

THE PET GAZETTE

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CONSULTATION BY APPOINTMENT

**438 CAMBRIDGE STREET
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Cat Flu

This disease is caused by two viruses, Feline viral rhinotracheitis (FVR) and Feline Calicivirus (FCV). These viruses are different to the human flu viruses and are not contagious to humans.

Young cats are particularly prone to developing infections to either of these viruses. In particular pure bred cats seem to be more susceptible to catching the flu.

The first signs of flu are usually a watery eye. The virus then affects the sinuses causing sneezing or ulcers to develop in the mouth. The cat will often have a fever and start to go off it's food. The discharge from the nose and eyes will become thicker and yellow in colour. This is due to bacterial infection.

In the very young cat immunity is

low, so the virus can cause problems if treatment is not sought immediately. Damage can occur to the eyes perhaps leading to loss of sight. Chronic problems with sinusitis and eye discharge can occur for the rest of the cat's life.

Treatment involves the use of antibiotics to prevent secondary bacterial infection, eye ointments, and depending on the severity of the condition, hospitalisation may be required with treatment including intravenous fluids (to prevent dehydration). Because a cat has to smell its food before it will eat, humidification or nebulization, e.g. with a vaporizer, will help to break up the discharge from the nose. Even taking the cat into the bathroom when you are having a shower will help.

It is very important for a cat to keep up its strength so that its immune system can help fight off the infection. Force feeding may be required in certain cases.

Prevention is far easier than cure. Vaccinations are available that provide adequate immunity against cat flu. Please call us at the clinic to obtain more information on Vaccination which provides up to 90% protection against infection, and will certainly reduce the severity and duration of any bouts of flu.

If your cat is going into a boarding cattery, it will be required to have a flu vaccination. It is always better to have your pet's vaccinations up to date. If you are unsure of your pets vaccination status please call us to check your records.



Young cats are particularly prone to developing infections to either the Feline Calicivirus or Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis

WINTER



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Canine (Kennel) Cough

Canine cough is one of the most common infectious diseases of dogs. It is a highly contagious respiratory disease that can occur in massive outbreaks and is sometimes still referred to as Kennel Cough.

However, dogs can become infected with Canine Cough anywhere that dogs gather, such as parks, obedience classes, dog shows and at kennels.

THE CAUSE: Canine Cough can be caused by a number of dif-

ferent viruses, but the two most common infectious agents are Bordetella Bronchiseptica and Canine Parainfluenza.

THE TREATMENT: This is usually antibiotics and symptomatic therapy such as cough syrup.

THE SIGNS: The classical sign is a harsh, hacking cough that often finishes with gagging. Severely affected dogs may have a fever, be depressed, not eat and develop pneumonia. The coughing bouts can persist for a number of weeks, despite treatment.

THE CONTROL: Puppies should be

vaccinated against both varieties at the time of normal vaccinations. Initially dogs require three vaccinations four weeks apart. Booster vaccinations should then be given annually.

Canine cough can occur any time of the year and can effect all ages.

If your dog develops a cough or shows any of the above mentioned symptoms, please bring him/her in for a check up.

REMEMBER PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE - HAVE YOUR PET VACCINATED!

Unusual Case Report

Bobby is a 12 yr old black, male, cocker spaniel. He initially came into our clinic in late April with redness, crusting, blistering and symmetrical hair-loss around both eyes. On closer examination this blistering was also found under his axillae (armpits) and all the skin between his paws was very red. Both of his eyes had a bluish haze with white specks, and his pupils were enlarged. His ears were itchy, full of yellow oozing wax, and were infected with a mixture of bacteria and fungus. His coat was dry and his skin flaky. Poor Bobby!

However, what was very different and interesting about Bobby was that all his skin and eye problems occurred symmetrically.

