

VETERINARY SURGEONS

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Newsletter – WINTER 17 Issue 36

CLINIC NEWS

Welcome to our winter newsletter.

We have had one change in staff over the last month. Katrina who has worked part-time for us is leaving to follow her passion for emergency veterinary nursing at the After Hours Veterinary Clinic. This is a fantastic opportunity for her and we wish her well for the future.

We are however excited to welcome back Anita to our vet nursing team. Anita worked with us until 2012 when she left to start a family so it's lovely to have her back with us.

You may also have seen two new black Curly Coated Retrievers in clinic. Dr Mike Averill has two new dog additions to the family, Kiri and Tui.

SEASONAL UPDATE – Winter

We recommend you continue flea treatments over this time. In winter fleas are still around and tend to live inside your house. Treating your pets with a regular flea product will put a stop to the fleas breeding inside and stop making your pets itchy.

As the weather gets colder many dogs enjoy having a jacket or coat when going outside for walks. Just like us they feel the cold especially if they are shorter furred.

Older pets can often find winter cold harder on their arthritic joints, there are many options to help them move freer and feel less pain so come talk to our staff about joint supplements and prescription diets and medications which can help.

PYOMETRA

By Dr Chantal Moreton BVSc

Pyometra is a dangerous condition that few people are aware of until faced with a very unwell dog who usually needs emergency surgery.

It is a condition seen in older dogs more commonly, who have had regular 6 monthly heats but never been pregnant. It results from repeated exposure of the uterine lining to high concentrations of the hormones oestrogen and progesterone which causes cystic endometrial hyperplasia (i.e. unhealthy uterine lining). When a dog is in heat, the cervix becomes partially opened and bacteria enters the uterus from the vagina and the unhealthy uterine lining creates the perfect environment for the bacteria to multiply. Eventually the uterus becomes enlarged with a purulent (pus) filled discharge. The infection can enter the blood stream (septicaemia) and spread to other organs, especially the kidneys and liver.

This process happens slowly over time and dogs often show no clinical signs of disease until they are very unwell – not eating or drinking, dehydrated, vomiting. Sometimes there is evidence of disease with a vaginal discharge (an open pyometra) but with no discharge, the pus has nowhere to escape (a closed pyometra) and this can lead to rupture of the uterus and peritonitis – a catastrophic event!

Diagnosis is suspected when a female, unspayed dog presents with signs of being unwell, an enlarged abdomen and has usually been in heat within the past 12 weeks. An x-ray or ultrasound will show signs of uterine enlargement and blood tests may show evidence of infection, kidney and/or liver disease.



**Caring Vets,
Healthy Pets**

If the condition is mild and owners still want to breed with the dog, sometimes antibiotics and hormone therapy will clear the infection and future pregnancy may improve the health of the uterus. It would still be recommended to spay her as soon as possible though.

However, usually these dogs are very unwell and they need life-saving treatment. This usually means starting on high doses of antibiotics, i/v fluid therapy to help with hydration and kidney/liver function. Once (and if) stable, an emergency spay (hysterectomy – removal of both ovaries and the uterus) is required. As you can imagine, this is a high risk surgery with potential for rupture of the uterus – an unhappy situation for both the dog, owner and veterinary team!

The good news is that once the surgery is performed and if normal organ function is restored, patients go on to live a normal, healthy life but it is a very risky time for them and not all dogs will survive.

So.....as always the best cure is prevention!!! Spay your female dogs at an early age (preferably before their first heat at about 5-6 months of age) and this nasty condition can be avoided. However if you do suspect your dog may have a pyometra, please bring her in early to be assessed, remind your vet that she is unspayed and we can give her the best chance of getting through this nasty disease.

Dental problems in Guinea Pigs

By Barb, VN

Lionel the guinea pig had been losing weight and having problems eating what he normally liked to eat. His owners brought him to see Dr Mike Averill to find out what was wrong. Dr Averill looked in Lionel's mouth with an otoscope to try see his molars but often it can be hard to see as their tongue and food can get in the way. On examination in his mouth it was discovered that Lionel had malocclusion.

Malocclusion is when the incisors and molars (sometimes it's just the incisors) become overgrown preventing normal chewing. Because the teeth are not lining up with each other they no longer wear evenly. These overgrown teeth can cause sores and injuries to the inside of the mouth. Malocclusion can cause long term issues as the guinea pigs teeth keep growing throughout their lives.

Malocclusion is believed to be genetic (especially in young guinea pigs under 2 years of age) but it can also be caused by trauma or infection

causing the teeth to grow in a faulty formation.

Illness combined with changes in eating (reduced eating or eating mostly soft foods) can allow the teeth to overgrow and lead to malocclusion. Other things that can cause dental issues are jaw fracture, tooth abscess, root elongation and jaw muscle weakness.

So how do you know if your guinea pig might be having dental problems?? Have you noticed:

- Difficulty eating, only picking at food
- Drooling or wet around the mouth
- Weight loss
- Exaggerated chewing
- Front teeth not even or lining up
- Much slower eating food
- Having difficulty with large pieces of food- can't tear or rip food, can't bite large piece of carrot into smaller pieces, dropping food that they pick up
- Interested in food but not eating

Any of these can point to possible dental problems. So a check-up with the vet is a good idea.

To read the rest of this article and how to prevent these problems visit our website:

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

PROMOTIONS

Check out our website for 2 amazing promotions running now.

Purchase any 2 Broadline or Frontline Plus cat (3pk or 6pk) and go in the draw to win a safari trip for two to Africa.

Purchase any dog Frontline Plus, Nexgard Chewables or Nexgard Spectra 3pk and go in the draw to win a cruise for two to Alaska (including dog-sledding)

Competition closes 31st July 2017

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**