



THE STRAVEN ROAD
VETERINARY
CENTRE (LTD)

VETERINARY SURGEONS

Dr. MICHAEL J. AVERILL, B.V.Sc (Dist)
Dr. CHANTAL MORETON B.V.Sc
Dr. EVE ALLELY B.V.Sc
Dr KATE TOLLIDAY BVSc
Dr. ANNE FINLAY BVSc

STRAVEN RD. VET CENTRE
8 STRAVEN RD, RICCARTON
CHRISTCHURCH .

Postal address
PO Box 8169, RICCARTON
PH. (03) 348 9728 FAX (03) 348 8012

469 Papanui Road
PH (03) 352 5749, FAX (03) 352 5780

Newsletter – SUMMER 2014/2015 Issue 26

CLINIC NEWS

From Mike and all the other staff at our veterinary clinic, we wish all our clients a very Happy New Year. May 2015 be a happy and healthy year for you and your pets.

On the staff front, we extend very warm congratulations to our nurse Barb, who married Brad in October. We wish them a lifetime of happiness.

Sadly we are saying farewell to Katrina Fagan in January. A new nurse will join us at the end of January and we will introduce her in the next newsletter.

SEASONAL UPDATE

Summer

Heat Exhaustion

This is a serious problem, and the risk is heightened at this time of the year. Read our article later relating to dogs in cars, but remember the same applies to your cat or any other pet you may be transporting in your car. They are all equally susceptible.

Fleas

We covered this last newsletter. Remember now is the peak season. Treat your pets before there is an infestation. This is far easier than getting rid of one. And remember fleas are not picky about whether your animal is clean or dirty, as long as it has blood. If you have never noticed them before you've probably just been lucky. Talk to our friendly staff about what is best for your pet.

Swimming and pet safety

Your dogs are just as susceptible to drowning as you are in the summer. Remember to assess any waterway carefully before allowing your dog to swim in it. Fast currents and big waves can be very dangerous. Water volumes can change quickly if there has been recent rain up stream. Be aware of current and previous weather conditions when making

the assessment. Sea conditions can change within minutes. Check marine forecasts if you have your dog on or in the sea with you. If you are taking them out on boats consider a flotation device, especially if you are a long way from shore.

HOT DOGS and CARS
Don't leave them in!

It's summer and so far it's a hot one. It is very exciting for us humans, but for dogs it's not quite the same. Every year many dogs suffer and die when their owners leave them in a hot car. Even if it is in the shade, on a 25 degree day a car can heat up to around 40 degrees or even more in just minutes! Just imagine how hot it can get on an even warmer day.

Sadly dogs can sustain brain damage and even die from heat stroke in just 15 minutes! So dog owners, think again when leaving your precious pet in the car for a few minutes when you're running a quick errand. It's just not worth it.

If you happen to see a dog in a hot car and it is locked, take note of the cars information e.g. number plate, colour, make and try and find the owner. If no luck after a short time you will need to alert the police or local animal authorities to help.

Once the dog is out of the car provide it with cool water to drink and if possible spray the dog with cool water or dab with a cool towel. Do not use ice or ice cold water as you will overcool the dog which can lead to other issues. You want them to gradually cool down. Usually a visit to your veterinarians is also recommended after this sort of situation. Photos or videos of the ordeal are always good to have as evidence to back you up, may the owner kick up a fuss.

Symptoms of heat stroke include: Restlessness, excessive thirst, thick saliva, heavy panting, lethargy, lack of appetite, dark tongue, rapid heartbeat, fever, vomiting, bloody diarrhoea and lack of condition.



Caring Vets,
Healthy Pets

PET FOOD

Choosing the right one

There is a wide array of pet foods available on the market these days, from biscuits to canned, raw foods to grain free diets. It can be bewildering trying to choose the best diet for your pet.

Things have changed a lot from the days when all domestic cats & dogs were fed on food waste and scraps. Pets have become more integrated into people's lives as members of our families, fostering an interest in improving health & longevity. With research, the knowledge of their nutritional requirements has grown significantly in the past 50 years, although there is still a lot to learn. Minimum nutritional requirements of cats and dogs are set out by the American Association of Feed Controls (AAFCO) using the latest evidence and any reputable food claiming to be nutritionally balanced will have passed AAFCO trials. In addition, some of the major companies put a lot of time and money into research trials of their own, both into regular pet food and prescription diets. We can therefore be confident in the suitability of most reputable commercial diets.

We know that different life stages and breeds have different requirements e.g. for puppies & kittens it is important to select a puppy/ kitten specific diet. Large breed puppies in particular should be fed on a large breed specific diet which moderates calorie intake to prevent excessively rapid growth (which can cause bone deformities) whilst ensuring proper nutrition particularly protein and correct calcium/phosphorus balance.

A lot of attention has been focused recently on raw food diets. These have been promoted as being ideal as it most closely matches that which they would have in the wild. Unfortunately the flaw in this argument is what is "natural" does not by definition mean it is ideal. Wild canines evolved in niches which they were able to find prey and survive, this does not necessarily mean this is perfect nutritionally. Disease, pain, starvation, predation and parasites & shorter lifespans are all part of a natural wild dog's life but these are far from ideal!

Domestic dogs (more so than cats) have evolved, under human influence, far from their wild cousins. The wild diet may be a starting point but that does not mean a different diet will not be better. The truth is that basic nutritional requirements are still under scrutiny and we are a long way from defining ideal diets. That is not to say that a raw food diet cannot be have potential benefits. One long term study showed significant improvement in oral health with supplementary feeding of dogs with raw oxtail weekly,

and it has also been shown that dental disease develops more rapidly with moist diets than dry ones. Although conversely feeding bones to domestic dogs and the ingestion of bone fragments always carries some risk e.g. of tooth fracture, intestinal irritation, diarrhoea and constipation, and more serious complications such as intestinal obstruction or perforation.

In summary look for one that is designed for your pet's life stage – growing, adult or senior. Choosing a reputable brand and avoiding homogenous poor quality dog food is a good starting point. Inevitably, convenience, cost and availability will also play a part in selecting a diet. Look for signs of health in your animal such as a good hair/coat, having energy and regular toileting with formed faeces which aren't too hard. What suits one animal may not suit another. Any change in feeding should ideally be done gradually, mixing increasing proportion of the new food with old food to allow the bacteria in the gut to adapt and reduce the risk of gut upset and diarrhoea.

Our veterinarians and qualified veterinary nurses are all able to provide you excellent advice on the best diet options for your pet. Remember every pet is an individual, and what works for one may not for another. Please talk to us.

PROMOTIONS – Straven Road only

There is one promotion to bring to your attention in this newsletter. Remember this is available at our Straven Road branch only:

Advocate- Buy any box of Advocate and receive a cat toy or dog treat (While stock lasts)

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.



For regular updates make sure you like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/veterinarycentre>



**Caring Vets,
Healthy Pets**