This was quite unusual, as most of the common skin complaints in dogs such as mite infestations, bacterial and fungal infections, food allergies and hypersensitivities, don't have this symmetrical involvement. So one of the next possibilities to explore was that Bobby's immune system was not functioning properly, and

that he had an auto-immune disease.

The immune system is the defence network of the body, used to fight off infections and reject foreign invaders.

The immune system is designed to recognise "self" cells from "non-self" cells. It is this ability that causes the body to reject skin grafts, blood transfusions, and organ transplants. However, like anything else, the immune system can fail, either by not doing it's job - or doing it too well. In Bobby's situation the ability of the immune system to recognise "self" from "non-self" was lost, and so his body began to attack and reject his own tissue.

Certainly, auto-immune diseases of the skin are uncommon, but thankfully they can be treated. The primary goal is to suppress the body's immune response with large doses of oral corticosteroids.

However, as Bobby's condition was so severe and painful, we placed him under a general anaesthetic to first clean and flush his ears, and to wash his skin to help remove crusts and flakes which had formed.

Normally the skin has certain 'resident' bacteria that live happily without causing any trouble in the healthy pet, however, when the immune system is compromised these bacteria can

proliferate and penetrate into the skin to cause inflammation and tissue damage. Soothing antibacterial lotions were then applied to Bobby's skin, and his ears were medicated with antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory drops. He was also given oral antibiotics to take home to combat the severe secondary skin infection, as well as ointment and corticosteroid drops for his eyes. This medication regime certainly kept his owners on their toes.

At Bobby's revisit he appeared much brighter and his ears and skin had improved dramatically. On eye however, was still blue, bulging and painful, glaucoma had developed in this eye.

Glaucoma occurs when there is an increase in pressure within the eye, and can occur following severe inflammation of the eye.

Bobby was given eye drops to reduce this pressure, and when he returned one week later, the pressure had thankfully reduced. Bobby will however need to continue with these drops for the rest of his life.

Thanks Bobby for being such a pleasure to handle, and congratulations to his loving owners for their dedication to his treatment regime. Your hard work has certainly paid off!

Two Without Trouble



Introducing another cat to the family

When kitten season comes along, many cat lovers will be considering adding another feline to their household.

Cats by nature are very territorial and do not usually accept another cat into their area without a few displays of hissing and chasing, but with some forward planning and a little patience, most cats do get used to the idea.

Sometimes the addition of another cat is unplanned, such as when a stray walks into your life. Your cat and the newcomer should be kept apart for 10-14 days to make sure the new cat is not incubating any contagious disease. A checkup is recommended and strays will need to be vaccinated and neutered.

If you have a choice about what cat joins your household, it would be better to chose a cat of the opposite sex and younger than your existing cat.

Before bringing the second cat into the household, prepare an area where it

can be confined away from your cat. A spare room or the laundry is ideal. This allows the cats to become used to each other without contact. Spend extra time with your existing cat to make him feel extra special.

Once you feel that the cats are settled, open the door to the room about 5cms and jam it in some way. This allows the cats to see each other and to touch noses if they wish, but not be able to fight.

Once the cats seem to have accepted each other without hissing and growling you may open the door. Do not make a fuss, let the cats wander about and do not interfere. There will almost certainly be some hissing and posturing and perhaps chasing. This is normal but if they do get into a serious fight do not try to pick them up to separate them. Make loud noises or throw water on them to break up the fight.

It is best to provide two litter trays in case the original cat refuses to share its bathroom.

It is impossible to make animals be friends, but in most cases cats will work out how to live together. In some cases they may become nothing more than housemates and divide the house into "his" and "her" territory. In many cases they will become best friends, mutually grooming, snuggling up together and sharing food bowls.



Expect some arching and spitting if introducing a new feline friend.

Neutering Facts

Have you put off neutering your dog or cat because you were unsure as to whether you or your animal would benefit by taking this irrevocable step?

Do you believe because your pet is confined to your yard or is controlled on a leash that neutering is unnecessary?

