

BROAD LANE VETS



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TRAVELLING ABROAD – EXOTIC DISEASES AND THEIR PREVENTION INFORMATION FOR PET OWNERS

The Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) was launched in February 2000, to enable pets to enter the UK from abroad without having to spend time in quarantine. Most of the existing requirements of PETS are control measures to prevent the introduction of Rabies to the UK. However they do not prevent any of the other diseases that affect cats and dogs abroad, a number of which can be life-threatening and can also spread to people. Some of the diseases you need to be aware of are described below.

We advise seeking veterinary advice about exotic disease prevention in good time prior to embarking on foreign travel with your pet. Routine parasite control which is adequate in the UK, is not sufficient to protect your pet abroad.

LEISHMANIA

Leishmania is extremely common in countries surrounding the Mediterranean and in Central and South America. Disease is caused by a parasite which is transmitted by sandflies.

Dogs are the main reservoir for infection, though children and immunosuppressed adults can also develop disease. The parasite affects the immune system, has a long incubation period and is difficult to treat, with dogs normally remaining infected for life. Prevention of infection is therefore advised.

Keeping dogs indoors from dusk to dawn (the period when sandfly activity is highest) helps.

Specific insecticide-impregnated collars are available to repel sandflies.

Advantix spot-on applied every 2weeks is also effective.

BABESIOSIS

Babesiosis occurs in many areas of Europe, including France, as well as Africa and Asia.

It is caused by a protozoal parasite which infects red blood cells. The parasite is transmitted by ticks. Areas of forest and rough-grazing, such as campsites, are where ticks are found most frequently.

Young to middle-aged dogs are predisposed. Disease may develop quickly. Anaemia, collapse, and multiple organ failure may occur. Treatment may be difficult. Prevention of disease by aggressive tick control is best.

Dogs should be checked daily and any ticks found taken off, using a tick remover to ensure complete removal.

Specific insecticide-impregnated collars are available to help repel ticks.

Advantix spot-on is also effective.

EHRlichiosis

Babesiosis occurs in many areas of Europe, including France, as well as Africa and Asia.

It is caused by an intracellular parasite which infects white blood cells. The parasite is transmitted by ticks. Areas of forest and rough-grazing, such as campsites, are where ticks are found most frequently.

German Shepherd Dogs may be predisposed, and in this breed the disease may be fatal. The immune system is attacked and platelet number and function are affected.

Dogs should be checked daily and any ticks found taken off, using a tick remover to ensure complete removal.

Specific insecticide-impregnated collars are available to help repel ticks.

Advantix spot-on is also effective.

HEARTWORM

Heartworm is common in southern Europe; especially around the Mediterranean, USA, Canada, Australia and eastern Asia.

Heartworm disease is caused by a worm which resides in the pulmonary arteries and heart. It is transmitted by many species of mosquitoes.

The dog is the primary host for the worm, which is transmitted into the skin by mosquitoes and then migrates slowly through the body to the arteries, where it grows and may reach 30cm in length. Heartworm has been known to affect humans. Onset of disease is slow, starting with coughing, but can lead to death. Treatment is complex and dangerous. Prevention is easy and effective.

Mesh nets/window covers and repellents will help avoid mosquito bites.

Monthly dosing with Milbemax or Program Plus will prevent heartworm.

FLEAS AND OTHER WORMS

It is advisable to continue regular flea and worm control whilst you are away with your pet. If the specific treatments advised above are used for exotic disease prevention, then these will normally cover fleas and other worms too.

Remember, as part of the Pet Travel Scheme, your pet must receive an authorised tapeworm treatment from a vet 24-120hours before embarking on the return journey to the UK. This needs to be borne in mind when the timing of other treatments is planned.

PLEASE MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE VET TO DISCUSS TRAVEL ABROAD

WITH YOUR PET IN MORE DETAIL BEFORE YOU HEAD OFF ON YOUR HOLS!