

YOU, YOUR PET AND YOUR VET



A Vetboard Victoria Factsheet

What do you need to know when it comes to caring for your pet?

There are many important considerations when it comes to the responsibility of pet ownership, for example:

- health conditions your pet might be prone to
- your financial capacity to take care of a pet (and the likely total cost of caring for your pet over its lifetime)
- whether to obtain pet insurance.

You should make your pet's health and wellbeing a priority. This includes:

- vet check ups, vaccinations and parasite prevention
- ensuring your pet's basic needs are met - providing healthy food, water, and a nurturing and safe living environment.

What is your plan if your pet gets sick?

It's important to know what to do if your pet gets sick. Make a plan:

- Know when to seek veterinary care.
- Know where the vets in your area are, and when they are open.
- Have an alternative option for when your regular vet is not open.
- Have an emergency plan if you can't get immediate access to veterinary care.
- If someone else is looking after your pet, give your vet's contact details to them. It may be helpful to discuss the cost of veterinary services with them, e.g. the upper limit to pay for vet services if you cannot be contacted in an emergency.

What can you expect from your vet?

A pet owner can reasonably expect:

- respect and professional behaviour
- an accurate and honest representation of the vet's services, qualifications, and their expected involvement in the pet's care
- treatment options, risks, likely outcomes and estimated costs
- owner involvement in decision-making.

What can your vet expect from you?

A vet can reasonably expect from you:

- respect and polite behaviour
- open and honest communication including full disclosure of your pet's history and medications
- a commitment to prioritising the health and wellbeing of your pet
- prompt payment for services.



Owner responsibilities in the veterinary board's guidelines for veterinary practice



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for all guidelines

1. Make the wellbeing of your pet a priority
2. Give your vet accurate information about your pet's history and health.
3. Tell your vet if any other vets have provided veterinary services for your pet, and what they said.
4. Make decisions and give consent for proposed procedures or treatments *in the best interests of your pet:*
 - You can decide on a treatment plan for your animal from the range of management options provided by your vet.
 - You can ask your vet to explain the options and recommended treatment plan, so you can ensure the plan is suited to your own financial and practical requirements.
 - You may seek a second opinion and ask your vet to refer you to another vet or a veterinary specialist.
 - You may choose to decline your vet's recommendations and pursue other options, as long as your pet's wellbeing will not be negatively impacted.
5. Ask your vet for more information or explanation, if you feel you need to better understand an aspect of your pet's care.
6. Follow your vet's care instructions for your pet after they provide veterinary services.
7. Know the normal business hours of your vet's practice and make plans for after hours and emergency veterinary care.
8. Maintain your relationship with your vet through:
 - regular communication
 - showing you intend the relationship to continue
 - accessing veterinary services as needed or until you or your vet terminate the veterinary relationship.
9. In case of emergency or if you prefer someone else to represent you, you can authorise another person to act on your behalf. Your pet's wellbeing should be the focus of your authorised representative's decisions, and they should be willing and able to:
 - give consent for proposed procedures or treatments
 - take financial responsibility for the veterinary services provided to your pet as required, including clearly communicating any financial limits to your vet.

Your pet. Your responsibility.



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