

COVID-19: The prepared pet checklist

If you find yourself having to be hospitalised during COVID-19, here's a guide to ensure your pets will be well cared for while you are away.

- Ensure you have adequate supplies of food and medication** – at least enough for the intended length of your stay in hospital.



- Check that your pet is up to date with their vaccinations**, in case they need to go to a boarding facility or to someone else's home. Veterinary clinics won't routinely be doing booster vaccinations under *Alert Level 4*, but if you anticipate needing to leave home during this time, talk to your veterinarian about your situation.



- Have appropriate carriers or collars/leads/harnesses available**, in case your pet needs to be transported or walked.



- Make sure you leave clear instructions for all medications**, including dosages, how to administer them, and how often they need to be given.



- Make sure that you have a contact list** for whoever is looking after your pet. This should include:



- Your pet's usual veterinarian**
- Your pet insurance company**, and policy number (if relevant)
- Your pet's microchip number**, and contact details for the *NZ Companion Animal Register*, in case they go missing.
- Contact details for somebody you trust** to make decisions about your pet's welfare (e.g. if your pet gets ill or injured), if you are not able to do so. Make sure you have talked this through with that person first! Ideally make a written plan.

- Options available for pet care** if you are hospitalised include:



- Leaving your animals at your home with others** from your social bubble (best option if possible)
- Having family or friends take care of your animals** at their own home - i.e. your animal joins their bubble.
- Boarding kennels/catteries or pet sitters** – however, access to these may be limited during *Alert Level 4*. Keep informed on the availability of these services in your area.

- As a precaution**, pets coming from a home where they may have been in contact with infectious people should be washed thoroughly, using warm animal-friendly soap and water before entering a home that has not had COVID-19.



- An alternative to washing** (especially for cats!) is to limit contact, wear gloves when interacting with them, and practice good hygiene (handwashing, no kissing/cuddling) for the first three days to reduce the potential for them to transmit viral particles that could be on their fur or skin.



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