



THE STRAVEN ROAD
VETERINARY
CENTRE (LTD)

VETERINARY SURGEONS

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Newsletter – WINTER 2010 Issue 8

CLINIC NEWS

We would like to congratulate Anita Ansell, Veterinary Nurse and partner Chris on the earlier than expected, but safe arrival of their first born. Isaac is doing well and the new parents are very happy.

We welcome Sabrina to our team. She will be covering Anita's position for the next year, while Anita takes maternity leave. You can read more about Sabrina on our website.

Dr. Francesca Matthews went on maternity leave in late June, with her baby due mid-July. We wish her well for the safe arrival of her baby. She will be back on deck later in the year.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Parvovirus and Kennel Cough Prevalent in Christchurch

Recently we have seen an increase in prevalence of both Parvovirus and Kennel Cough in Christchurch. It is important that your dog is up to date with its vaccinations to prevent these diseases.

Note, vaccinated dogs do still get kennel cough, however by ensuring they are well up to date with vaccination means that any bout they do have will be shorter and much less severe. Discuss the best options for kennel cough vaccination with your veterinarian, as some dogs may benefit from 6 monthly boosters. You can also read more about kennel cough on our website.

<http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/important-notices.php>

Log-on to our website:

www.veterinarycentre.co.nz regularly to get updates such as this!

FEATURE ARTICLE

Bandaging and Wound Care by Tania Archbold, VN

Wounds:

If your pet has had surgery that requires suturing (stitching) you will need to keep them quiet until the stitches come out. This is usually 10-14 days post

surgery.

Keeping them quiet is a very important part of wound healing. It can reduce inflammation and redness to the area which in turn doesn't make the wound as sore or as itchy to the animal. Wounds heal from side to side rather than the length of the wound, so it doesn't matter if your pet has a very small wound or a wound the length of its leg, provided all other factors are equal, the healing time will be very similar.

A lot of patients that we have seen which have had wound healing issues have been allowed to be really active in the first week or two after surgery so it is really important to keep them calm and quiet.

We understand this is easier said than done with some pets. You may need to get extra pain relief, which can help with the healing process, or an Elizabethan Collar for them while they are healing. You will need to keep them in a more confined area than what they are used to and restrict exercise while they have sutures in.

Bandages:

If your pet has a bandage on it is very important to keep these clean and dry. If the bandage gets wet it needs to be replaced the same day. Leaving a wet bandage on an animal can cause damage to the skin and the introduction of infection into any wound under the bandage, which the bandage should be protecting, or even in between their toes.

Different types of bandages will need to be changed at different times. Your veterinarian or veterinary nurse will inform you on when the bandage is due to be changed or come off. If they are left too long they can become irritated and uncomfortable causing your animal to bite at it and possibly causing damage to the skin around the top or bottom of the bandage.

Not all animals tolerate bandages very well so Elizabethan collars may need to be used while they have a bandage on. Again, keeping them confined will help with the healing. If your pet is really agitated by the bandage it may be on too tight or too loose so you will need to get these checked. Loose bandages can cause rubbing and irritation, while tight

bandages may cause blood circulation problems.

If you have any issues with wounds or bandages on your pet get them seen as soon as possible. If left they may get more uncomfortable and cause damage to themselves, or slow the healing process down.

We will always request that a bandage and or wound are checked prior to giving you an Elizabethan collar or other device to prevent chewing. We need to be certain there is no other reason for your pet being irritated by the wound or bandage.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Blocked Bladder Emergency in Cats by Chantal Moreton, BVSc

When it's raining and cold in the winter, who wants to go outside unless they really have to? Our feline friends seem to think the same but most have to go outside to go to the toilet! This can turn into a real problem, especially for our male feline companions.

If a cat's urine concentrates in the bladder and they are not on a nutritional diet or they are genetically predisposed, sometimes bladder stones/crystals can form. When small enough, these can pass down the urethra (the tube from the bladder through the penis to the outside world) but sometimes, they get stuck. This causes much pain for the cat as urine cannot pass from the body and means an emergency trip into the vet clinic.

Typical signs that a cat has a blocked bladder: constant licking at back end/penis, general discomfort, pain when being picked up, straining in the garden/litter tray (which can sometimes be mistaken for faecal constipation), passing only small dribbles of urine sometimes with blood.

If your cat displays any of these signs, do not hesitate in getting him seen by your vet – the only treatment option is an immediate general anaesthetic and the passing of a urinary catheter up the penis to relieve the blockage. If the blockage is severe and a catheter cannot be passed, sometimes surgery is needed to open the bladder itself and unblock internally or if the cat is constantly blocking, a urethrostomy is needed – where the end of the penis is surgically removed to create a permanent opening.

A hospital stay of a few days and follow up treatment is usually required to get these boys back to normal. Often because of the toxins that build in the body when urine cannot be eliminated, the kidneys can be affected and cats can feel quite nauseous but if the cat is seen soon, these problems can be reversed. On discharge from the hospital, the cat will be started on a specially formulated diet that helps prevent the stones/crystals from reforming and medication to help repair his damaged bladder and urethra.

To try and help prevent your male cat from experiencing this nasty problem: ensure they are on a good quality diet – several brands of cat food are formulated to prevent crystal formation (please check with the staff at the Veterinary Centre to make sure your cat is safe), always have a good supply of water so urine does not become concentrated and if your feline companion doesn't like going outside especially in the winter, have a clean litter tray inside so they can relieve themselves in comfort!! If your cat does not drink much water and is on a totally dry diet, it may be advisable to add wet food to the mix. Again talk to your veterinarian about what is best for your cat.

PROMOTIONS

Check out the website for details on our current promotions. Current for July 2010:

1. Purchase a bag of Hills Science Diet Kitten and get Profender Free
2. Just come into either of our branches and buy a packet of Frontline Plus and receive an extra pipette free.

Find out more at:
<http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/pet-product-promotions.php>

WEBSITE

www.veterinarycentre.co.nz

New content on the website:

Dental Care – things you can and should be doing at home to provide optimal dental care for your cat or dog.

<http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/dental-care.php>

Teeth brushing – step by step, how to introduce your cat or dog to teeth brushing

<http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/teeth-brushing.php>

Blood Tests – read about the reasons for and the benefits of blood tests prior to anaesthesia, for a senior pet and also when your pet suffers from carrying too much weight

<http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/blood-tests.php>

We want you, our clients to be part of our website. Share your favourite pictures of your pets by emailing them to us.

We'd also love to hear their stories too, especially if your pet has undergone treatment with us and you'd be willing to share. Let us know if you are happy to share your pet's story and we can put something together and contact you for your perspective too.

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.