

THE HOWLER

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Crisis Checklist for Your Pet: Developing a List of Emergency Contacts

[New York, NY] (Feb/07)— In an emergency situation, it's important to have crisis measures in place ahead of time, for both human and animal family members. Gather this list of emergency contacts ahead of time—it is advisable to be prepared in advance during a disaster warning.

"According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, preparing ahead of time and acting quickly is the best way to keep you and your family, including your animals, out of danger," says Dr. Erica Mollica, a veterinarian at St. Marks Veterinary Hospital in the East Village. "That's why we encourage pet owners to prepare their list before disaster strikes."

Here are 16 important elements to have on your emergency list ahead of time:

1. First, make sure you have two waterproof folders with your contact information and 24-hour contact numbers—numbers where you may be reached (pager, cell phone, work phone). Take one with you in your animal evacuation kit and leave another at home in an obvious location, most likely near your telephone. These contacts can be used by rescue personnel responding to a disaster affecting your animals or by you during a disaster or an evacuation.
2. Your prearranged evacuation site
3. Local contact person in

case of emergency when you are not available

4. Out-of-state contact person in case the disaster is far reaching in your locale
5. Your veterinarian and an alternate veterinarian (30-90 miles away, preferable one who provides boarding)
6. Boarding facility (local) and an alternate boarding facility (30-90 miles away)
7. Hotels that allow pets (90 mile radius)
8. Local Animal Control (212) 788-4000
9. Local Police Precinct
10. Local Fire Department
11. Local Public Health Department
12. Local Animal Shelter
13. Local Red Cross Chapter
14. Local Humane Society (212) 752-4842
15. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) (212) 876-7700
16. United States Department of Agriculture Missing Pet Network (www.missingpet.net)

In addition, it's important to have proper identification on your pet. Make sure your animal's identification includes rabies and license tags, if applicable, to help reunite you with your animal(s) in the event that you are



NYC is the home to various cutting edge resources in the veterinary arts.

separated. Identification should provide your name, home address, a phone number where you can be reached, and an out-of-state phone number of someone that you will be in contact with during or soon after the disaster/evacuation. If possible, include your veterinarian's name, location, and phone number.

AFTER HOURS VET

FACILITIES:

MANHATTAN

- AMC (212) 838-8100
- FAVS (212) 924-3311
- NYCVS (212) 767-0099

BROOKLYN

- VERG (718) 522-9400
- Animal Kind 718 832-3899
- Ave L (718) 444-5151

QUEENS

- EAEH (718) 426-4444

STATEN ISLAND

- VEC (718) 720_4211
- AAE (718) 980-2600

LONG ISLAND

- CSVC (516) 420-0000
- LIVS (516) 501-1700
- CVA (516) 825-3066
- UltraVet (516) 294-6680
- Nassau Emergency (516) 333-6262

WESTCHESTER

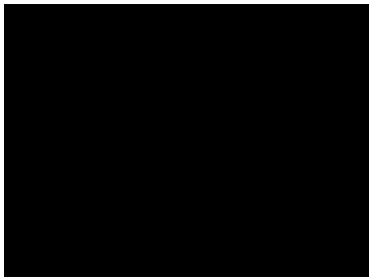
- VEG (914) 949-8779
- County (914) 779-5000
- KBVC (914) 241-7700

Celebrating the Bond Between People and Pets

March is a good month to promote responsible pet ownership, celebrate the human animal bond and promote public awareness of veterinary medicine, as the month kicks off with National Pet Week, May 2 through 8, sponsored by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

“We love our pets. But you might not know there are actual health benefits to pet owners,” said Dr. Brett Levitzke, a veterinarian at The Veterinary Emergency and Referral Group of Brooklyn. “Research has shown tangible health benefits including lower cholesterol, lower blood pressure, reduced stress levels, and overall better mental health for people living with pets.”

To help you learn more about the Human-Animal Bond, here are a dozen interesting statistics from the Argus Institute for Families and Veterinary Medicine at Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital:



1. 63% of U.S. households have at least one pet (11th annual AAHA pet owner

survey).

