

Airline Travel Tips for Snub Nosed Pets



Studies have shown that the main categories of incidents (death, injury or loss) when flying animals were from the following two issues.

1. Faulty unsecured kennels
2. Breathing and overheating issues for dogs with snub noses.

Although the airlines do try to limit these incidents by requiring kennels to be secured with metal hardware and cable tying the doors closed, with the additional consideration being that snub-nosed pets can travel [usually] only when the forecast calls for temperatures to stay below 21-24 degrees C.

Helpful, but not enough; as still over 50% of all reported pet deaths on airplanes are dogs and puppies who have snub noses as these animals are more at risk when flying in cargo than any other pets.

Snub – Short nosed pets include but are not limited to:

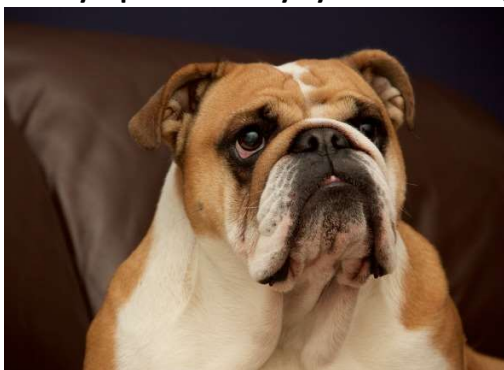
Boxers
Bulldogs
Pekinese
Pugs
Japanese Chins

(** See more comprehensive list below)



Also of note are cats such as Persians and Burmese, as well as other exotic short-hair breeds.

Brachycephalic Airway Syndrome in Dogs



Brachycephalic Airway Syndrome is the medical term related to various upper airway problems found in short-nosed, flat-faced dog breeds such as the Pekingese. A *brachycephalic* (meaning to having a short, broad head) breed may experience partial obstruction of the upper airway due to physical characteristics such as narrowed nostrils, an overly long soft palate, or collapse of the voice box (also known as the *larynx*). Breathing difficulties may also occur because of an abnormally small windpipe (or *trachea*), another characteristic common to brachycephalic breeds. Some of the more common brachycephalic breeds are the Pug, Bulldog, Boxer, Chihuahua and Shihtzu.

Symptoms and Types

Symptoms of an obstructed upper airway may include snoring, rapid breathing (or *tachypnea*), noisy breathing when inhaling, frequent panting, difficulty eating or swallowing, coughing and gagging, inability to perform physical activity, especially in warm, humid weather, and occasionally physical collapse. A physical examination may reveal further indications, such as *stenotic nares* (narrowed nasal passages), abnormally high body temperature (or *hyperthermia*), and increased respiratory effort evident by open-mouth breathing and constant panting.

Causes

Brachycephalic airway syndrome stems from the dog's unique head shape, which is inherited at birth. Most dogs are diagnosed as young adults, generally by age three. A characteristic reported in nearly 100 percent of cases of dogs with brachycephalic airway syndrome is an elongated soft palate. Narrowed nasal passages is also reported in about 50 percent of all cases of dogs suffering from brachycephalic airway syndrome.

Factors that may increase the risk and further complicate the condition further include obesity, allergies, over-excitement, and exercise, which may cause rapid breathing that the obstructed airway cannot manage. These problems worsen in warm, humid weather, which can lead to excessive panting.

Dogs more commonly use panting to cool off yet snub nosed dogs still suffer more breathing and overheating issues than snub nosed cats, but both are at risk.

Here is what you can do to help pet airline travel to be safer for these special pets.

What to do

Purchase an airline kennel that is at least 1-2 sizes larger than required for your size pet to help provide plenty of air space around the pet. Make sure your kennel has ventilation on all four sides for Domestic and International flights, even though rules specify only required for International flights for Snub nosed pets more is always better. Modify by drilling additional ventilation holes in the back wall of kennel if they are lacking. Might even be good idea to add a few extra holes in bottom walls. This is the level your pets head (nose) will be at when in a lying down position, but just a few do not overdo it or you could compromise the integrity of the kennel. See diagram below.

