

INSURING YOUR PET

General

Pet health insurance is valuable to you and your pet(s). We encourage you to seriously consider it.

Competition between the leading pet insurers means cost-effective insurance cover is available. But beware of insurance policies which seem considerably cheaper – they usually mean limited cover and / or querying of most claims by the insurance company, however straightforward. As the saying goes: you usually get what you pay for!

Why insure?

Most veterinary bills are modest. But if your pet is in a road accident or develops a complicated disease which is difficult to diagnose or treat, then you may need significant funds to do the best for your pet.

If you have money set aside for the “rainy day” – when the roof leaks or your pet has a serious veterinary problem – then pet insurance may not be for you.

However, if (like many of us) money can at times be tight, then pet insurance makes sound sense – you know exactly how much you have to pay in premium each month and how much the “excess” is. No sudden unexpected big bills at a financially awkward time!

What about searching on the internet?

This sounds great in theory. The reality at the present time is that it is difficult to find the information you want and, more important, to make a genuine comparison between companies and policies.

A number of web-sites claim to independently review ‘all the insurance companies and policies’, but we have found that when you enter a number of different animals’ details into any of these web-sites it produces a list each time with a couple of companies always at the top. In other words, that web-site is sponsored by those two companies and it is far from independent!

What about “Which” consumer magazine?

From time to time pet insurance is featured in this monthly publication. Its value is helping you to decide on the most important aspects to consider, and listing all the better insurance companies and policies.

To obtain the most recent report, use the internet: “Which? Online” and then look under

We have the brochures, policy details and application forms for a number of pet health insurance companies.

“House & Home” and select “Pet Insurance”.

Voucher towards booster vaccination?

Some policies include a voucher (e.g. worth £25) towards the annual check-up and re-vaccination.

Why? Because - on the “stitch in time principle” - earlier diagnosis of a problem usually means less cost for the insurance company to pick up.

Go for genuinely “Lifelong” cover

Be sure to get cover for Life for your pet. Then, as long as you continue to renew your policy there are no new exclusions at annual renewal time. And the insurance company will continue to pay for on-going conditions (such as arthritis or allergic skin disease).

Exclusions

Normally, any disease condition previously or already affecting your pet when you first take out the policy will be excluded (in other words, not be covered by the policy).

The Excess

In the event of a claim, you simply pay a fixed amount of money per disease condition. The company pays all the costs above that.

Consider policies where you can pay a higher excess in exchange for a lower monthly/annual premium – as can be done with household or motor insurance.

Catches & Hidden Extras

There should be none. But be sure to read the small print.