



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

VETERINARY SURGEONS

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Newsletter – WINTER 2013 Issue 20

CLINIC NEWS

Our big news this month is that our Head Veterinary Nurse, Tania Fernandez has been nominated by Hills Pet Nutrition for the award of Veterinary Nurse of the Year. Congratulations Tania and best of luck. To read the full nomination written by Dr. Chantal Moreton, visit: <http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/vn-of-yr-nomination.php>

Recently staff took time out to enjoy a mid winter Christmas Function. It was a freezing cold night during the Antarctic storm week but we rugged up warm and Buddha Stix put on a fab meal and service and the Court Theatre Scared Scriptless team were hilarious after dinner entertainment. We recommend both venues if you are looking for a night out!

SEASONAL UPDATE

Winter

Now that we are well into winter it is good to be thinking about the following

1. Pets still need to be getting out and getting some exercise. If they are doing less remember to reduce their calorie intake.
2. Keep those winter treats like chocolate and other foods not meant for animal consumption, away from your pets. Read our article on Macadamia nut poisoning for more.
3. If you are heading away on a winter get away, don't forget to book your kennel or cattery well in advance and make sure you have your pets vaccinations up to date. For dogs an intranasal kennel cough vaccine is worth considering 2-3 weeks out from them going into the kennels to reduce the risk of kennel cough. Talk to us for further information.
4. Fleas can still be a problem at this time of the year so keep a watch for evidence of fleas, or better still

keep up your pets flea treatments throughout the winter.

5. Its mating season again for cats. If you still have an unneutered male or female kitten (or cat) get them booked in for desexing as soon as possible. Every year there is a sad ending for 100's of kittens that there is no home for. Even if your cat is desexed be aware that the rate of fighting and jostling for territory will increase at this time of the year as the resident tom cats (usually wild) put pressure on territory and this causes more fighting even in places where the neighbouring cats are usually harmonious.

RECENT CASE

Macadamia Nut Poisoning

Everyone knows about chocolate poisoning and we get plenty of calls from clients checking whether the dose of chocolate their pet has just accidentally ingested will be harmful. However it is important to realise that there are many other human foods that are toxic to your pets too.

Recently we saw a case of Macadamia nut poisoning and it served as an important reminder of the dangers of access to certain foods.

Macadamia nut poisoning can cause paralysis to the hind limbs, lethargy, vomiting and abdominal pain. Symptoms can start as soon as 3 hours after ingestion and only very small quantities need to be ingested.

To read more about other common food toxicities for pets, you can read our website article: <http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/food-toxicities.php>

Remember, take extra care to ensure **your** pet only ingested food intended for it and if an indiscretion occurs remember to contact us as soon as possible for advice.

**ENSURE YOU CAN PROVIDE THE BEST
Pet Insurance**

If you are in a position where you can find several thousand dollars at short notice, or comfortably cover



**Caring Vets,
Healthy Pets**

on going medication for years on end due to something some like arthritis, you probably don't need pet insurance.

However, if you can't pet insurance is something you really need to seriously consider.

There are three main providers of pet insurance in the New Zealand Market, but numerous other less well advertised too. The policies, excesses and cover vary hugely. We have put together some questions that you should ask before you decide on a policy. The best policy and company for you will depend on the pet you have, the amount of cover you want and what excess you can manage. Click here to view our article: <http://www.veterinarycentre.co.nz/insurance-checklist.php>

Click on this link to access the consumer report from February 2012 relating to pet insurance. <http://www.consumer.org.nz/reports/pet-insurance> . A small fee must be paid to view the entire report.

PROMOTIONS

July and August are Senior Pets Months

Our dogs and cats are now living longer than ever thanks to improvements in nutrition and veterinary care. This means they are getting into advanced years and suffer from many of the same conditions which affect older humans. Regular check ups, at least annual, are recommended to facilitate early and effective diagnosis and management of many of these conditions. This time of year particularly, our older friends show more signs of pain from arthritis in the cold. Although slowing down is a normal part of ageing, sometimes signs attributed to "old age" can indicate discomfort and be due to underlying disease which can often be managed effectively. Our aim is to keep our senior patients as happy and healthy as possible, quality of life is key!

When is my pet considered senior?

In general, any animal over 7 years is considered senior, although this varies with breed and size.

What diseases affect older pets?

- Dental disease
- Heart disease
- Liver/ kidney disease
- Cancer, also referred to by vets as neoplasia
- Osteoarthritis
- Endocrine (hormonal) diseases such as

hyperthyroidism (cats), hypothyroidism (dogs), diabetes and cushings disease.

- Neurological degeneration – senile cognitive changes occurs in animals too!
- Reproductive disease: testicular and prostatic disease in unneutered males, pyometra and uterine/ ovarian tumours in entire females.

How can routine tests help?

Blood tests can help to give an early indicator of underlying disease, this is especially important before an anaesthetic, to check liver and kidney function amongst other things. However, sometimes changes only occur when disease is more advanced, for example changes related to kidney function only occur after 70% of function is lost. Urinalysis is a more sensitive indicator of kidney function, when looked at in conjunction with bloods, and can give us information about various other conditions too.

What can I do to keep my pet healthy?

Routine check ups are an important part of managing your pet's health, your veterinarian can discuss issues particular to your pet, and clinical examinations can help to pick up early signs of disease.

Maintaining a healthy weight – is a simple and effective way of optimizing your pets health. Overweight pets are at higher risk of heart disease, diabetes (particularly Oriental breeds of cats), degenerative joint disease (arthritis) and cancers. Prevention is better than cure!

Good diet – feeding a good quality diet which has been formulated around the needs of senior pets will help keep them in good shape, maintain good digestive function, and some prescription diets can help manage various conditions such as chronic renal failure in cats and arthritis in cats and dogs.

Visit our promotions page on our website for more 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.



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Healthy Pets**