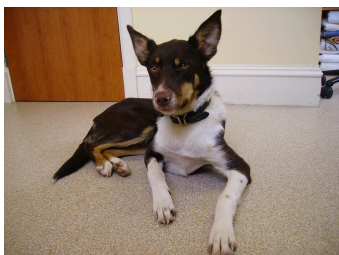


Spring Newsletter

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Pot Pourri poisoning in dogs.

This is Hayly who along with her brother Dylan decided to knock over a bowl of pot pourri and devour the contents! This was a new one for us but unfortunately it causes serious effects including vomiting, internal caustic burns and nervous signs. Fortunately their owners phoned Emma immediately and brought them to the surgery where they both had to be hospitalised for five days for intensive nursing, medication and intravenous fluid therapy.

Hayly and Dylan were lucky and made a full recovery but we thought it was important to warn other pet owners about the dangers of pot pourri and other unusual dangerous household items.

Other items that can be highly toxic even in low quantities include pennies (high concentration of zinc), mothballs (contain naphthalene or paradichlorobenzene - one or two balls can be life threatening in most species), potpourri oils, fabric softener sheets, automatic dish detergents (contain cationic detergents which could cause corrosive lesions), batteries (contain acids or alkali which can also cause corrosive lesions), homemade play dough (contains high quantity of salt), winter heat source agents like hand or foot warmers (contain high levels of iron), coffee grounds, alcoholic drinks, chocolate and xylitol chewing gum.

Top pet names

Out of the 2175 pet we now have registered, we have compiled a list of the most popular pet names:

- 1) Molly
- 2) Millie, Tia, Max
- 3) Jack
- 4) Lucy
- 5) Ben
- 6) Daisy
- 7) Bobby, Holly, Misty
- 8) Bailey, Buster, Honey, Sam, Tara, Barney, Jake
- 9) Ruby, Jasper, Toby

Working dogs receive Royal stamp of approval



The Royal mail has paid tribute to the contribution made by the nation's working dogs, with the launch of six new stamps.

The work done by assistance, mountain rescue, police, customs, guide and sheepdogs will be recognised on stamps ranging from 32 to 78 pence.

The launch coincides with the centenary of the first use of police dogs. The stamps will feature an assistance dog called Rowan (golden retriever), a mountain rescue dog called Merrick (cross breed), a police dog called Max (GSD), a customs dog also called Max (springer spaniel), Bob the sheepdog (border collie) and Warwick the guide dog (yellow Labrador).

Welcome Rachel

Rachel Penny RVN has joined us as a full time veterinary nurse.

Rachel is particularly keen on rehabilitation and physiotherapy and is currently training to become a veterinary physiotherapist.

She has two rescue greyhounds, Meg and Texas and an extremely vocal bengal cat called Indi.

VHD Outbreaks

The Rabbit Welfare Association has reported outbreaks of VHD in Scotland.



Clinical signs include breathing difficulties, loss of appetite, high temperature and bleeding from the nose. More severe symptoms include: severe jaundice, weight loss, lethargy and liver failure or even sudden death.

One outbreak near Ellon killed nearly half of a group of fifty rabbits at a rescue centre so the disease is prevalent in our area. Other recent cases have been found in Dunfermline, Perth and the Shetland Isles.

Canine j/d Trial

We have been taking part in a dietary study with a new food called Hills canine j/d which has been designed to help dogs with osteoarthritis.

Hills j/d is a complete diet which has been specially formulated with high levels of an omega fatty acid called EPA, which is derived from oily fish. Ten dogs of different breeds with varying types of joint problem have taken part in the trial.

Of the ten dogs, two didn't complete the trial, one because he refused to eat it and another because it was causing him problems with bloat. Of the remaining 8 dogs, three owners reported a significant improvement and five didn't think it had made any difference. With the three that improved, two were younger labradors that have hip dysplasia and one was an older German Shepherd.

