

Get pets set for holidays early, vet warns

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Get pets set early this holiday. Credit: University of Queensland

Pet owners should take steps now to protect their animals during the holidays, a University of Queensland School of Veterinary Science academic has warned.

Head of the General Practice service at UQ VETS Small Animal Hospital Dr Donna Spowart said while most people regarded their pets as extended family members, they sometimes forgot to ensure their pets had sufficient medications during the Christmas and New Year break, when many veterinary surgeries were closed.

"Ideally, pets should also be vaccinated at least two weeks ahead of their

being placed with boarding kennels and catteries to protect them against diseases," she said.

"If you are leaving your animals in someone else's care while you're away, they will need your pets' details including medications, vaccination history, specific dietary requirements, name of their vet, and other medical details.

"People are sometimes so busy preparing for their own holidays they leave everything until it's too late to consider these arrangements."

Dr Spowart said it was important during the storm season to microchip cats and dogs, as animals can become anxious during storms and escape their yards.

"If you lose a pet, you should contact your local veterinary clinic and organisations such as your local council pound and the RSPCA.

"Social media is also very helpful with people now posting images of lost and found animals.

"If you find a lost pet, your local vet can read the microchip and identify the owners.

"That's why it's important to ensure these details are up-to-date."

Dr Spowart said people considering giving their children pets for Christmas presents should buy from reputable sources, and factor in the ongoing costs and responsibilities.

"You should consult your vet shortly after you get your new pet home, to ensure your pet's vaccinations are up-to-date to protect them against a number of potentially fatal conditions," she said.

Dr Spowart said other factors people should consider were intestinal worming, tick and flea protection, desexing, registration, ongoing food and grooming costs, and obedience training.

Provided by University of Queensland

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