

## Ease the Stress of Travel with Pets

**Anticipate your cats' needs to ensure a stress-free summer trip.**

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Bring your cat's favorite bedding from home to help relieve the stress of staying in a strange place.

During the height of summer, many people take advantage of the warm weather to embark on family vacations — and cats and dogs are important members of those families.

Cat owners can include their pets in their summer travel plans. Making plans ahead of time and paying attention to your pet's needs can make the trip a success for everyone, according to Central Life Sciences, the distributors of ComfortZone pheromone-based products.

Any changes in a pet's environment can cause stress and lead to inappropriate behaviors, said Debra Nickelson, DVM, of Central Life Sciences. "By taking the appropriate measures to prepare pets for travel and anticipating their needs during a trip, many potential issues can be avoided," she said.

Nickelson offered these tips for traveling with cats and dogs: Help your pet get used to traveling in the car before you begin a long road trip. You'll be able to determine if your pet suffers from motion sickness or becomes overly excited in the car, and can seek treatment from your vet before you leave on your vacation.

Make sure you have the proper carrier or seatbelt harness for your pet, to keep both the animal and the humans safe during the trip.

Keep your pet on its normal feeding schedule as much as possible. Feed your pet one hour before you depart and immediately after you stop traveling for the day.

Never leave your pet alone in the car. Extreme temperatures in a closed car can be fatal.

Before you depart, obtain proof of vaccinations from your veterinarian. Many hotels require these documents when checking in with pets.

Pack some of your pet's favorite items from home, such as bedding, toys and food dish. Bring a crate if you must leave your pet unattended in the hotel room.

Place the "do not disturb" sign on the door to ensure hotel staff members don't accidentally disturb your pet. Leave a television or radio on at a low level to drown out unfamiliar noises and voices.