



VETERINARY SURGEONS

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Newsletter – SUMMER 2012/2013 Issue 18

CLINIC NEWS

In October, our Head Veterinary Nurse, Tania Archbold, became Tania Fernandez when she married her fiancé Carlos. They enjoyed a fabulous day and you can check out some photos on our Facebook page.

In January we will farewell one of our nurses, Jess. She is leaving us to develop her skills in anaesthesia, as she trains to become an anaesthetic technician. We wish her well.

Don't forget to LIKE us on Facebook. We are still working towards 250 likes so we can give away the bag of Hills pet food.

For our summer newsletter we thought we would take the time to revisit to important topics for this time of the year. The first relates to getting a new pet. Although the article focuses on dogs, this can be applied to other pets too. The take home message is please talk with us first before investing in a new pet. The advice we give will be invaluable in choosing the right pet for your household.

The second article just details some of the fabulous dog walking areas we have in our fabulous city to get out and enjoy this summer. Enjoy.

GETTING A NEW PET By Linda Sorenson, DVM

As this is a time of year when people often think about getting a new dog – whether that be you or a friend or relative, so we thought we would re-run this article as a reminder.

"We're getting a new pet, and are considering a (breed name here). What do you think?"

Wow. We really wish we heard this more often than we do. For some reason, veterinarians (and veterinary nursing staff) are infrequently queried when people are interested in adding new pets to their households. We can offer a lot of very useful information, from behavioural and personality profiles to possible genetic/inherited issues you may end up having to deal with now (or in the future) with your new family member.

A lot of people are familiar with some well-known breed /

disease associations, including (but not limited to):

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- Boxers and Cavaliers / heart disease
 - Doberman Pinschers / von Willebrand's disease (similar to hemophilia)
 - Westies / allergies that result in chronic skin disease
 - Persians and Siamese / upper respiratory infections
 - Labradors / hip and elbow dysplasia
 - Schnauzers / bowel and pancreatic inflammation
 - German Shepherds / bloat
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The list is endless, and pretty much any breed will have an increase of some problem or disease process over the average truly mixed-breed Heinz 57 pooch.

This link will connect you to an extensive listing of breeds and their known disease problems: [Canine Inherited Disorders Database](http://www.upei.ca/~cidd/intro.htm) or <http://www.upei.ca/~cidd/intro.htm>

Selection of a breed should also take into account your family and lifestyle, as well as the personality and temperament of your new family member so that you have the best potential for a long, happy, healthy relationship. Our clinic staff are pretty familiar with the personalities of most of the breeds out there, and can advise you on many points that might be important in your selection, including:

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- How much exercise with this breed likely need?
 - How large will he/she get?
 - How much shedding or grooming is likely?
 - Will my new pet get along well with other family members, including other pets and young children?
 - How easy is this breed to train?
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Obviously, there may be many more factors that could influence your personal decision about which dog might be best for you. Remember that certain breeds do have personality tendencies, but every pet will also be strongly influenced by the home environment that is provided. Thus, an "intelligent" breed will not be trainable unless the time is put into training.

Here is a helpful link that may assist you in selecting a breed for your lifestyle and family:

<http://www.dog-breed-facts.com/articles/selecting-a-dog-breed.html>

The following site is useful if you have specific criteria in mind (such as size or activity level), as it classifies breeds according to such things as:



Caring Vets, Healthy Pets

- Breeds that do well with children
- Small dogs suitable for indoor or flat living
- Hypoallergenic or non-shedding dogs
- Dogs that might be suited to long periods alone (all family members working)

Scroll about half-way down the page to find a listing of these criteria.

<http://www.dog-breed-facts.com/index.html>

If you click on a specific breed on the above site (the column down the right-hand side), you will get a description of the breed, as well as a ranking on the following traits:

- Size/weight
- Grooming required
- Exercise required
- Living space needs
- Training required
- Tolerance for small children
- Tolerance for strangers

Obviously the dog's environment will shape its personality as well, but it does make sense (for instance) to start with a breed that will be suited for children and strangers if your goal is to take them into classrooms.

While these links provide a lot of information, we still encourage you to contact us regarding your new addition so we can provide you with up-to-date details and advice on your chosen breed.

Please feel free to call or drop in and chat with us if you are considering a specific breed for adoption so we can help make sure you get the right fit for your lifestyle and family.

DOG WALKING AREAS

More time to explore with your dog in summer

Tired of the same old walk around the block? Want to try something new? Here are some popular dog parks and walks to check out.

The Groynes Dog Park

- Where: 160 Johns Road, Belfast
- At the Groynes there is a securely fenced separate area specially designated for dogs. It contains:
 - An obstacle course; two clean spring-fed streams for dogs to swim or splash in.
 - Fresh drinking water
 - Wash down areas for dogs
 - Doggy doo dispensers and rubbish bins
 - Picnic tables and seating are provided next to the carpark area – dogs must be on leashes in this area.
- Note: The rest of The Groynes Reserve is totally prohibited to dogs.
- Hours of operation: 8am daily until a half hour before sunset.

Styx Mill Reserve Dog Park

- Where: Entrances from Hussey Road and Styx Mill

Road.

- This is a securely fenced area for dogs. It contains:
 - Two lake areas
 - Toilets and carparking
 - Hours of Operation: 7:30am daily, closing at 5:30pm in winter or a half hour before sunset in summer.

Horseshoe Lake Reserve Dog Park

- Where: There are several entrances; Lake Terrace Road, Horseshoe Lake Road, Broomfield Terrace or New Brighton Road.
- This is a securely fenced area. It contains:
 - A dog agility course.
 - Limited seating and parking for owners.

Victoria Park Dog Park

- Where: Off Dyers Pass Road (connects to south end of Colombo Street) or off Victoria Park Road.
- This is a securely fenced area in the Cashmere Hills. It contains:
 - Rocky outcrops, grasslands and steep climbing ridges to exercise your dog.
 - Fresh drinking water.
 - Doggy doo disposal bins.
 - Hours of operation: 7:30am daily, with closing times of 6pm in winter and 9pm in summer.

Halswell Quarry

- Where: Halswell Quarry – via Cashmere Road or Kennedys Bush Road
- Halswell Quarry has a dog exercise area where dogs may be off their leash. This area is not a designated dog park however, and is unfenced. Dog owners should be aware of other park users and keep their dogs under control at all times. It contains:
 - Plenty of carparks
 - Two toilet blocks

Bottle Lake Forest

- Where: Waitakiri Drive, Burwood
- A map of the forest can be obtained from www.ccc.govt.nz or the information centre at the car park.
- Dogs love running through the forest and there are places for them to stop and have a swim.
- It is not a designated dog park and is unfenced. This is a very popular place for active sportspeople, families and dogs so dog owners should be aware of other park users and keep their dogs under control at all times.
- Hours of operation: 6am to 11pm year round.

PROMOTIONS

Visit our promotions page on our website for current promotions: <http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/pet-product-promotions.php>

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.



**Caring Vets,
Healthy Pets**