

## VETERINARY SURGEONS

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## THE STRAVEN ROAD VETERINARY CENTRE (LTD)

### Newsletter – AUTUMN 17 Issue 35

#### CLINIC NEWS

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter.

At the end of March we said goodbye to one of our vet nurses, Jamie Bolton. Jamie had been with us for 3 years but has decided to start a new adventure by moving to Australia. We will miss her positive attitude to everything but we wish her well for the future.

Katrina Lowe, who recently finished her studies towards a Diploma in Veterinary Nursing at Ara (formerly CPIT) in Christchurch, will be taking on Jamie's position and looking forward to using her new knowledge and skills to help you and your pets. She has already been taking our puppy preschool classes.

Many of you would have seen Ana, the black Curly Coated Retriever at the vet clinic over the last 9 years. Ana belonged to Dr Mike Averill and came in every day to work with Mike. Sadly she was diagnosed with cancer in December and had to be put to sleep at the end of January. She was a perfect teaching dog for the vet nursing students who complete work placement with us. She will be very much missed by Mike, his family and all the staff.

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#### SEASONAL UPDATE – Autumn

In Autumn, we see typically warm but damper conditions. In these conditions, fleas still thrive, so remember to keep up your flea treatments.

Ear infections and skin infections can also be prevalent. Make sure you keep a close eye on your pet's ears and skin. Any changes in smell or visual changes or if you notice increased

scratching, should signal the need for a check up.

As the evenings get darker, it is worth thinking about the safety of your pet if you are walking after dark. Keep them on a lead so that you know where they are if you are walking in uncontained areas, and both you and your dog should consider wearing high vis gear so that you can be seen by motorists.

If any of you have a kitten or young cat that still hasn't been desexed or know someone who has one, remember that cat's (from a young age) start coming into season around the shortest day (21<sup>st</sup> June), so please ensure your kittens/young cats are desexed as soon as possible, to prevent adding to the huge numbers of kittens, many of whom don't find homes, produced each year.

If you have any questions about your pet, our friendly team are here to help, so please don't hesitate to give us a call.

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#### CRANIAL CRUCIATE LIGAMENT DISEASE IN DOGS

**By Dr. Mike Averill**

The cranial cruciate ligament is located within the stifle (knee) joint. It helps to stabilize the stifle joint by stopping the tibia (shin bone) from moving forward in relation to the femur (thigh bone).

Cranial cruciate ligament rupture in dogs is most commonly due to gradual degeneration of the ligament over time, rather like a rope fraying. Less commonly it can be caused by sudden trauma. Other factors that can contribute to cranial cruciate ligament disease include obesity, individual conformation, genetics and inflammatory disorders of the joint.

The most common sign of cranial cruciate ligament disease is lameness in the affected leg, which can



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vary in severity depending on whether the ligament is partially or completely torn. Other signs may include difficulty getting up from a sitting position, difficulty jumping into the car, muscle wastage, joint swelling and stiffness. Many dogs that have cranial cruciate ligament disease in one stifle will go on to develop the same problem in the other stifle joint.

Cranial cruciate ligament disease is usually diagnosed by palpation of the stifle joint, often under sedation, which will usually demonstrate an instability of the joint. X-rays are also taken, which usually show the presence of arthritis in the stifle joint.

Treatment of cranial cruciate ligament disease can be either surgical or non-surgical. Non-surgical management is best suited for dogs that are a high anaesthetic or surgical risk, such as dogs with severe heart disease or other serious illnesses. Small dogs that weigh less than 15kg bodyweight have a better chance of recovery without surgery than heavier dogs over 15kg bodyweight, which have a poor chance of recovery without surgery. Non-surgical treatment usually involves weight management, anti-inflammatory medication, exercise restriction, joint diets, joint supplements and physiotherapy.

Surgical management can be based on either ligament replacement techniques or osteotomy (bone cutting) techniques that make the cranial cruciate ligament redundant. The ligament replacement techniques are simpler, less expensive to perform and usually return many animals to near normal function. They work best in smaller, older and less active dogs. The technique we use is called extra-capsular suture stabilization, where a strong nylon suture is placed on the outside of the joint in a similar orientation to the original ligament, between a bone at the back of the femur called the lateral fabella and two tunnels in the tibia. It is then tightened with a metal crimp. Osteotomy techniques, which include tibial tuberosity advancement (TTA) and tibial plateau levelling (TPLO) are more expensive and generally performed by specialist surgeons for larger and more athletic dogs.

The success rate for cranial cruciate ligament surgery is usually about 85-90%. Aftercare includes exercise restriction, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy, arthritis management with joint diets, joint supplements and anti-inflammatory medication, and weight management.

If your pet is showing signs of lameness, make sure it has been seen by us. Cruciate disease is just one of many causes of lameness and it is

important it gets investigated, and treated. Even if the lameness is related to old age changes, it is important your pet is provided with adequate pain relief.

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## Hyperthyroidism in Cats

Hyperthyroidism is a relatively common hormonal disorder in cats. Most cases (up to 99%) result from a benign (non-malignant) nodular enlargement of the thyroid gland(s) located in the neck. In approximately 70 to 75% of cats with hyperthyroidism, both thyroid glands are affected.

The incidence of this disease has increased steadily since the early 1980's but the reason for this is still unknown. Multiple factors such as dietary, environmental, genetic and immunological causes may be involved.

Hyperthyroidism occurs most commonly in middle-aged to older cats, with an average age of onset of 13 years. The thyroid gland produces thyroid hormones which regulate the body's rate of metabolism and in hyperthyroid cats there is an excessive production of thyroid hormones which causes an increased metabolic rate.

The most common signs seen in hyperthyroid cats are weight loss, increased appetite, vomiting, increased thirst and urination, restlessness, unkempt hair coat and diarrhea. Some cats may present with loss of appetite and weakness. Cats with hyperthyroidism commonly develop rapid heart rates, heart murmurs and high blood pressure. Left untreated these can lead to heart failure, kidney failure, liver failure or blindness.

To read the rest of this article: [click here](#)

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## PROMOTIONS

There are no current promotions at this time but be sure keep an eye out on the website for promotions coming soon.

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**We would love to hear your feedback on our newsletter. We thank you for your custom and we look forward to seeing you again soon.**



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