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Winter care for pets

PET lovers and pet owners need to be prepared to keep their pets warm and comfortable for winter. In the colder weather, we need to take care of all our pets, especially dogs.

In some situation, winter can be a critical time for pets, whether they stay indoors or outdoors. Even though we live in a relatively warmer environment, the sudden decrease in temperature can still be harmful for our pets.

We should consider them exactly as we do our children; our pets will benefit from our direct care and protection during the winter. There is a common myth that pets do not need any additional human care during winter, but we must bear in mind that domestic pets are social by nature, so they are happiest when they are close to the owner who provides them warmth, love and comfort. When pets stay close to humans, they adapt to human love and comfort. But our pets aren't the only ones needing care. Besides them, we should also help street dogs and cats to survive the cold by sheltering them, or at least allowing them to sleep under warm corners of our building premises without any disturbance.

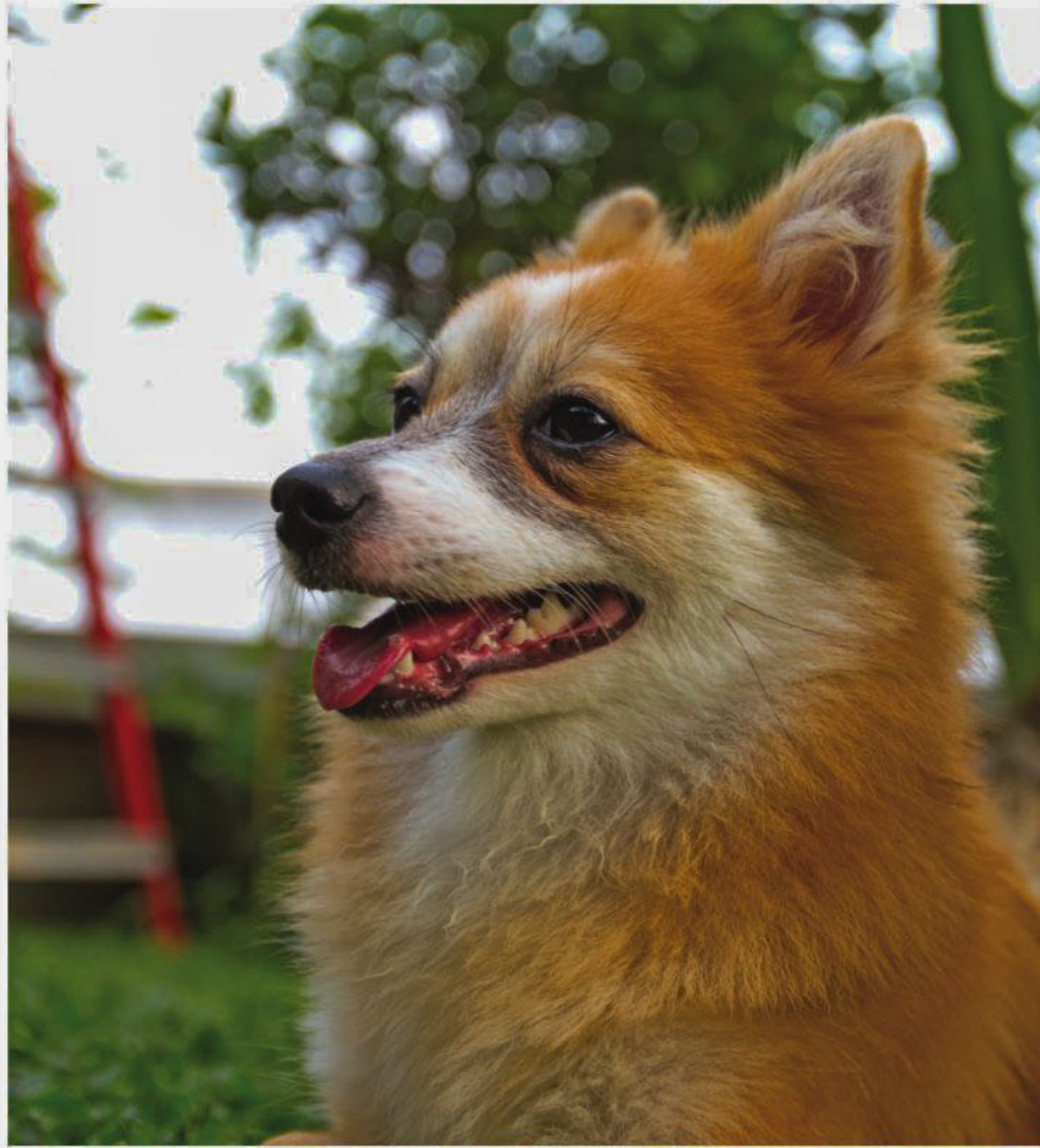
Cold weather can be tough on pets, just as it can be tough on people. Sometimes owners forget that their pets are just as accustomed to the warm shelter of the indoors as they are. Some owners will leave their animals outside for extended periods of time, thinking that all animals are adapted to the outdoors. This can put their pets in danger of serious illness.