When to Fly & Preventative

Only fly in cool temperatures, during the cooler weather seasons or late night-early morning. Do not assume your flights will all leave on time, if the temperature is expected to get hot on either end or at your connections during the day of your flight, RESCHEDULE. So in the event there is a delay for several hours or your pet misses a connecting flight, your pet does not end up flying in the heat of the day!

Refrain from feeding snub nosed pets for 6-8 hours before flying or even longer. Autopsies results listed in the Airline Incident Reports have indicated that in some of these deaths, vomiting may have been a contributing factor. It is similar to preparing your pet for surgery where a full stomach can cause vomiting which can lead to a risk of breathing obstruction. Don't feed many hours before shipping you can still mark the Shipper's Declaration stating you offered food in the time required (you are not required to feed only required to "offer" food). Digesting food will raise body temperature and possibly result in air-sickness vomiting and snub nosed pets cannot breathe easily from their tiny sinuses if they are vomiting and panting simultaneously.

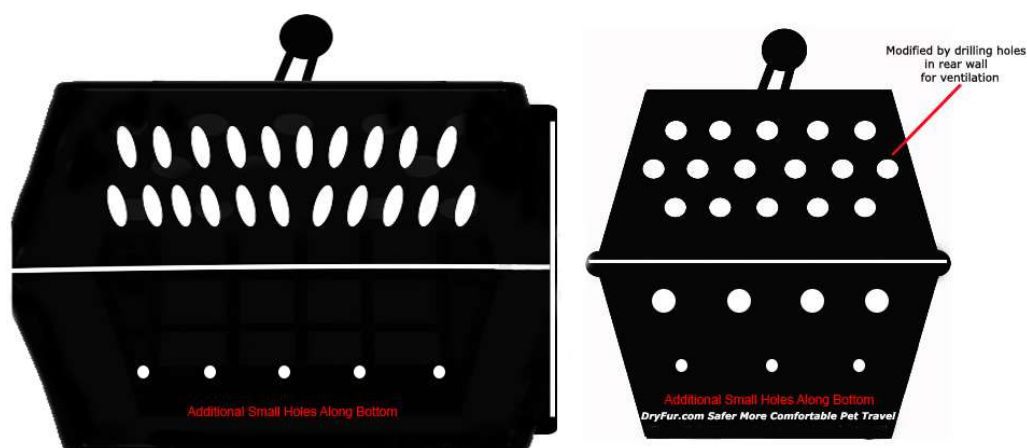
Day of Flight

Provide plenty of cool fresh water. Use a Stainless Steel Water Bucket (hook-on type) or you can cable tie to the door either will work. You should fill the bucket with water and freeze solid then attach to the kennel door this will help cool the air in an around your pet and also provide cool water when melted.

Dampen or mist their bed, mat or cushion or look into the many dog cooling mats and pads available these will help keep your pet cool with evaporation.

Do not tranquilize any pet before flying especially Snub Nosed.

After studying these Incident Reports and looking for possible solutions, we still believe it is a risk for Snub Nosed pets to travel in the cargo area of the Plane. So please research and look into other traveling options and only when you have no other option should you fly your snub nosed dogs in cargo. Check with your Airline for restrictions





Snub or Pug Nosed Dogs		Snub Nosed Cats
American Bulldog	Lhasa Apso	Burmese
American Staffordshire Terrier	Japanese Boxer	Exotic
American Pit Bull Terrier	Japanese Pug	Himalayan
Boston Terrier	Japanese Spaniel (Chin)	Persian
Boxer	Mastiff (All Breeds)	
Brussels Griffon	Pekinese	
Bulldog*	Pit Bull	
Chinese Pug	Pug	
Chow Chow	Shar Pei	
Dutch Pug	Shih Tzu	
English Bulldog	Staffordshire Bull Terrier	
English Toy Spaniel	Tibetan Spaniel	
French Bulldog		