Visiting Vet Service

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Traveling with a Dog

Traveling with a dog always seemed to present far too many hassles to make me feel that it was worth the effort. That was until I went on my first college tour out to Ohio in April of 2011 with my white dog, and of course, my daughter. Since then, I have taken numerous enjoyable short road trips with one or two dogs. There are so many pet friendly hotels that finding a place to stay is easy. Dogs attract interest from a variety of people to meet and chat with along the way, especially on a college campus. There’s no question that having a dog along puts certain limitations on your activities, but dogs also create new experiences most people will never have.

Summer travel can be difficult in hot sunny climates. There is no safe way to leave a dog in a car unless you leave the car on with the AC blowing. If you are likely to be in a position of having to leave a dog in the car during the summer heat, it’s best to leave the dog home! Just a few minutes in a hot car, even with the windows down, can potentially be life threatening or deadly to a dog.

Once the summer comes to a close, it is much easier to travel with a dog. Whether you’re going away for a week long vacation or a visit to relatives for the afternoon, there are certain points to consider when you take your dog along.

Weather- If the dog will be left in the car, it’s important to have an idea what the temperature range will be while you are away. Certain locations offer shady spots to park, which make a big difference when leaving the car for extended periods of time. Sunshades for the windows and a small battery operated fan keep the car much cooler. However, it’s always risky to leave a dog in a car when temperatures are over 70 degrees. If it’s too hot to leave your dog in the car, be prepared to sit out on a meal in a restaurant or “take out” and eat outside or in the car with the dog.

Hotels- Many pet friendly hotels are available now, compared to just a few years ago. The good news is that you can take your dog, but the concern is that you are bringing your dog into a room and dog-walking areas that unknown dogs have visited. Be sure to take preventative measures to avoid bringing fleas, ticks, and intestinal parasites home with you. It’s a good idea to check for intestinal parasites a few weeks after your return.

First Aid- Bee stings, minor wounds, exacerbation of a chronic ear infection, and other incidents can occur while you are away. You might not have quick access to a vet hospital and will need to attend to your dog’s health yourself. While diagnosing and treating serious medical issues is not advised without veterinary guidance, a good first aid kit with proper instructions on how to address minor problems, at least until you can get to a vet, is helpful. We can work with you to construct a custom first aid kid for your individual dog based on his/her own medical history, age, and needs, and where you’ll be going.

Veterinary Hospitals- Check out area vet hospitals and have numbers available with you just in case you run into a serious medical issue with your dog. Take vaccine certificates and a health summary along with you so you’ll be able to share important information with the hospital and vets that are not familiar with your dog.

Traveling by Air- Be sure to check with airline carriers for specific health certificate and travel bag requirements. If you are leaving the country, check with embassies from each specific country you are planning to enter for their own requirements. Rules and regulations change all the time so it’s important to check well in advance of travel to leave enough time to fulfill vaccine, health certificate, and other requirements.