



# Be prepared for when the unexpected happens

Your dog might be your closest friend giving unconditional love, and your cat, your TV couch companion, but unfortunately they can't fend for themselves should something happen and you aren't able to be there for them.

Because pets usually have shorter life spans than their human caregivers, you may have planned for your animal friend's passing. But what if you are the one who becomes ill or incapacitated, or who dies first? To make sure that your beloved pet will continue to be cared for, should something unexpected happen to you, it is important to plan ahead.

## **What can I do now to prepare for the unexpected?**

In the confusion that accompanies a person's unexpected illness, accident, incapacitation or death, pets may be overlooked. In some cases, pets are only discovered in the person's home days after the tragedy, resulting in their safety and welfare being placed at risk.



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To prevent this from happening to your pet you should take these simple precautions:

1. Find at least two friends or relatives who agree to be emergency caregivers for your pets in the event that something unexpected happens to you. Provide them with keys to your home along with any important information such as feeding instructions, medical needs and the name of your pet's vet.
2. Make sure your neighbours, friends and relatives know how many pets you have and the contact details of your pet's emergency caregivers. Your pet's emergency caregivers should also have each others contact details.
3. Carry a card in your wallet that advises emergency personnel you have a pet at home and lists the contact details of your pet's emergency caregivers.
4. Post "in case of emergency" stickers on your doors specifying how many and what types of pets you have. These notices will alert emergency personnel during an emergency. Ensure you remove these when you move or if you no longer have your pet.
5. Display your pets emergency caregivers contact details somewhere highly visible in your home.

Pets require daily care and will need immediate attention should you not be there to care for them – the importance of making these formal arrangements for their temporary care should not be overlooked.



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