Take your pets for a check-up before winter kicks in. Your veterinarian can check to make sure they don't have any medical problems that will make them more vulnerable to the cold. Pets may require more health care during the winter. At least one checkup at the beginning of the season may boost his/her chances of staying healthy all winter long. Keep in mind that your pet has a sensitive immune system, just as humans do, and his chances of getting frequent colds are quite high if the proper precautions are not taken. To boost your pet's overall health this winter, besides manufactured pet foods, a natural, homemade diet will make a nutritious and healthy treat for your pet. A natural diet provides more nutritional value and is easier on your pet's system. In addition, give your pet some vitamins and mineral supplements

that your vet may suggest and your pet will have a much better chance of staying healthy, happy, and safe during the cold winter months.

Keep your pets inside as much as you can when the weather is too cold. If you have to take them out, stay outside with them. When you're cold enough to go inside, they probably are too. If you absolutely must leave them outside for a significant length of time, make sure they have a warm, solid shelter against the wind, thick bedding and plenty of non-chilled water. Try leaving out a hot water bottle, wrapped in a towel so it won't burn your pet's skin.

Some pet animals can remain outside safely longer in the winter than others. In some cases, it's just common sense: long-haired breeds like long coat German Shepherds, British



Sheep Dog, Saint Bernard, Persian Cat etc. will do better in cold weather than short-haired breeds like Dachshunds, Dogo Argentino, Doberman, local indigenous cats etc. Small dogs will feel the cold sooner than larger animals. Your pet's health will also affect how long she can stay out. Conditions like diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease and hormonal imbalances can compromise a pet's ability to regulate her own body heat. Very young and very old animals are vulnerable to the cold as well.

Keep an eye on your pet's water. Sometimes owners don't realise that a water bowl has water with very low temperature and their pet can't drink it. Animals that don't have access to clean, normal temperature water are more likely to drink out of puddles or gutters, which can be polluted with oil, antifreeze, household cleaners and other chemicals.

Be particularly gentle with elderly and arthritic pets during the winter. The cold can leave their joints extremely stiff and tender and they may become more awkward than usual. Stay directly below these pets when they are climbing stairs or jumping onto furniture. Consider modifying their environment to make it easier for them to get around. Make sure they have a thick, soft bed in a warm room for the chilly nights.

Go ahead and put that sweater on Princess, if she'll put up with it. It will help a little, but you can't depend on it entirely to keep her warm. Pets lose most of their body heat from the pads of their feet, their ears and their respiratory tract. The best way to guard your animals against the cold is by keeping a close eye on them to make sure they're comfortable.

Hypothermia, or a body temperature that is below normal, is a condition that occurs when an animal is not able to keep her body temperature from falling below normal. It happens when animals spend too much time in cold temperatures, or when animals with poor health or circulation are exposed to the cold. In mild cases, animals will shiver and show signs of depression, lethargy and weakness. As the condition progresses, an animal's muscles will stiffen, her heart and breathing rates will slow down, and she will stop responding to stimuli. If you notice these symptoms, you need to get your pet warm and take her to your local veterinarian.

Model: Bubbles

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