2. Today's veterinary medicine is as sophisticated as human medicine with diagnostics including MRI, CAT scan, ultrasonography and linear acceleration for the treatment of cancer.

3. 99% consider their pets as family members (Voith, 1985), and 83% refer to themselves as their pet's mom or dad (11th AAHA pet survey).

4. 76% feel guilty leaving their pets when they go to work. 38% admit to

calling home to talk to their animals (1997 AAHA pet owner survey).

5. More than 75% say their dog's health is as important to them as their own (Pfizer Animal Health/ Gallup Organization Dog Owner survey).

6. 59% believe that their pet has a best friend (2001 AAHA pet owner survey).

7. 57% would prefer their pet as their only companion if they were stranded on a desert island (2001/2002 American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA) Pet Owner survey).

8. 52% are better at remembering the names of neighbor pets than human neighbors (2001 AAHA survey).

9. 52% believe that their pet listens to them the best (2001 AAHA survey).

10. 44% would spend \$3000 or more to save their pet's life (2001 AAHA survey).

11. 21% would travel 1000 miles or more to obtain specialty care for their pet (2001 AAHA survey).

12. 32% allow their dogs to sleep on their beds (11th AAHA survey).

While the numbers are just numbers, there is an undeniable magic that happens when we return home and these animals are greeting us as if we've been away for a year... every time.



CAT Scan of a canine patient.

What are My Pet's Vital Signs?

As animals cannot talk and tell us what hurts, we must rely on our personal knowledge of the pet and vital signs to determine if its time to go to the vet. Veterinarians and veterinary technicians look at various aspects of the animals physiological condition. Among the most important are the vital signs which include heart rate, respiration rate, color, capillary refill time, and temperature. While every pet has there individual vital signs, there are parameters which are considered normal range.

To check for a heart rate, place your thumb on the spot where the animals left elbow touches the body and hold the chest with the same hand. In larger or barrel chested breeds, you can listen

directly on the same spot. In dogs, the normal heart rate ranges widely as there are various breeds and sizes. Generally, the smaller the animal, the faster the heart rate. 60-180 beats per minute (bpm) is considered normal range in canines. Giant breeds are not to exceed 100 bpm. Normal in cats is 110-220 bpm.

Respiration rate is another important vital sign. Look at your pet's chest at rest. Normal for a dog is 10-30 breaths per minute (bpm). Cat respiration rates are 25-30 bpm. Understand that panting in a dog is normal on a hot day or after exercise, while open mouth breathing in a



Respiration rate and color are vital signs noted on every physical exam.

cat is never good.
Story continued on back cover.

Ten Trip Tips

Considering your pet's needs prior to hitting the road for vacation can save both time and frustration later.

"Once a scared pet is actually in the car, the signs of sickness typically start during the first few minutes of the ride," said Dr. Diane Levitan, the medical director at The Center for Specialized Veterinary Care in Westbury Long Island. "Compounding the problem is the fact that some pets prefer to 'hide and ride', so they can end up not only sick but stuck under one of the seats."

To avoid these problems, consider making "practice runs" in your car with your pet. Start out with short rides at first, then let them become gradually longer. At the end of the ride, offer lots of praise and treats, and before long your pet may be begging for a ride in the car.

Here are ten tips you should keep in mind when traveling with your pet:

1. Before the trip, take your animal for a veterinary check-up and obtain a health certificate and documentation of inoculations.

2. Your animal's travel crate must be large enough for your pet to stand, turn around and lie down in comfortably.

Also you should line the bottom of the crate with towels to absorb urine.

3. Try to avoid traveling in extreme weather conditions. If you must travel in hot weather, try to make the trip in the evening or early morning.

4. Bring a couple of jugs of cold water. The water can be used to cool down your pet if the car should break down.

5. Dogs should be given water and exercise during rest stops, but they should not be allowed to run loose at rest areas. No matter how well trained an animal is, this is a new experience and an accident could happen. Cats, birds and all other pets should remain in their carriers until safely indoors once your destination is reached.

6. Under no circumstances should you leave a pet in a parked car. It takes only minutes for an animal to develop heatstroke.

