



THE PET GAZETTE

Brought to You by **FLOREAT VETERINARY CENTRE**

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CONSULTATION BY APPOINTMENT

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Zoonotic Diseases

A zoonosis is a disease common to animals and humans. Zoonotic diseases are more common and serious in third world countries or in tropical climates. Still, pet owners should be aware of the potential risk of the zoonoses found in our area. In many of these zoonotic diseases, humans may not "catch" the disease directly from the pet. Instead, the animal patient serves as a barometer, signaling the presence of infectious agents in the environment.

TICKS

Can transmit diseases to animals and people. Diseases can be caused by tiny organisms that are transmitted to people or animals from tick bites, and cause fevers, rashes, and joint pain. Disease is not transmitted directly from pets to people; you must be bitten by the tick. Protect yourself by wearing long sleeves and long pants tucked into boots when walking in areas where ticks live, cutting back weeds and brush near your home, using tick repellent on yourself and your pets, and by looking for and removing ticks regularly.

TOXOPLASMOSIS

Caused by a protozoan, a one-celled parasite. Hunting cats often contract this parasite by eating small rodents, then shed the cysts in their stool. The parasite is also found in raw meat. Most cats and people show no signs of the disease, or have only mild flu-like symptoms. Those who have a weakened immune system may develop a much more serious infection. Fetal infection,

especially during the first three months of pregnancy, can result in blindness, so pregnant women must take special precautions to avoid contacting toxoplasmosis cysts. Protect yourself by not letting your cat hunt and not feeding it raw meat. Pregnant women and persons with AIDS should wear gloves when gardening, wash thoroughly after handling raw meat, cook meat thoroughly, and should not change litterboxes.

ROUNDWORMS

Nearly every puppy is born with roundworms contracted from its mother. These worms can be transmitted to people, especially children. Most infections in people are so mild as to cause no signs at all, but the potential for severe illness exists. Migrating worms may damage the liver, eyes or brain. Because the eggs are transmitted in the puppy's stool, sanitation is essential; feces should be removed and disposed of daily and everyone who handles the puppy should wash their hands frequently. This is especially important in young children, who often put their fingers in their mouths. Protect yourself by having your veterinarian test several stool samples from your new puppy, and do yearly tests and regular worming on adult dogs.

RINGWORM








Actually not a worm at all, but a fungal infection of the skin. It can be difficult to diagnose in animals, as the lesions do not look the same from case to case. Some animals, especially cats, can carry the fungus in their hair coat without showing signs of itching, scaly skin, and hair loss.

In people, the classic lesion is a raised, reddened, and itchy "ring."

Pet owners should be informed about the risks of zoonotic diseases. Consult with us or your doctor whenever you suspect one of these diseases, but do not panic. Early diagnosis and veterinary care, as well as simple precautions, can protect you and your family and keep your pets healthier, too.



Contents

-  **Moving Day**
-  **Scooting**
-  **Fitting Tips**
-  **Moulting**
-  **Pet Bird Housing**
-  **House Training Problems**
-  **Your Best Friend**



Moving Day

Summertime is often moving time for families who want to relocate without interrupting the children's school year. So its time to start planning now. Since dogs are territorial animals, a move to a place filled with new sights, sounds, and smells - especially smells - can be a challenge or a trauma for the family dog.

Dogs that never go anywhere but to the veterinary clinic are likely to have the most trouble adjusting.

Dogs that go everywhere and are not threatened by new experiences will make the easiest transition. Change of residence is a prime reason why families surrender dogs to animal shelters. Units say 'no pets' or restrict pets by number and weight; townhouse units have postage-stamp yards and restrictions on fences; many subdivisions and residential communities prohibit above-ground fences, and owners think their dog will be unhappy if he can't romp in a yard, so shelters get frantic calls about the dog that needs a home because "we're moving next week."

However, dogs can be happy wherever their family goes as long as their needs are met. They don't need a yard to romp in, they need exercise, and a daily walk can provide enough. They do need patience as they adjust to a new home and training to help give them confidence and deal with nuisance habits, but they are very

adaptable. The trick is to find a new home that allows dogs. Once that hurdle is overcome, the rest is a matter of planning.

