

216 Task 2 How to Quarantine an animal



What diseases or conditions require a pet to be quarantined?

Suspected exposure to rabies, a fatal virus, is the most common reason that your pet will be ordered under quarantine. Quarantine is a legal requirement, ordered by an animal control officer.

Other illnesses that can warrant quarantine recommendations from your veterinarian, rather than orders from your local government, include canine or avian

influenza, bordetella — commonly known as kennel cough — parvovirus and giardia.

These infectious diseases are easily transmitted from animal to animal, which is why it is important to sequester your sick pet.

Signs of influenza are similar to those in people: coughing, sneezing, fever, nasal discharge and lethargy. Dogs with bordetella will have a persistent hacking cough; while pets with giardia and parvovirus will have diarrhea and vomiting (although not all pets with giardia show clinical signs and can appear completely healthy while being infected).

How do you quarantine your pet from people and other animals inside your home?

By the time a disease is recognised in a household with multiple animals, everyone probably has been exposed to it. It's like if you have one child with the flu or chicken pox, you expect the others are going to get some variant of it.

For example, by the time a pet shows signs of the flu, the most infectious period (the first four to eight days) is over. Nonetheless, if your pet has an infectious disease, you should limit him to certain parts of the household, to limit the chance of your other pets becoming infected. There should be no sharing of water bowls, food bowls, toys or bedding, or joint activities, such as playing and going for walks.

With the flu, it is particularly important to keep younger animals and those with respiratory problems or other underlying illnesses away from sick pets so they don't become infected. Some strains of canine flu and avian flu, which can affect cats, may develop into streptococcus infections or pneumonia in susceptible animals.

How do you quarantine your pet from people and animals outside your home?

Keep your pet restricted to an area in your home and property and away from visitors — including both people and animals. With many infectious diseases that affect pets, it is unclear if people can be infected, so limit everyone's exposure to the pet until your veterinarian has given the all-clear. Use common sense when caring for your sick pet by washing your hands immediately after cleaning up his waste or handling toys, dishes, etc. that might have saliva on them. Wearing gloves when cleaning up poop in the yard or litter boxes adds another layer of safety.

Why is it important to follow your veterinarian's advice?

With rabies, it is a matter of life and death. This fatal virus with no cure can be transmitted to people through a pet's saliva. Owners are required by law to get their cats and dogs vaccinated, and to comply with the law to protect the public. Failure to do so can result in a revoked license and end a career for the veterinarian.

With other infectious diseases, closely following your veterinarian's advice is the best way to protect your other animals and family.