Think of the advantages of having your pet "fixed up":

1. No more wandering animals seeking out a mate during seasonal periods.
2. No more unwanted animals hanging around your property.
3. Less aggression and more affection by your pet.

4. Less health danger to your pet - females will be less susceptible to breast cancer and uterine infection, while males will be less likely to develop prostatic infections or cancer.

5. No worrying about problems associated with your pet's oestrus (heat) times.

6. Your pet will live longer.

The spaying of females and castrating of males is a surgical procedure which removes the reproductive organs of your pet once and for all.

It is a painless operation performed under a general anaesthetic, usually carried out when the pet is around 6 months of age.

If you are not contemplating breeding from your pet, then we strongly suggest neutering for your pet to live a longer, happier and healthier life.



Does your dog tend to wander on occasion? Neutering could help the problem.



Staff news

New Product

HEXARINSE

Does your pet have smelly breath? Are you finding that brushing your pets teeth is a losing battle?

Hexarinse is a new oral rinse to aid in preventing tooth and gum disease in dogs & cats. It has an antibacterial action to help prevent plaque build up, which can lead to periodontal disease, and will leave your pet with clean and fresh breath.

We routinely use this product in the clinic after pets have had their teeth descaled and polished. But, it can be used daily at home as part of your pets overall dental health program. All you need to do is to squirt some of the liquid into your pets mouth, and the foaming action of the rinse will then disperse the liquid throughout the oral cavity.

A great new option available now for \$13.20.



NEW FACE

Introducing Catherine Cox (pictured below), who joined our team last September as a Jr. trainee nurse. Clients will now see her at reception from time to time as she completes her vet nurse training with us.

NEW VET

The team at Floreat Vet Centre extends a very warm welcome to our newest member, Dr. Rebecca Vaughan (pictured above). Rebecca is a graduate of the Veterinary School of Murdoch University (Rebecca's mother and Mrs Stewart were school friends at P.L.C.). Rebecca enjoys all aspects of veterinary practice, but is especially interested in ophthalmology and dermatology. Rebecca relieves Dr. Emma Russell who is now working in Melbourne, to be closer to her boyfriend, who is also a veterinarian.



WELL DONE TRACY!

Most clients will know Tracy from our popular Puppy Pre-School that we run on Sundays. As well as this successful endeavour, Tracy is of course a qualified vet nurse - and just recently became an RSPCA registered dog trainer. Congratulations Tracy!

GREG'S NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Greg and his wife Jenny, on the safe arrival of Olivia Hannah, a baby sister to Daniel Callum - who is almost 2 years old. Thank you to the clients that sent their good wishes.

Pet Profile - Burmese Cat



The 'perfect' Burmese is affectionate, amusing and companionable

The Burmese breed is a sleek and elegant shorthair, agile and graceful with a delightful personality, good looks and great charm. Easy to look

after and playful and tolerant of children. Many say this breed is the perfect cat.

Although Burmese have been recorded in their country of origin for at least 500 years, the modern breed has been developed in the US only since 1930.

The original Burmese was a sable brown colour, however breeders began to produce other colours, notably champagne (also known as chocolate) in the early 1960's. They now also come in sable, blue, platinum brown, lilac, red, cream, brown tortie, blue tortie, chocolate tortie and lilac tortie.

Grooming entails only weekly combing to remove dead hair and wipe over with a damp chamois to enhance natural shine.

Burmese are extremely friendly to both strangers and family and communicate in sweet soft voices. They crave attention and affection and will do anything to get it. They remain playful well into adulthood and dislike being left alone for long periods.

If yours is a household where humans are absent throughout the day, perhaps you should consider keeping two cats for company. Females assume an active role in running the house, while males are more laid back and prefer to supervise from someone's lap.

The Burmese has lost many of the skills it needs to survive in the wild. Being too friendly and trusting for its own good, it should always be kept safe indoors.