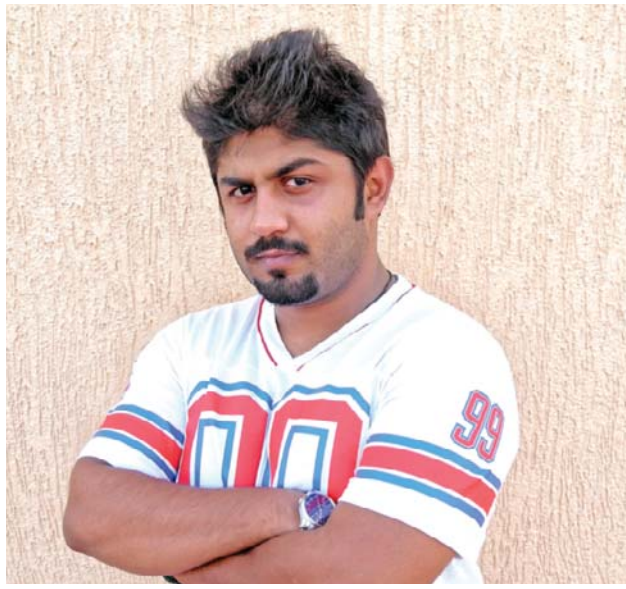


Stress

"Most pets are comfortable with routine. Vacations and boarding usually mean that the animals' routine is changed. This can be due to changes in location, hours of activities, people, food, etc. All this can cause stress to animals," said Jameela Al-Nakkas, a senior veterinary technology student in Australia. She said the best thing about being a vet tech is client education. "We are responsible for teaching clients how to care for their pets, such as what food to feed, housing, parasite prevention and general care. In addition, it is part of our jobs to be supportive and caring, especially during euthanasia, for clients and for the staff," she explained.

Jameela added that some animals are okay with change and most adapt pretty quickly, but this can be considered somewhat of a stressor. Friends and family are usually better for pets to stay with if they are familiar with their carers. "With boarding facilities (pet hotels) and hospitals, it is essential to make sure the animal is up-to-date on their vaccines and are not immuno-compromised (too young, too old, have immune system disease, pregnant, etc) to avoid catching any diseases. Some places even require special vaccinations to ensure that this doesn't occur, such as kennel cough vaccine," said Nakkas.

"In general, boarding is a stressor, and stress (a mental health issue) has effects on physical health as well, especially for young,



Ali Al-Saadi, owner of the @5la_3ndy animal shelter in Kuwait.

old, pregnant and immune-compromised pets. Also, with animals that have separation anxiety issues, being away from their primary carer can be very difficult for them. I personally prefer boarding services that are qualified (that meet international and personal standards). Pet sitters are also a great option that is usually greatly less stressful for the animals," she said. "Moving the animal can be made easier by slowly getting the animal used to the new place or carer, using calming tools such as food, supplements, sprays, etc. A vet can also prescribe antianxiety medicine if possible. Bringing toys, blankets and food may help as well," added Nakkas.

Planning your next holiday, tour or safari? Think in advance about the destiny of your pet. Don't leave it all to the last minute. Having pets should be taken seriously and as not as some people do, who buy them to entertain their kids, and with the first problem, the pets get abandoned.

Guidelines for choosing a boarding service, these are ASPCA recommended:

1. Cleanliness. Which includes a daily cleaning routine, clean staff uniform, clean housing, etc.
2. Appropriate fencing/housing to prevent animal injury or escape.
3. The number of staff should be appropriate to the number of animals on board. The ASPCA recommends that the maximum should be 15 animals per person.
4. The staff must have experience with handling the animals, knowing their needs, knowing CPR and first aid and have a vet on premises or on call.
5. If their animals are mixed together they should have a behaviour assessment and sorting process and the proper knowledge to break fights. They must also know how to introduce animals together.
6. They must ask about the special needs of your pet and what they can offer. Especially sending pictures and all.

Written by Jameela Al-Nakkas - Veterinary Technology Senior Student - The University of Queensland, Australia.



Jameela Al-Nakkas, Veterinary Technology Senior Student - The University of Queensland

And the winner is...

Lucky winner
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