

How frequently will I need to pay the excess?

Like your home and car insurance, pet insurance will have an excess which you will pay for each condition, some pet insurance companies will require an excess per condition per policy year others will take a one off excess per condition for the life of the policy.

The amount that you will pay as an excess will vary between companies it also depends on the breed and age of your animal.

And finally

Be careful of internet comparison sites when choosing a pet insurance policy. The company at the top of the list is not always the best one for you!

Low premiums may sometimes mean a poor insurance package with unexpected limitations. Check the small print carefully.

Make sure that premiums are paid on time and in full – insurance companies can be quick to cancel a policy.

You will not be able to take out insurance for a problem that has already been documented by your vet. All companies will ask for a full history of the animal to be insured to check for pre-existing conditions.

The best time to start insuring your pet is from the day you get it. Your veterinary practice may be able to offer you no obligation cover notes to provide short term cover until you have researched things a little more.

Summary

- Veterinary practices will encourage owners to insure their pets to make sure that they never have to compromise the quality of care an animal receives on the basis of cost.
- Your veterinary practice will be able to advise you on certain companies which they feel offer the best policies and levels of cover.
- Please feel free to contact a member of your practice team for further advice.



Excellence in Veterinary Care

XLVets Small Animal member veterinary practices work together to share experience, knowledge and ideas to ensure the highest levels of quality and care for their client's pets. XLVet member practices provide a compassionate and caring service for all pets and at the same time offer comprehensive and up-to-date treatment in all fields of veterinary medicine and surgery.

PET INSURANCE



Why insure your pet?

In recent years veterinary medicine has become increasingly more sophisticated. We are able to diagnose and treat conditions that a few years ago would have remained undetected. The downside of these advances is an increase in the associated costs. This leaflet is designed to help you understand pet insurance, how to select the policy that is right for you and where it can help.

How do I decide if pet insurance is right for me?

There are a multitude of different companies offering pet insurance these days and it is impossible to say that there is one type that is better than any other.

A good pet insurance policy will cover the costs associated with accident and illness, giving you peace of mind that you can afford the best available treatment for your pet.

As with other types of insurance, you will be required to pay a premium usually on a monthly or annual basis. There is usually also an excess to pay and there will be a list of exclusions which explain what the policy does not cover.

The most important thing to do is work out what you want from the policy and whether it can provide this for a reasonable cost.



What is usually covered?

It is important to remember that policies differ however, in most cases the following will apply:

- cover will be provided for accidents and emergencies;
- cover will be provided for illness.

Cover does not usually start for illness until **two weeks after the policy start date** however, immediate cover may be provided for accidents or injuries.

Many companies also offer extras within a policy such as public liability, emergency boarding kennel and cattery fees, accidental damage, overseas travel and much more.

What is not usually covered?

Most companies do not cover what can be classed as preventative healthcare, this includes:

- vaccination and microchipping;
- flea and worming treatments;
- neutering;
- dental treatment.

Some companies may offer policies with incentives such as discounts on some routine treatments such as vaccinations.

Cover is unlikely to apply for pre-existing conditions such as any problem present before the policy was started.



Questions to ask when choosing pet insurance

How long will the policy provide cover for a condition?

Short term cover

Some policies will only cover a condition for a certain period of time, this may apply for 12 months following the start of the problem or the cover may stop at the end of the policy year.

Lifetime cover

Policies providing this will generally cover the costs of an illness for the duration of a pets' lifetime. There is sometimes the requirement to pay an excess for each condition at the start of each policy year to maintain cover. This type of policy is particularly useful for long term conditions such as diabetes, osteoarthritis and heart disease.



Is the veterinary fees cover appropriate?

The sum of money available to cover a condition varies tremendously between companies. Many will restrict payment of veterinary fees to a set amount per illness or injury. This can create problems where a condition is ongoing and the costs exceed the amount of cover.

Other companies offer a level of cover for a condition which is recharged on an annual basis.