

Pets In Hong Kong

Contributed by Administrator
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Living Conditions

There are lots of dogs and cats here in Hong Kong. Unfortunately they are banned from public housing estates and some private residential blocks, so check that pets are allowed in your flat before you move in. It seems quite strange at first to see a big dog living in a typical small Hong Kong flat, but owners are often quite conscientious and take them out for plenty of walks. Then the dog may be happier than one living in a big house! However, most dogs here are small. Yorkshire Terriers, Pomeranians, Schnauzers, Miniature Pinschers, Maltese and Shih-Tzus are all popular. Cats usually adapt well to flat life and quickly get used to litter trays. People are becoming much better at picking up their dogs' stools, with a scooper, or newspaper. Remember "on the spot" fines are now in force to people who do not clean up after their pets in public areas.

Common Ailments

What are the main problems here in Hong Kong? Well, the weather can get pretty hot and humid so skin problems are probably the most common thing we deal with. Fleas, ringworm, mange, allergies and various sorts of eczemas are all popular.

Your dog should already be vaccinated against distemper, parvovirus, leptospirosis and hepatitis. These are included in the normal "6 or 7-in-one" puppy shots. Make sure to get your annual booster as these diseases are common here. A rabies vaccination every 3 years is compulsory, although there have been no cases of rabies in Hong Kong since 1988. Similarly with your cat, get the "cat flu" shots every year, and there is now a good vaccination against feline leukaemia.

"High Rise Syndrome" is what we call the tendency for cats, which are out on high balconies or window-ledges, to fall off. Anything falling from more than 7 floors up tends to reach terminal velocity, and even when they survive, cats often don't seem to learn from their experience!

It is important to ensure your dog gets out for enough exercise, as well house-trained dogs, bursting for a pee all the time, can develop cystitis. Similarly, cats who would normally go outside, or with dirty litter trays, can develop cystitis, nephritis and FUS.

Heartworm is fairly common here. This also occurs in North America and Australia but is not common in Western Europe.

Most other problems are very much the same as you would find anywhere else and shouldn't cause you to worry too much about bringing your pet here.

Other Pets

We see a full range of other pets here. Birds are very popular, especially with the local Chinese who can be seen taking them out in their cages for walks and to meet other enthusiasts. Chinchillas are gaining in popularity and there are a lot of rabbits, hamsters and reptiles. If you have a pet such as a parrot which may be a rare species, and CITES listed, you should contact the Agriculture and Fisheries Department with regard to import and export regulations and restrictions. Certainly it is wise to check the species of any bird you are offered for sale here, and make sure you get a proper receipt, or you may find you are not allowed to export it when you leave.

Local Laws

All dogs need to be vaccinated against rabies to get the compulsory license. This will normally be re-done by the Agriculture and Fisheries Department on arrival. (There have been no cases of Rabies in Hong Kong since 1988). Microchipping of all dogs has been introduced. This can be done by your Green Cross Vet.