The dogs which did not respond tended to be older and already had a more advanced debilitating arthritis. These might improve if they stay on the food for longer, as it takes 4 months to have its full effect and the trial was only 28 days long, but it seems as if the food will be less beneficial for these longer standing cases.

There is never going to be a straightforward cure for osteoarthritis but we can add j/d to our armoury along with drugs such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatories, painkillers, weight control, exercise management, acupuncture, physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and nutraceutical supplements such as glucosamine and chondroitin sulphate.

J/d is now also available for cats.



Microchip cat flap

SureFlap™ cat flaps recognise the ID chip already implanted in your cat, allowing access to your pet and making unwanted visitors a thing of the past.



Once the unit is installed and the batteries put in place, the flap can be put into learn mode. The next time your cat passes through the flap, the unique ID code of its chip is put into memory. Now SureFlap™ unlocks whenever your cat wants to come into the house. Multiple cats can be programmed into the flap at the same time and cat owners can have complete control of who is allowed to enter their house.

Dogs alert owners to onset of hypoglycaemia

Special Assistance dogs are being trained in the USA to alert diabetic owners when their blood glucose levels drop dangerously low.

It takes years of expensive work to train a dog to sense impending hypoglycaemia. Scientists are unsure how dogs can sense abnormal blood glucose levels in their human companions but one theory is that they can react to scents that are released due to chemical changes caused by glucose imbalance.

**We are now open until
7.30 p.m. on Wednesdays**

Migration of an orthopaedic wire to the heart in a Yorkshire Terrier

This was an extraordinary case which was reported in the veterinary literature recently. A 12 year old male Yorkshire Terrier was presented with acute heart failure and when they x-rayed him they discovered a 4 inch length of wire lodged in his heart. An emergency operation was performed to remove the wire but it wasn't successful and he died 2 days later.

The wire was one of three which was used to repair a fracture of his thigh bone when he was only 7 months old. The fracture healed well but 2 months later one wire was removed because it was poking through the skin of his leg but the other two were left in.

During the subsequent 11 years of his life one of the remaining wires managed to migrate forward right through his body until it ended up in his heart. There was no way it could have travelled in his bloodstream so it must have moved up through his groin, through his abdomen, through his diaphragm and then pierced the wall of his heart and moved up until it was completely within the left ventricle of his heart.

It apparently caused no problems during its journey until the very end when it damaged a heart valve and triggered the cardiac failure episode.

Source Crosara et al *Journal of Small Animal Practice* Feb 2008

Why Do Cats...?

Why do cats purr?

Purring is unique to the cat family. Kittens purr when they suckle and mother cats may purr as they approach the nest; it is a signal between cats that all is okay.

Why do cats groom?

Cats spend a third of their time grooming themselves. Their tongues are covered in tiny barbs which part and demat the hair. Grooming keeps the coat clean and flat which makes it more waterproof. It also keeps the touch sensitive hairs untangled. Evaporation of saliva can help cooling in hot weather and it generally helps with relaxation.

Why do cats' eyes glow green in some photos?

Cats have fantastic eyesight in low light conditions. This is because they have a special layer of cells behind the retina which reflects light back (from a camera flash) and gives them a second chance to see the image – they are six times better at seeing at dawn or dusk than we are. Siamese cats have different cells which will glow red in flash photos.

Why do cats knead when they sit on our knees?

This is another behaviour which has persisted from early in the cat's life. Kittens, when suckling, knead their mother to stimulate the flow of milk. They often also dribble as the body still associates it with getting a meal!

Why do cats rub themselves around us?

When cats rub us, they are actually smearing their scent from glands in their face and body. This is a reassuring smell which makes them feel secure.

Why do cats hunt even though we feed them?

The sensation of hunger and the urge to hunt are controlled by two parts of the brain. A full stomach does not over-ride the impulse to hunt. Cats cannot survive without meat so their body must be primed to hunt at any opportunity.

Why do cats get up early (if they can)?

Cats are crepuscular hunters which means that they are most active at dawn and dusk when their prey (small mammals) will be most active and when their excellent eyesight will give them an advantage.