Before moving day, investigate local zoning regulations and animal control laws. Some communities limit the number of dogs per household, ban particular breeds, prohibit certain types of fences, have nuisance ordinances to control barking, etc. Contact the local government for details and get the policies and laws in writing so there's no mistake made.

Spend some time reinforcing basic obedience commands with your dog. A dog that can focus on obeying a command is more tuned in to people and more likely to settle down during the journey and to cope with the change of scenery and circumstances in the new home.

On packing day, if possible, send your dog to a neighbor, friend, boarding kennel, or day care center for the day so you do not have to tend to him while the moving men are loading the van. If this isn't possible, make sure you have a secure area for your dog so he can be confined while the moving men are packing your belongings.

Make sure you pack some of his favorite toys and food for the journey to your new home. If he seems nervous, feed him small amounts until he is settled in the new house and yard.

At the new house. If there's a gap between arrival in a new area and

moving into the new home, find a boarding kennel for Ranger so you're not juggling dog, kids, and everything else in hotel rooms or other temporary quarters. When the furniture arrives and you're ready to sleep in the new bedroom, bring him home.

Unpack Ranger's bed, toys, and food and water bowls as soon as possible and put them in the same places they were in the old house.

Introduce yourself to your new neighbors and tell them about your dog. Arrange for the neighbors to meet the dog while he is on a leash.

Locate a veterinary clinic and make an appointment so you can assess the vet and he can meet Ranger before an exam for illness or injury is needed.

If your dog is microchipped or tattooed, call the registry to change your address and telephone number so they can reach you quickly if they are notified that your dog has been found.

Be patient. Some dogs take several days or even weeks to adjust to new surroundings.



Are we there yet?

Scooting

Scooting is when a dog very unpleasantly rubs its bottom along the ground.

There are two main causes of scooting. The most common cause is when a dog has tapeworms. As the worm segments pass out of the anus they cause irritation and the dog rubs its bottom along the

ground to relieve itself.

The second cause is anal sac impaction and inflammation. Anal sacs are a pair of glands that lie either side of the anal canal, they act as a scent gland. The cause of their infection can be related to improper diet, soft stools, lack of exercise or inadequate function due to nerve

disease. Scooting can be accompanied by licking and biting the anus, tail base or skin alongside the anus.

If your dog is exhibiting any problems, please book him in for a check up so we can assess the situation and advise treatment and a preventative plan of action.



Fitting

As an animal gets older it can be affected by siezures. Some types of fits can also be seen in young animals.

If your pet has a fit, it is best to leave the animal alone. Move furniture or objects which may be in the way. It is a good idea to make a note of the pet's behaviour before the fit and also how long the fit lasts. This information may be useful to diagnose the origin of the fit.

As the animal recovers from the fit, it may get up and act normally, or behave in an unusual way. Again, noting this behaviour may be useful for a diagnosis.

If your pet has a fit that seems to go for a long time (greater than five minutes), we suggest that you contact the clinic immediately.

Long term control of fitting can be achieved with medication.

We suggest that you have your pet examined and we will discuss a treatment plan to suit your pet. Often no medication is necessary unless the fitting becomes more frequent, or the pet is unduly distressed by the fitting.

Tips

WEIGHING YOUR PET

It's simple. Weigh the dog (or cat) and yourself on your bathroom scales, and simply extract your own weight.

In many cases Fido may have gained a couple of kilos over winter and its important to keep your dogs weight in check. It is also important to know the correct weight of your pet for effective worm control or other medicinal reasons.

If the dog is too heavy to lift we can weigh the dog at the clinic. There is no charge for this service.

SPRING HAS SPRUNG!

With longer daylight hours in the warmer weather we should all be out there making the most of it.

So why not get out there and take the dog to the beach or park and both get some exercise.

Don't forget to have fresh water on hand for your dog, keep your dog on a leash (except in off leash areas) and clean up after your dog.

That way both pet owners, pets and others can enjoy the spring season!

Moultling

It's that time of year when it seems that your pet is leaving his or her winter coat everywhere.