7. If you will be flying, remember

that most airlines have a limit on the number of pets allowed per cabin, so be sure to inform your airline when you make your reservation that you'll be

boarding with your animal. Also, ask for the allowable dimensions of your



Consider your pet's needs prior to hitting the road.

pet's carrier. If your pet is flying in the cargo section and you're traveling in hot weather or to a warm climate, book a night flight. Also freeze water you provide for your pet so that it will not fall out during loading, but will melt by the time the animal is thirsty.

8. Let the person sitting next to you know that you have a pet with you. (He or she may be allergic and want to switch seats with someone else.)

9. If you are planning to stay in a hotel, make arrangements prior to starting your trip. Your pet should be a welcome guest.

10. When you arrive at your destination, keep your pet in a calm, quiet area and give him or her plenty of time to adjust to the new environment.

Pet Sitting Emergency!

Isn't it always the case? The important trip, can't take the cat, and...BAM! The animal emergency happens. Now the cat sitter can't get in touch with you because you tossed the cell phone into the Caribbean Sea. What to do next? Who's the regular vet? Who will cover it? What will I have to sign? Fortunately you would have done your home work and compiled a list of these particular items:

1. The name, address and telephone number to your regular veterinarian. Call him/her to find out which 24 hour or emergency hospital they refer to

when they are closed and write down that information as well.

2. ASPCA Poison Control Center (888) 426-4435

3. A letter stating that you have left the animal in the care of the sitter and you authorize any medical procedures necessary until you can be reached. Include your name, emergency contact information, where you will be staying, and phone number there. Also include a credit card number and expiration date



Know beforehand which animal emergency hospital your regular veterinarian refers to when they are not available.

1800 AMBUVET

3449 81st Street
Jackson Heights, NY 11372

Phone: 1800-262-8838
Fax: 1866-426-1239
E-mail: info@ambuvet.com

*Injured Pet? Call
1800 AMBUVET!*

**We're on the Web!
www.ambuvet.com**



as most hospitals require some sort of deposit if an animal is to be admitted.

4. Prearranged transportation to the veterinarian. Or call 1800 AMBUVET if additional help is needed.

Keep a list of these items on your fridge every time you travel as it will prove to be invaluable when needed. Hopefully you and your pet will never need it.

1800 AMBUVET is a pet ambulance available to transfer your sick pet to the animal hospital of your choice 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

1800 AMBUVET is owned and operated by licensed veterinary technicians and are equipped to handle difficult or emergency situations.

Services include transportation of ill or injured animals, intra-hospital transfers of critical care patients, transport and cremation of deceased pets and handling of aggressive animals. Post operative recheck, chemo protocol, and discharge transports available. No dog is too big, no cat is too small.

1800 AMBUVET serves the NYC area and immediate vicinity. Check online at www.ambuvet.com for animal CPR seminars in your area.

What are My Pet's Vital Signs?

Continued from page 2.

Color in an animal is checked every time. Gently lift the upper lip on your favorite four legged fur ball. Check the gums and tongue. Red or pink is great while blue, white, or grey is cause for concern. Understand that certain breeds have dark pigment in their mouths which is normal for them. Take for example a blue tongued Chow Chow or a black gummed mixed breed. Next is capillary refill time (CRT). This is a quick check on circulatory integrity.

Choose an area in the upper gum line which is pink. Blanch the spot by applying a small amount of pressure with your thumb and hold for 2 seconds. Release and check the spot. The amount of time that it takes for the blood to return to the area is called CRT. Normal for both canine and feline is approximately 2 seconds. Anything above or below is abnormal.



Inside an AmbuVet Pet Ambulance.

Last but certainly not least is temperature. In the old days, we were only able to determine the temperature of an animal via the less than popular route of the rectal thermometer. Today however, there are nifty devices that you can place in the animals ear and it reads your animals infrared heat stamp in a second or less

(www.pet-temp.com). Normal for a dog is 99.5 F to 102.5 F while for a cat it is between 100.0 F to 102.5 F. While these are just guidelines for normal ranges, its very important for an animal owner to know what is normal for there particular pet as every creature is different. But when in doubt, check it out.