



BEACONSFIELD VETERINARY CENTRE PET CARE NEWS



March 2010
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1. Addy's article



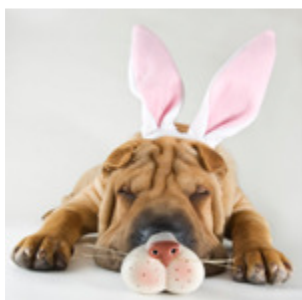
Congratulations to our vet Dr Angela Harris on getting her new house. I especially like the fact she has a new house because I get to go there on the weekends! I get lots of pats and cuddles, and she lets me sleep on her bed! Heaven! I love to go for wanders around her garden, then curl up with her to watch a bit of TV.

I would also like to welcome our new vet Dr Delphine Roelandts. She started here in the middle of February. I hope you like her as much as I do!

See you at the clinic!

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2. Easter is coming



Yes, Easter is coming up again, 4th April to be precise. Although it is still a month away, we wanted to get in early to remind everyone of the dangers of chocolate toxicity.

Chocolate contains theobromine, a compound that is a cardiac stimulant and a diuretic.

When affected by an overdose of chocolate, a dog can become excited and hyperactive. Due to the diuretic effect, it may pass large volumes of urine and it will be unusually thirsty. Vomiting and diarrhoea are also common. The effect of theobromine on the heart is the most dangerous effect. Theobromine will either increase the dog's heart rate or may cause the heart to beat irregularly, which may cause death with exercise.

After their pet has eaten a large quantity of chocolate, many pet owners assume their pet is unaffected. However, the signs of sickness may not be seen for several hours, with death following within twenty-four hours.

Cocoa powder and cooking chocolate are the most toxic forms. A

10-kilogram dog can be seriously affected if it eats a quarter of a 250gm packet of cocoa powder or half of a 250gm block of cooking chocolate. These forms of chocolate contain ten times more theobromine than milk chocolate. Thus, a chocolate mud cake could be a real health risk for a small dog. Even licking a substantial part of the chocolate icing from a cake can make a dog unwell. Milk chocolate (for example, Easter eggs) can still pose a risk to your pet, despite being one of the least dangerous types of chocolate.

So, remember to store your Easter eggs in a place that your furry friend can't get to, and never feed chocolate to them. If your pet does consume some chocolate, or you are worried that they may have, contact the clinic immediately.

Just think of it this way, it's more chocolate for you! Have a great Easter!

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3. Park party animals



For dog owners, a visit to the park is a great way to unwind, think about the day and socialise your pooch. But the benefits are now proven to reach further; with dog friendly parks becoming a hub for social networking.



A recent study undertaken at the University of Western Australia shows that dogs are a great conversation starter for 94% of people who take their dog to a park. Of these people, more than one in three have gone on to become more than just passing acquaintances and some are now organising regular social events.

These pooch park parties are bringing together people from all areas of life. In a leafy park in New South Wales, a group of dog lovers meet at the end of every working week. People bring along drinks and a snack and chat while the dogs play. For those who attend, it is a relaxing introduction to the weekend and it brings the community together.

Have you considered starting up a park party in your area? [Click here](#) to read some tips for partying with your pet.

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4. Puppies and kittens - a checklist



Here's a list of the essentials to help you get a new puppy or kitten started on the right track.

1. Health check and vaccination

It is never too early for a vet check. We'll get your best friend started on a vaccination program and a thorough check over will rule out any health problems.

2. Diet

To ensure your pet gets everything needed for a growing body, we recommend a premium quality diet. These highly digestible diets are



readily absorbed and the good result is less poo to pick up! Always introduce a new diet slowly to prevent an upset stomach

3. Parasite prevention

Intestinal worms can be a serious problem for our young pets so regular worming is a must. We will also recommend the most suitable products to prevent against fleas and heartworm.

4. Microchipping

A rice grain sized chip with an individual number is inserted under your pet's skin. Your phone number is kept on a central database so don't forget to update your details if they ever change.

5. Training

Dogs and cats learn from positive reinforcement and good behaviour starts from day one. Ask us about Puppy Pre School and training tips for your kitten.

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5. Why do we recommend desexing?

There is an obvious answer to this question: desexing prevents unwanted pregnancies in female cats and dogs.

Did you know that there are also medical reasons for desexing?

Desexing around the age of six months greatly reduces the risk of cancers in both male and female pets. Non castrated male dogs are at a higher risk of suffering from testicular cancer and prostate disease and are far more likely to roam, getting themselves into trouble.

Female pets that have not been spayed can develop mammary cancer. It is also not uncommon for non desexed female dogs to develop a uterine infection. This leads to a septic uterus, also known as pyometra and your pet can become very ill and even die if the uterus is not removed promptly.

There are countless stray and abandoned animals euthanased every year so desexing your pet gives unwanted animals a far greater chance of finding a home. If you do not plan to breed from your pet, we recommend desexing. If you are considering breeding with your pet make sure you discuss this with us first and only commence breeding at a safe age for your pet (generally after the age of 18 months).

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6. Keeping an eye on Jack

Jack the Kelpie had red eyes. He was rubbing them with his paws and woke each morning with a watery discharge. Jack was not his usual happy self.



Examination ruled out problems with his tear production, extra eyelashes that may cause irritation or the presence of a foreign body such as a grass seed. Special green dye was also applied to his eyes to check for damage to the windscreen of his eye, known as the cornea.

Thankfully there were no major problems and it was thought Jack was suffering from allergic conjunctivitis. Ointment was dispensed to help treat the problem and a revisit later revealed the conjunctivitis had cleared.

Important rules for healthy eyes:

See us if your pet:

- has one or both eyes closed or is squinting
- has swollen eyelids
- has redness noticed on the white of the eye
- has a sudden increase in discharge
- is continually rubbing the eye/s

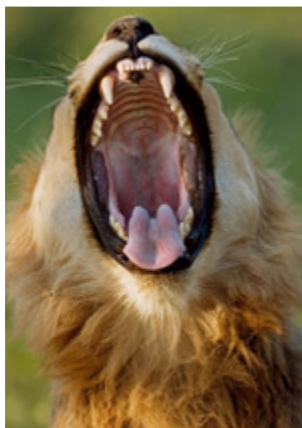
Only ever wipe your pet's eyes with a damp cotton wool ball.

NEVER put your own eye drops in your pet's eyes as this may damage the eye.

Consider an eye problem as urgent until proven otherwise. Early treatment gives us the best chance to successfully treat the eye/s. Always call us if you are concerned.

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7. Tableting tips



When it comes to worming or giving medication, we are often asked, "how on earth do I give my pet a tablet?"

Here are some tips to help you out:

1. Always check the instructions and double check you are giving the correct amount of medication
2. Have your pet in the sitting position
3. Hold the tablet in one hand between your thumb and index finger
4. Place your other hand over the top of your pet's muzzle and holding the upper jaw, open your pet's mouth
5. Place the tablet at the back of the throat and close the mouth
6. Rub the neck and make sure the tablet has been swallowed

You can try hiding the tablet in your pet's favourite treat but ask us first as some medications need to be given on an empty stomach.

For pets that are good at spitting out a tablet, there are spot on worming products available. Always ask us if you need some help.

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