



Guam is a unique place with many hazards for pets. This sheet is to inform you of some of these hazards and ways to help keep your pets safe.

**HEAT STRESS:** It is very humid and hot on Guam. Dogs have fur coats and can't sweat so they are even more affected by the heat than we are. Be sure to slowly acclimate your dog to the heat before taking them on walks, runs, hikes and to the beach. Try to avoid having your pet spend too much time outside during the hottest hours of the day even when they become acclimated. Do not push them to go on longer walks than they want to, and don't walk them on hot pavement during day. Keep your pets lean. Make sure your pets have fresh, cool water available at all times. (Don't let your pets drink salt water at the beach or drink from puddles) Never leave your dog tied up outside or in a vehicle, even with the windows down. Heat stress is very serious and can be fatal. Another helpful tip for hiking with pets is to NOT bring your pet with you the *first* time you attempt a new hike. This way you can find out if that specific hike is appropriate to bring a pet on. (i.e. how much shade is available throughout the hike, is there water for them to swim in and cool off?)

**HEARTWORM DISEASE:** Heartworms are transmitted to dogs and cats by mosquitoes. Unfortunately heartworm disease is common on Guam, but it is preventable. Heartworm disease can cause heart failure and death. Treatment is available if your dog gets this disease but it is much better to prevent it in the first place. ALL DOGS should be on heartworm preventative for the entire time they live on Guam and should be tested annually. If your cat spends any time outdoors, it is a good idea to keep them protected as well. You can talk to your veterinarian about different preventative options available for cats and dogs.

**INTESTINAL PARASITES:** Intestinal parasites are very common on Guam. Some are zoonotic, meaning humans can become infected too. Most intestinal parasites are microscopic and are only detected by having a fecal test checked at a vet clinic. It is highly recommended to have your pet's fecal checked at least once a year while you live in Guam. If your pet goes hiking, to the beach or to the dog park regularly this is especially important. \* An added bonus of having your dog on heartworm prevention is that most heartworm preventatives also prevent intestinal parasites.

**FLEAS & TICKS:** Fleas and ticks flourish on Guam. Tick disease is very common here. There are many different options for flea and tick preventative for cats and dogs. You can talk to your vet to find out which ones are right for you and your pets. If you get a flea or tick infestation remember to treat all pets in the household, the inside of the house and the outside environment all at the same time. Sometimes a second treatment of the house and environment are required to kill eggs that might have hatched. Prevention is easier and cheaper than treating for an infestation or a tick disease.

**LEPTOSPIROSIS:** Leptospirosis occurs worldwide, but is most common in temperate or tropical climates. The bacteria that cause Leptospirosis are spread through the urine of infected animals, which can get into water or soil and can survive there for weeks to months. Humans and animals can become infected through contact with this contaminated urine (or other body fluids,

except saliva), water, or soil. The bacteria can enter the body through skin or mucous membranes (eyes, nose, or mouth), especially if the skin is broken from a cut or scratch. Drinking contaminated water can also cause infection. Infected wild and domestic animals may continue to excrete the bacteria into the environment continuously or every once in a while for a few months up to several years. If your dog will be spending any time outdoors on Guam it is recommended that he or she is vaccinated for Leptospirosis.

**TOADS:** Guam is home to the invasive Cane Toad. Toads exude a toxin from poison glands behind their eyes. They squeeze this poison onto the surface of their skin when they are under threat. Dogs and cats are poisoned when they mouth the toad. If your pet gets a hold of a toad, immediately rinse their mouth thoroughly with water and wipe their gums and tongue with a damp cloth to remove any toxin left behind and contact an emergency veterinarian.

**BEE STINGS:** Bees, wasps, and mud daubers are all found on Guam and can sting your pets. Pets can have allergic reactions to stings. If your pet is stung, you can give them Benadryl (Diphenhydramine). The dose of Bendaryl for dogs is 1mg per 1lb. Closely monitor your pet for signs of anaphylaxis: puffy face, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, diarrhea or collapse. If this happens (or if you already know your pet has this type of reaction to stings) immediately take your pet to an emergency vet clinic.

**TRANSMISSIBLE VENEREAL TUMORS:** These are tumors that can develop on the genitalia and other places on a pet's body if they sniff, lick or mate with an infected animal. Have your pets spayed and neutered and do not let them come in contact with any stray animals or pets that have tumors on their genitalia.

**ANIMAL OVERPOPULATION:** While there is a problem with animal overpopulation all over the world, it is particularly bad in Guam. The entire island has only ONE animal shelter and it is extremely overwhelmed with strays and unwanted pets. Please help mitigate this problem by spaying and neutering your pets or at least not breeding while you live in Guam with your pets. This gives all the homeless animals that are already looking for families a better chance to get adopted. If you have room in your house and heart, please look into ways that you can help the shelter.

**Everyone can do something – Foster, adopt, volunteer, donate or advocate! Give them a call at 653-4246.**

**CATS:** Hazards for cats that spend time outside include stray cats and dogs, fleas and ticks and transmissible diseases like Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus. It is recommended to keep cats indoors. If your cat enjoys time outside, it is recommended that they only spend time outside if it is supervised.

Andersen Veterinary Treatment Facility does not see emergencies or walk-ins, patients are seen by appointment only. To schedule an appointment please call 366-3205.

We highly recommend establishing a relationship with an off base/emergency vet clinic before the need to use one arises.

We do not accept cash payments. We do accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover, money orders and personal checks.

Boller VTF on Naval Base Guam also has a military Veterinary Treatment Facility – They can be reached at 333-3225