



BELLA MOSS
FOUNDATION

What can Pet Owners do to minimise risk of HAI in their Pets



Nosocomial infections (also known as hospital-acquired infections or HAIs) can occur in veterinary clinics or hospitals and they pose a risk to both pets and humans. Pet owners can take several steps to minimise the risk of such infections, especially when their pets require medical care. Here's what pet owners can do.



For public use



GRAM
ADVANCING THE NATIONAL USE
OF ANTIMICROBIALS



INFECTION CONTROL EDUCATION FOR VETS NURSES AND OWNERS



Maintain Good Hygiene

> TOILET BEFORE VISITING THE VETERINARY

Ensure your pet has had suitable opportunity To toilet prior to visiting the veterinary facility.

> WASH HANDS REGULARLY

Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after handling your pet or any surfaces in the clinic.

> USE HAND SANITISER

In cases where soap and water are not available, hand sanitisers with at least 60% alcohol can be effective.

> DISINFECT PET'S BELONGINGS

It is best to avoid taking any of your pet's belongings into the veterinary facility. Anything that you do take in and later take home with you, such as your pet's collar, leash, etc., must be well cleaned and disinfected prior to taking it back inside your own home.

> WORKING IN HEALTHCARE SETTING

If you or any member of your household works in any healthcare setting, bring this to the notice of the veterinarian, as such a link increases your pet's risk of antimicrobial resistant bacterial infection.



Keep Up to Date with Vaccines

> VACCINATE PETS

Ensure your pets are up to date with all essential vaccines to protect them from common infectious diseases.

> FOLLOW VETERINARY ADVICE

Discuss with the vet the most appropriate vaccines and preventative measures for your pet based on their risk factors and lifestyle.

> AVOID FEEDING YOUR PET ANY 'RAW DIETS'

Avoid feeding raw diets in the 10 days prior to or during hospitalisation



Avoid Exposure to Contaminated Areas

> LIMIT TIME IN HIGH-RISK ENVIRONMENTS

Avoid bringing pets to the clinic unless absolutely necessary. If possible, wait in the car or outside the waiting area with your pet to limit exposure to any potentially infected surfaces or animals.

> CHOOSE A REPUTABLE CLINIC

Ensure that the veterinary clinic follows stringent infection control protocols. Look for clinics with a clean and well-maintained environment. Some clinics advertise their infection control / hygiene status. No responsible veterinary practice should mind a client asking to see their 'practice biosecurity and infection control policy', or a copy of their latest infection control audit.





Ensure Proper Disinfection

> SANITISATION OF PET CARRIERS

Clean and disinfect your pet's carrier or any travel equipment before and after visits to the clinic.

> ENSURE CLINIC CLEANLINESS

Confirm that the clinic has proper sanitation protocols in place, including regular cleaning and disinfection of common areas, treatment rooms, and medical equipment.



Monitor for Symptoms

> OBSERVE FOR ILLNESS

After a visit to the clinic, during the forty-eight hours following a visit, during 72 hours following discharge or within 30 days of a surgical procedure, monitor your pet for any unusual signs of illness such as fever, lethargy, respiratory, skin, urinary or digestive issues. Early detection can help address any infections quickly.

> PROMPTLY ADDRESS ANY CONCERNS

If you suspect your pet has contracted a nosocomial infection, contact the veterinarian immediately for further assessment.



Follow Veterinary Instructions Carefully

> ANTIBIOTIC USE

If prescribed antibiotics or other medications, ensure your pet completes the full course as directed. Incorrect use can lead to antibiotic resistance and other complications.

> MONITOR ANY SURGICAL WOUNDS

If any swelling or discharge is observed, contact the veterinary practice as soon as possible.

> IT IS NOT NORMAL OR DESIRED

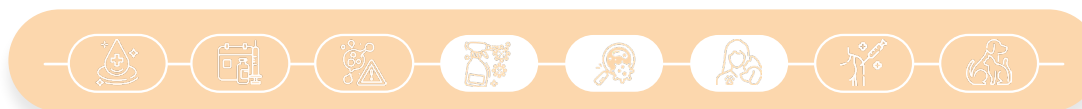
For any patient to lick or clean a wound following surgery, any tendency to do this should be discussed with the veterinarian and if necessary, the wound should be covered, or a collar or alternate measure taken to prevent access to the wound.

> ISOLATION PROTOCOLS

If your pet has a contagious disease, follow isolation protocols to prevent spread to any other animals in the clinic.

> YOUR VETERINARIAN

Your veterinarian is likely to have given you advice in respect of dietary and water intake and any advised restriction on exercise, climbing stairs or jumping onto furniture, etc. Any such advice must be followed carefully.





Vaccinate and Protect Yourself

> HUMAN PROTECTION

If you or any members of your household have compromised immune systems, take extra precautions when handling pets, especially when visiting the vet.



Limit Contact with Other Animals

> AVOID CONTACT WITH SICK ANIMALS

When at the clinic, try to keep your pet away from other animals who may be showing signs of illness to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

By taking these steps, pet owners can help reduce the risk of nosocomial infections, keeping both their pets and themselves healthier and safer during veterinary visits.