To reduce shedding of hair it is important to brush your pet regularly, especially long haired dogs and cats. This helps strengthen the hairs while removing dead hair.

A mild shampoo regularly will also help maintain the condition and shine in your pet's coat.

As the condition of the coat often reflects ill health in your pet, any changes should alert you to a problem and we suggest you contact us.



Animal fur on the furniture can be a real nuisance this time of year

Pet Bird Housing Tips

Housing is a subject lightly looked upon by most bird owners but so important to the bird and its good health

The cage should be well constructed and of sufficient size for the type of bird. Generally speaking no cage is "large enough". Most commercial cages are metal in construction and well built.

If building your own beware that most larger Cockatoo's, Galahs and Parrots like to chew wood and metal therefore selection of nontoxic materials must be made (ie no lead based toxic paints on cages).

Perches should be of correct size

(diameter) for the type of bird. Sufficient contact with the birds tornails should be made to prevent foot and leg problems particularly overgrown nails. Often tree branches are good perches, but make sure that they are from nonpoisonous trees.

Food and water bowls should be constructed of easily cleaned material. Plastics are the best. They should be cleaned daily to minimise contamination.

Toys that are suitable for the type of bird may be used in the cage. Don't overdo it with the toys, poor Tweetie won't have any room to move and

stretch his wings.

Bottom litter should be changed daily and be suitable for the type of bird. Birds require roughage (shellgrit) to help digest food. An easy way to provide this is to sprinkle small amounts of grit on the bottom of the cage for the birds to peck on.

Resting time - birds need to sleep for at least 8-10 hours. So cover the cage at night to help keep them warm and enable them to rest quietly.

Follow these simple steps and your birds will be happy and live a long life.



Pet Dental Month

During the month of September is Pet Dental Month

During the month of September is pet dental month. Just like people, our pets need good dental care. When our pets teeth are not maintained properly, hard crusts of tartar develop on the surfaces of the teeth. Over time, this can lead to bad breath, infected and inflamed gums, pain and decaying, loose teeth.

Bacteria from the infected gum tissue can enter the bloodstream and cause damage to organs such as the heart and kidneys. Diseased teeth and gums are a common problem amongst our pets. The good news is that we as pet owners can do routine dental care at home to prevent our pets from having any dental problems.

The first thing we should do for our pets is to have a check up with the vet to see if there are any existing problems that need to be fixed. During the month of September you can bring your pet into the Floreat Veterinary Centre for a Free Dental checkup and to talk about a dental program that suits your pet.

Some of the things you can do at home to assist your pets dental health are brushing their teeth, encouraging them to chew on a treat specifically designed for their teeth (the new Greenies are very popular) or feeding them a diet that is again designed to reduce plaque and tartar build up.

Staff News

NEW VET Dr Nicole Laing

The team at Floreat Veterinary Centre extends a very warm welcome to our newest member Dr. Nicole Laing.

Nicole has recently come back from an extended working holiday in the UK with her 12 year old cat Tristan and 12 year old dog Herbie.

Nicole enjoys all aspects of Veterinary Science, but has a special interest in ophthalmology and dermatology.

NEW NURSE Carol Schwechler

Introducing Carol Schwechler who joined our team in July as a Qualified Veterinary Nurse.

Carol enjoys all aspects of Veterinary Nursing, but has a particular interest in puppy and dog obedience training.

Carol will therefore be helping to run our very popular Puppy Socialisation and Training classes.

House Training Problems

Q: *I'm having a terrible time housebreaking my new puppy. I've been reading books and following all the advice – putting her on a regular schedule etc., but she seems to need to urinate almost constantly! She'll have accidents just minutes after coming in from outside. Help! What can I do?*

A: It's normal for puppies to have a few accidents even when you're doing everything right. If her need to urinate seems constant, though, or if she squats often and produces little, it's possible there's a medical cause

for her housebreaking difficulties.

It's very common for female puppies to develop urinary tract infections between the ages of six weeks and six months. The infection causes irritation and discomfort which results in an almost constant need to urinate.

Fortunately, this problem is easily controlled with medication.

To find out if this could be the cause of your troubles, bring your puppy in for a checkup.



Housetraining problems could be related to a pet health issue.