

# A guide to Pet Insurance

## How can pet insurance help you?

Like humans, pets can suffer an illness or injury at any time. As there is no NHS for pets, you need to consider how you would cover the cost if your pet needs treatment.

Pet insurance can help you get your beloved pet back on their feet without worrying about the cost of veterinary bills.

Vets can now do more for pets than ever before but pet owners are often surprised by the cost of veterinary bills and unaware that some conditions require ongoing treatment.

There are specialist tools and techniques that can be used to give your pet the best possible diagnosis and care but costs can soon mount up. Pet insurance can help cover these costs and allows you to budget monthly rather than worrying about paying unexpected veterinary bills.

## Choose the right pet insurance policy

It is important to realise that not all pet insurance is the same and consider carefully which type of policy is right for your pet.

### Lifetime policies

- Cover is provided up to a set amount for veterinary fees and refreshed each policy year.
- No time limit on how long you can claim for each illness or injury as long as you renew the policy each year without a break in cover.
- Ideal if your pet develops an ongoing condition such as arthritis or diabetes.



### 12 month/Time-limited policies

- Cover is provided up to a maximum amount per condition.
- There is a 12-month limit, meaning conditions will only be covered for the first 12 months.
- After 12 months the condition will be excluded from the policy.



### Maximum Benefit policies

- Cover is provided up to a maximum amount per condition (e.g. £3,000).
- Once you have claimed up to the maximum amount, that condition is excluded from the policy.



### Accident only

- No cover for illness.
- Provides a fixed sum of money for each accidental injury.
- Some policies have a 12-month limit meaning injuries will only be covered for the first 12 months.
- Often only covers a certain amount of accidents.



## Benefits of pet insurance:

- Peace of mind in the event of illness or injury
- Financial help to cover the cost of unexpected treatment
- Able to make decisions based on what's best for your pet without worrying about the cost of treatment
- May allow you to seek veterinary advice sooner
- Improved treatment options and outcome for your pet

## What else should you consider?

### Excess

The excess is the contribution you make towards the cost of a claim. It is important to check what excesses apply as some insurance policies have a % excess in addition to a fixed excess. The excess is usually deducted from your claim settlement.

### Additional Cover

Some policies will not only cover the cost of veterinary bills but also include cover for the cost of advertising and a reward if your pet gets lost or stolen. And, can even help with legal costs if your pet causes an accident, injury or damage to someone else's property.

### Pre existing conditions

Pet insurance does not usually cover pre-existing conditions that occurred before the start of a policy. It is important to get the right cover from the start as switching to a different policy could cost you more in the long run if your pet already has any illnesses.

### Price

Not all pet insurance is the same so don't just shop around on price alone. It's also important to check how the cost of your policy will change over time. Most policies increase in price as your pet gets older but some insurers also increase your premium if you claim and others don't.

## Questions you may find useful to ask when shopping for pet insurance

- Can you pay my vet directly?
- Are you a pet insurance specialist?
- Will you cover my pet into old age?
- Will my premium or excess increase if I make a claim?
- Does the policy cover congenital, hip related or hereditary illnesses?
- Does this policy cover dental treatment and behavioural problems?
- Does this policy place limits on particular conditions or medications?
- Is there a time or monetary limit on how long this policy will cover ongoing conditions for?



## Did you know

you're more likely to claim on your pet insurance than your car or home policy?