may be able to suggest facilities that will be able to board the animal.

### **Your Home**

Pets should never be left to fend for themselves while you are away. For a short trip, a neighbor or friend (especially one who knows your pet or is a pet owner) can provide care for your pet in the comfort of your home. Professional pet sitters are also available; the Internet can provide information on pet sitting associations and listings of their members, or you can ask pet-owning friends for recommendations. Ideally, have the potential sitter come to your home for a pre-trip interview to see how your pet reacts to him or her and to give you the opportunity to ask any questions you may have. Most reliable pet sitters will be able to provide references, so that you can check their reputation and past job experiences. Some pet sitters will also provide other services such as picking up the mail, and they can help provide a more “lived in” look to your home.

An ongoing relationship with a reliable pet sitter can be invaluable. In case of unexpected travel or absence (such as a family emergency), having a person who is already familiar with your pet and home can be a great relief.

As always, make sure the pet sitter knows how to contact you in case of illness or emergency, and be sure to provide a copy of your pet’s veterinary records, as well as written instructions about any special care needs your pet might have.