

Taking your pet abroad

The rules have changed post BREXIT and the requirements vary depending on where you are travelling to. A pet passport issued in the UK is no longer valid for entry into the EU.

Travel within Europe

The following requirements are compulsory to allow you to travel with your pet to Europe and re-enter the UK without the need for quarantine. Dogs, cats and pet ferrets travelling to the EU or “listed” third countries must:

- Be identified with a functioning microchip
- Be vaccinated against rabies (must be at least 12 weeks of age for this vaccine)
- Wait 21 days after the rabies vaccination before travel
- Be treated for tapeworm (dogs only) 1-5 days before arrival back into the UK. This must be certified by a vet abroad or, if your trip is for less than 5 days by us here in the UK before you travel.
- Obtain an **Animal Health Certificate** no more than 10 days before travel.
- This certificate is valid for 4 months from the date of issue for travel to the EU and re-entry into the UK.
- For us to issue this we need proof of microchipping and vaccination if this was done elsewhere.

NB: If you have a passport which was issued in the EU then you can travel with this passport to the EU and use it for entry back into the UK. “Listed” third countries are those that are considered to present no higher risk of rabies compared to pet movements within the EU. The list is on the DEFRA website: www.defra.gov.uk

Vaccination against Leishmaniosis

Leishmaniosis is an exotic disease found in parts of southern Europe and warmer climates (see box for details). A vaccination is recommended to reduce the chance of infection but it is essential that measures to reduce exposure to sand-flies are employed even in vaccinated animals.

Your dog must be 6 months old to have this vaccination and immunity lasts for one year after one injection. It is necessary to have a test before vaccinating if your pet has been abroad before. Your pet must not be undergoing any other vaccinations or worming treatments during the initial course of vaccinations. Please ask your vet for further details, advice for products to repel sand-flies and costs.

Outside Europe and or to non-listed countries

If you plan to travel further outside the EU to any of the “non-listed” third countries you will need to apply for an Export Health Certificate instead of an Animal Health Certificate, we are unable to offer this service.

The health risks of taking a pet abroad

Successful vaccination programmes against rabies in wildlife in mainland Europe have allowed the UK to agree to these new regulations. However, the lifting of compulsory tick treatment in 2012

mean that both human and animal health are at more risk from certain exotic diseases, which, until now, have rarely been seen in the UK. The risks are very much higher if you bring in an animal formerly resident abroad, such as a stray or re-homed animal. See below for details.

Pet welfare whilst travelling

When deciding whether to take your pet on holiday, think about its needs during the journey – food, water, temperature, walks, availability of local vets, etc. Thorough research of the local facilities when you arrive is also important. A change of scenery may be refreshing for you but upsetting for your pet. If you are planning to holiday in very hot countries then it is important that there will be adequate ventilation, preferably air conditioning.

Pets are susceptible to heat stroke which can be life threatening. Brachycephalic breeds such as Pugs, Bulldogs and French bulldogs are particularly susceptible to developing heat stroke. Pets' skin is also at risk of sunburn, especially on the head and nose. Thin-coated breeds may also get sunburn on their backs if they are in direct sunlight for too long. We recommend that your pet is not exposed to direct sunlight for prolonged periods and especially between the hours of 11am-3pm. These considerations are in addition to the real risk of your pet picking up parasites and serious diseases not currently present in the UK.

Diseases your pet may bring home

These are Vector-Borne Diseases, spread by insects, and are a risk to dogs in Europe. We strongly recommend using effective

treatments to prevent tick, mosquito and sand-fly bites for all pets travelling abroad. For an up-to-date map of canine vectorborne disease incidences please go to www.cvbd.org

LYME DISEASE

Lyme disease is an inflammatory disorder caused by infection with the tick-borne bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*. In dogs the most obvious symptoms of Lyme disease include a distinctive 'bull's eye' lesion around the site of the tick bite, lameness and fever.

BABESIOSIS

Babesiosis is a serious disease of the red blood cells caused by infection with one of a number of species of the tick-borne parasite, *Babesia*. In dogs, the symptoms of babesiosis can include: loss of appetite, fever, anaemia, weakness and coffee-coloured urine. It can be fatal. Babesiosis does not normally occur in the UK. However, it is seen in Europe, Africa and Asia.

EHRlichiosis

Ehrlichiosis is a tick-borne disease of the white blood cells, caused by infection with a bacterium called rickettsia. In dogs symptoms of ehrlichiosis can include fever, anorexia, weight loss, stiffness and prolonged bleeding.

LEISHMANIOSIS

Leishmaniosis is a zoonotic disease transmitted to humans and animals by the bite of sand flies. Sand flies are named due to their colour and in fact found in woodlands. This is a chronic disease (cannot be cured) with an incubation period of months to years. Clinical signs include skin lesions (hair loss, scaling and ulceration), loss of weight and/or poor appetite, eye problems, lameness, anaemia, kidney failure and diarrhoea.

HEARTWORM DISEASE

Dirofilariasis, or heartworm disease, is a severe vector-borne disease, transmitted by many species of mosquitoes. Mosquitoes transmit the microscopic larvae into the skin during blood feeding. The larvae then remain in the skin for some time before maturing. They then migrate through the body to the pulmonary artery and right side of the heart. Here they reach adult size (up to 30cms) about 150 days post infection. Clinical signs include exercise intolerance, coughing, weight loss and occasionally death.

TAPEWORM

Echinococcus multilocularis is a form of tapeworm that causes severe zoonotic disease in humans. It is transmitted to humans in infected meat from grazing animals. Dogs and foxes shed the tapeworm segments in their faeces. Cats can become infected by eating infected prey such as voles and other rodents. They are less susceptible to high worm burdens but still shed the segments in their faeces.

HEPATOZOONOSIS

Hepatozoan canis is a parasite transmitted by ticks and is common in southern Europe. Clinical signs include lethargy, fever, loss of appetite, muscle wastage, enlarged lymph nodes and anaemia.

TICKBORNE ENCEPHALITIS

This is a serious zoonotic disease caused by a virus, transmitted by a specific tick species, found throughout most of Europe. Clinical signs are neurological due to inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain and also the brain itself. The disease is potentially life-threatening in both humans and animals.