



THE STRAVEN ROAD  
**VETERINARY**  
CENTRE (LTD)

**VETERINARY SURGEONS**

Dr. MICHAEL J. AVERILL, B.V.Sc (Dist)  
Dr. CATH NEVILLE B.V.Sc  
Dr. LINDA SORENSEN DVM  
Dr. CHANTAL MORETON B.V.Sc  
Dr. FRANCESCA MATTHEWS B.V.Sc

**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 2009**

**Issue 2**

As this newsletter goes to print Christmas will have been and gone and we are into the New Year. Can you believe how quickly the last year has gone!

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**NUTRITIONAL ADVICE**

**Feeding Your Pet Bird For Health**

Variety is important when it comes to feeding your pet bird. Seeds alone are not a proper balanced diet for them. Birds are often uniquely adapted to eating seeds and nuts and love to eat them. However they often become addicted to eating their favourite foods like some people do with junk food. Sunflower seeds, for example, are high in fat and a common cause of obesity, health problems and a shortened lifespan in pet birds. Budgies, cockatiels and cockatoos seem particularly prone to putting on weight. Regular exercise is also important for your pet bird.

The current thinking is that pelleted diets should make up about 80% of your bird's diet and seeds less than 20% of their diet. Pelleted food is a blend of foods, such as grain, seeds, vegetables, fruits and various protein sources which are specially formulated in size and content for any given species. Any change from an all seed diet to a more varied diet including pellets must be gradual and carefully supervised to make sure that your bird keeps eating, passing droppings normally and maintaining its correct weight. Ideally your pet bird should be checked first by your veterinarian to make sure he is in good health as a diet change can be stressful and birds will often hide signs of illness.

Your pet bird should also be given a wide range of fruits and vegetables, including beans, corn, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, apples, pears and oranges. These should be fresh, washed before they are offered to your bird and replaced before they become spoiled. Healthy human foods such as rice, pasta, whole grain breads, eggs(boiled or scrambled) and lower fat meat such as cooked chicken can also be fed sparingly to parrots. Lorikeets have different requirements to other pet birds as they are nectar feeders and do best on a diet of liquids and fruits.

AVOID feeding avocado, chocolate or offering

alcohol or caffeine containing drinks to your bird as these are all poisonous to them.

A cuttlefish bone is a good source of calcium and a useful addition to the cage of pet birds and especially important if they are growing or laying eggs. Grit is no longer considered necessary in the diet of parrots and can in fact cause blockages if they eat too much. Finches and canaries can still be offered a tiny amount of grit every few months. Vitamin and mineral supplements are only necessary if your bird isn't fed a balanced diet.

Finally always make sure that you supply your bird with fresh water and keep the water dish clean.

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**STAFF PROFILE**



**Dr. Mike Averill**

Mike is one of the owners of "The Straven Road Veterinary Centre Ltd", which was established at the start of the new millenium . He is currently the senior veterinarian in the practice and, with the retirement of Chris Steel in 2007, he is now also the practice manager.

Mike graduated with distinction as a veterinarian from Massey University in 1980. Initially he worked for 9 years in mixed veterinary practice, with 4 years in Timaru, followed by 5 years in Rangiora. He moved back to Christchurch in 1989 to concentrate fully on small medicine and surgery at the Veterinary Centre.

He has regularly attended postgraduate veterinary courses on a wide range of topics in New Zealand, Australia and South Africa to maintain and improve his knowledge and skills. For many years he assisted a specialist veterinary surgeon, Dr Larry Anderson, with referral medical and surgical cases from other veterinary practices in the South Island. Mike has a special interest in bird medicine and surgery.

Mike is married to a pharmacist, Maureen, and has two children, a daughter who has just graduated as a physiotherapist and a son who is studying to be a civil engineer. He currently has 2 pets; Benny, an 8 year old budgie and Ana, a 4 year old Curly Coated Retriever dog, who you will often see sitting in the reception area at the clinic looking for attention from anyone!

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## NEW PRODUCT

### Cortavance®

Virbac Animal Health is excited to announce the NZ launch of Cortavance®

Cortavance® is sprayed onto the skin for the relief of inflamed and itchy skin in dogs. It can be used, for example, to relieve the discomfort of hotspots, lesions caused by flea allergy dermatitis and itchiness due to other types of allergic skin conditions.

Cortavance® contains the brand new active ingredient: Hydrocortisone Aceponate. This is an exceptional new component as it is both activated and deactivated in the skin. Consequently, Cortavance® is extremely potent in the skin but has very few side effects elsewhere in the body as it is barely absorbed.

Cortavance® comes in a 76ml spray bottle. The spray presentation allows for exact daily dosing. Cortavance® builds up a reservoir in the deeper layers of the skin so it continues to have an effect for up to 10 days after treatment is stopped. The once-a-day dosing and straightforward spray application make Cortavance® easy to use and allow for minimal owner contact with the product, No massage is required.

Cortavance® is a prescription medicine and should always be used under veterinary supervision. Please consult your veterinarian if you feel that Cortavance® may be suitable for your pet.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

**It's worth entering our competitions!!**

## Frontline Plus Promotion

In conjunction with Frontline Plus and Merial Ancare we had a Frontline Plus promotion running in store throughout September and October to go in the draw to win a digital camera.

Frontline Plus is a flea treatment used on cats and dogs which is applied on the back of the animals' neck on the skin. It is a great product and very easy to use for both vets and owners. We stock all sizes from cats to extra large dogs so as long as we know a recent weight on the animal we can find the size that will treat your furry friend.

To be in to win all you had to do was to buy any packet of Frontline Plus and make sure we had your correct contact details. This was a limited draw with only the first 100 people going in to win. At the end of October we printed out a list of entries and with 3 staff members as witnesses drew out the winning name.



The lucky winners were Robert and Elizabeth Sheid. The Sheid's are loyal clients who have been coming to us for many years with their animals. They were presented with their prize of the Sony digital camera by Dr. Michael Averill. Congratulations to the Sheid's. Look out for more promotions going on in store.

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## COMING SOON

A website dedicated to The Veterinary Centre at Straven Road and Papanui Animates. Give us your ideas of what you would like on our website because it is for you!

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