

## Information Sheet

# Travelling with your Pet



### Getting a Passport

These steps must be carried out *in this order* to gain a pet passport.

1. Identichip
2. Rabies vaccination
3. Blood sample 21 days after vaccination
4. Laboratory charge for blood test\*
5. Issue of passport

\*The blood test measures antibodies to ensure that your pet has responded to the vaccine. Around 5% of dogs fail this test. They are often old or large dogs. If this happens steps 2 – 4 would need to be repeated, incurring further costs.

### Re-entering the UK

Your pet may only re-enter the UK 6 months from the date that an acceptable blood sample was taken. This is in case it was incubating rabies at that time. You can travel before this date but you will not be allowed to return.

### Boosters

Rabies boosters are given every 3 years. It is your responsibility to remember this. If you miss a booster (even by one day) your pet will need to repeat steps 2-4 and wait a further 6 months before being allowed to re-enter the UK. Remember that it will take at least 7 months before you will be able to bring your pet back into the UK. The passport is not valid until 6 months after the successful blood tests.

### Where can you go?

A passport allows you to move freely between countries in the EU. For travel to those countries in the Pet Travel Scheme which are outside the EU you require a passport and the relevant export certificates. These are obtained from DEFRA. It is your responsibility to check with DEFRA if any special regulations apply to these countries e.g. annual rabies vaccinations. You will need to visit a vet before travelling.

### Coming Home

Dogs and cats must be seen by a vet abroad before returning to the UK. The vet must administer to your pet treatment for ticks and tapeworms that are not present in this country, and then sign and record in the passport that this has been done. The treatment must be carried out 24 to 48 hours before you embark on your return.

### Staying Healthy

When you travel abroad your pet is at risk from diseases that are not present in the UK. They are all serious, difficult to treat and potentially life threatening. We advise that you take precautions to prevent your pet becoming infected. They affect mainly dogs but cats are at risk. If your pet is ill abroad or when you return you must take it to a vet and explain where you have been.

### Diseases of the Travelling Pet

1. **Leishmaniasis** – This is present in the Mediterranean including parts of France, Spain, Italy and Greece. It is also seen in the Middle East, subtropical and tropical areas. Pets are infected by blood sucking sandflies. They can incubate the disease for months or years. The symptoms include weight loss, skin disease, lameness and fever. The eyes and kidneys can be damaged. Dogs can pass the disease on to people.
2. **Heartworm** – This found in the USA, Canada, parts of Australia and the Mediterranean. It is transmitted by blood sucking mosquitoes. The worms migrate in the blood to the heart. The incubation can be several months. Symptoms include coughing, exhaustion, breathing difficulties and collapse. Milbemax or Stronghold given monthly will prevent Heartworm.
3. **Babesiosis** – This is found particularly in France but also in Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy. It is transmitted by ticks. The incubation is 2-3 weeks. The disease causes severe anaemia with pallor, weakness and collapse.
4. **Ehrlichiosis** – This is found in the Mediterranean especially France, Greece and Italy. It has been seen in Germany, Holland and Belgium. It is also transmitted by ticks. The incubation is 1-3 weeks. Early symptoms include fever and a poor appetite but progress to affect the immune system and blood clotting.
5. **Prevention** - Sandflies prefer woods and gardens. Mosquitoes and sandflies are most active from May to October especially at night. Do not let your pet sleep outside unless it is protected by a mosquito net. Ticks like areas of forest and rough grazing. They can attach at any time of the year but are most active in spring and autumn. You should check your pet daily for ticks and remove them using a tick hook. There are products available that will repel and/or kill ticks, mosquitoes and sandflies. e.g. Frontline, Advantix, Scalibor. Unfortunately no one treatment will protect against all the diseases.

### Remember

Tick and tapeworm treatment will be given before you return home so treatments have to be timed to avoid overdosing or drug interactions. If you are visiting any of the affected areas please ask for further information.