

# MEDIA RELEASE

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Promoting  
Responsible  
Dog  
Ownership



## Keeping dogs warm in winter prevents illness

Winter is now hitting most of Australia hard, and keeping dogs warm in these coldest months is now of vital importance. Dogs exposed to excess cold can get chills, respiratory and sinus problems, as well as experiencing arthritis. Owners need to invest in their dog's health by providing them with blankets at night and a warm place to snuggle up during the day, maintaining an exercise regime, and increasing their dog's food intake.

"It's getting to that stage of winter when we all tend to rug up at home and before we go out, so it makes sense to do the same for our dogs. When dogs are cold, they are going to bark and let their owner know about it, so giving them plenty of blankets at night not only keeps them warm, but keeps them quiet.", says veterinarian and **Dogs NSW** spokesman **Dr Peter Higgins**.

Buying your dog jackets and coats is an effective way to keep dogs warm while they are outside during winter. They provide an extra layer of insulation on top of their winter coat while protecting them from cold wind and rain.

"Whether or not your dog actually needs a jacket depends on the age and size of the dog. Generally speaking, the smaller and older they are, the more help they need to stay warm, as their body cannot generate heat as quickly as larger or younger dogs.", explains **Dr Higgins**.

"Pets with single-layer coats will also require some extra insulation, and they will thank you for the extra insulation. Adding a jacket can also be a fun way to express your dog's personality. There are lots of options available these days, from thin knitted sweaters to 'doggy couture'!", suggests **Dr Higgins**.

Keeping up an exercise routine can also be hard in the colder months, just as for humans. The daily walk is often replaced by a night in the lounge room in front of a heater.

"Exercise will get a dog's blood circulating more rapidly to stop them from getting too cold. This also means it won't be hard to get them back into routine when summer comes around.", advises **Dr Higgins**.

"It's also good to increase their food intake during winter as dogs, like us, use more energy to keep functioning in colder weather. Dogs will not only be unhappier and more irritable, but more susceptible to illnesses like sinus, throat, and lung problems. ", warns **Dr Higgins**.

"We need to keep a keen eye on good health during these months. If your dog starts developing a hoarse cough, gets a dry nose, and shivers more than usual, it's best to get it checked out with your local vet in case anything serious develops.", warns **Dr Higgins**.

"And we should all remember that, like people, dogs can suffer quite badly from arthritis in winter; so much so, that the pain could prevent them from walking or even getting up.", reminds **Dr Higgins**.

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