

## PRESS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Daycare: It's Not Just for Human Kids!**

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It's no surprise that with their hectic daily lives, many dog owners want to find ways to entertain their pets during the day. Doggie day care facilities have sprung up everywhere and for a fee, owners can leave their dogs with trusted handlers and allow them to play and release a great deal of energy.

From lap dogs to herding dogs, there really isn't a breed that doesn't enjoy daycare. However, just because you think your dog might enjoy these interactions doesn't mean you want to jump into the first doggie daycare you find. Before settling on a daycare, take the time to do a little research first. After all, your pet may be spending a great deal of time there.

Look for facilities that not only appear clean to the eye, but also smell clean. Ask the staff where pets are taken for potty breaks and see how that area is cleaned and maintained. Pay close attention to safety features, like gates, fences and, if present, cages. They should be clean and not have any sharp edges that could injure a pet.

Ask about the daycare's rules to keep all pets safe and happy. Make sure the dogs are supervised at all times. This is important because unsupervised animals will set their own rules, potentially making the group unsafe for submissive or smaller dogs. In spite of precautions, dog fights occasionally happen and it is important to ask what the plan is for such an event or even for a disaster such as a fire.

Another important consideration is vaccination requirements. Ask the daycare which vaccines they require of their guests and also ask how they confirm them.

As a dog owner, your responsibility to the doggie daycare is to make sure your dog is up to date on flea and heartworm prevention as well as intestinal parasite control. Above all, if your dog is coughing or acting sick in any way, do not take them to doggie daycare! Many bacterial and viral diseases in dogs are easily spread through contact and you don't want your dog spreading illness to the other dogs. If in doubt, have your dog checked out by

your veterinarian.

Realize that not all dogs will enjoy this experience and that is okay. Dogs that are not well socialized, are dog aggressive or even some that get overwhelmed easily may not do well at a doggie daycare. Watch your pet for signs of low energy or even grumpy behavior. This may mean that your pet is going to daycare too often. The daycare staff should be able to tell you how your pet is interacting and engaging on a daily basis. This will help you decide how often to bring the dog to the site.

Finally, ask your pet-loving friends or your veterinary team about the reputation of local doggie daycare facilities to help identify one that will best suit your pet.

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*The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA), founded in 1898, is a professional organization of more than 330 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine. For more information, visit [www.vtvets.org](http://www.vtvets.org) or call (802) 878-6888.*