



VET mates

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT YOUR PETS

DECEMBER 2017



Christmas BBQ

Christine Moloney

As this year draws to a close we would like to thank all of you for allowing us to care for your pets and to wish you all a very peaceful, relaxing and family orientated Christmas, followed by a fabulous New Year. We invite you to share our Christmas BBQ lunch on Friday Dec 15th from 11-2 at the Feilding clinic.

There will be clinic tours, a pet photo booth and special deals on the day. Our Christmas/New Year hours will be slightly reduced to allow everyone time with their families and afterhours requirements will continue to be serviced by the Massey Emergency Afterhours clinic.

We look forward to seeing you all in the New Year, if not at the BBQ.

Tips for Keeping Your Dog Safe in the Heat

There is no doubt that one of the best aspects of living in New Zealand is getting to enjoy our beautiful summer weather.

For many of us, this experience is made even more enjoyable by sharing it with our four-legged friends. Familiarizing yourself with how to keep your pet cool and comfortable can help keep your pet safe, happy, and healthy on these hot summer days.

The most important aspect of keeping your pet safe during the summer is to remember that they should NEVER be left alone in the car. The inside of a car can reach over 40 degrees on a 21 degree day. Recent studies have also shown that cracking the window does little to decrease the heat inside your car. This kind of heat can be fatal to your dog within minutes.

It is also important to realize that certain types of dogs are more sensitive to the heat than others. Brachiocephalic breeds such as bulldogs, French bulldogs, pugs, Boston terriers, etc. have a much more difficult time maintaining their core body temperature in the heat.



These dogs should always be monitored very closely for signs of heat stroke if they are outside on a warm day. Ideally, trips outside should be short and should be taken closer to dusk or dawn when the day is cooler. Dogs who suffer from laryngeal paralysis or who are obese should also be watched much more carefully during warmer weather.

On very sunny days it is also possible that your dog could get sunburn. The nose and ears are common areas for dogs to get sunburns. Dogs with thin or sparse haircoats, as well as dogs with pink/white skin are more susceptible to this problem.

Applying pet sunscreen or zinc to your hands and then to the exposed areas on your pet as well as putting a t-shirt on them can help to reduce this risk.

PICK OF THE LITTER

Toys For Your Dog

If you have ever questioned the benefits of dog toys and treats, just remember this:

Dogs are like kids; they need something to focus their attention on, give them good fun and keep them busy, and at the same time improve their physical and mental skills.

Toys and treats are the perfect solution for dogs that are so bored that they chew on anything and dig up the yard.

A tired dog is a good dog! A simple yet accurate phrase every pet owner should remember. Boredom and lack of exercise are the leading causes of destructive behaviour.

Taking your dog on long walks, going jogging, playing fetch or tug are all great ways to interact with your dog and provide physical exercise. But how do we exercise our dogs on days when we can't go for a long walk, or play fetch due to schedules or weather conditions? The answer is toys and treats. To soothe the anal glands. Fewer visits to the vet to manually squeeze the glands out results in less irritation too!

When purchasing toys for your dog make sure that they are suitable for your dog's size. You don't want a big dog to have a small toy that he can destroy in two seconds. So ask our friendly staff for advice in this area.

Ditch the Itch!

Helen Sheard

It's the time of year when, if, like me, you own an allergic dog, you start to get a little tense... Fleas, pollen, itching... oh sigh

Another weapon against itching has come into our dermatological arsenal – Cytopoint – an injection of antibodies against interleukin-31, the little chemical messenger in the body that triggers itch.

The antibodies mop up IL-31 before it can trigger those pernicious sensations. Because it is essentially working alongside your pet's immune system, it has virtually no side-effects, and no drug interactions.

It eventually breaks down but is not metabolised by the liver or kidneys, so will not affect these organs at all.



The injection is given once every four weeks and can safely be given all year round, or just over the trouble season if your pet is only a seasonal itcher.

But wait you cry, this golden bolus can't be all that it seems, there must be some cons! Well yes, there is... but not many. The big one is probably cost. For those of you with pets on Apoquel already, this will replace the daily pills, but at approximately 20% more cost. The other drawback is that 2% of dogs (not a typo – it's a very small number of dogs!) may not respond at all.

That is because the IL-31 antibody originally stems from mice. The antibody is cultured from the mouse's blood, then 'caninised' – ie converted to a dog antibody. This is so the dog's immune system doesn't recognise it as foreign and get rid of it. However a miniscule part of mouse antibody remains. Most dog's immune systems are happy to ignore this. Some with 'hypervigilant' immune systems will recognise it and get rid of the antibodies before they have time to work.

Remember that with allergic dogs, there is no one fix – the key rules are:

- Year round flea treatment
- Regular shampooing to remove allergens and moisturise the skin
- Supplements to maintain the skin barrier
- Medications to reduce inflammation/itch

Come and see our team to work out a management plan for your itchy pooch!

Don't Forget!!

If your pet is microchipped and has been registered with the NZ Companion Animal Register (NB this is different from council registration).

Don't forget to go online and update your details should your address or phone number change.

We recently had someone bring in a stray cat, wanting to know if she was microchipped so they could find her previous owner. Indeed she was, however both the phone number and the email address on the register were out of date. Fear not, stray cat is staying on with the family who found her, until (if) her owners can be found.

Remember that the microchip contains only a number – like a barcode – not your details, so for you to be reunited with a lost pet, these details need to be correct.

If you're not sure if you signed up for the NZ Companion Animal Register when you had your pet microchipped, contact our friendly reception team.

How much is in there???

Jeanette Parsons

As vets, taking and reviewing x-rays are a routine part of our day.

Once in a while we come across a case that catches our attention... like "Bella", a 7 month old Labrador (not her real name – though perhaps it should have been 'Rocky'?).

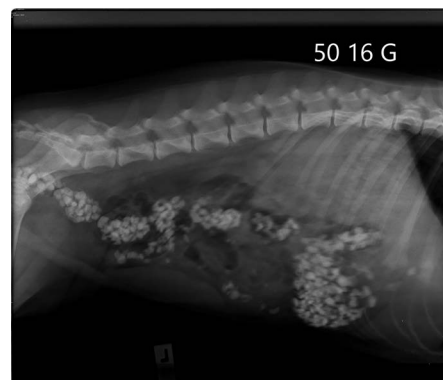
Bella was a vomiting case with a difference.

Her owners advised us that Bella had brought up some gravel in her vomit. They thought that having vomited on the gravel drive, Bella had then been a typical dog and re-eaten her vomit, along with some gravel.

An x-ray was taken to check Bella had not swallowed any larger stones that might become stuck in the intestinal tract and require surgery. Imagine our surprise, when we saw not just a little gravel, but evidence that Bella had in fact been enjoying a gravel feast!

Thankfully, there were no stones large enough to become stuck, and Bella was sent home with the expectation she would pass the gravel out in the natural way (ouch!)

Under advice to keep Bella away from the gravel drive, hopefully that is an x-ray picture we never have to see again!



Glyde into Summer

Helen Sheard

For some older dogs arthritis doesn't always improve with the warmer weather. Some may be just a bit stiff, or have trouble getting into the car. Some may be super stiff after spending a day at the beach.

Whether or not they are bad enough to need daily pain relief, they may benefit from a joint supplement. Trouble is, what to choose? There are so many out there and the different ingredients can get confusing.

Here's a basic rundown...

Green lipped mussel extract or powder: this is a source of omega 3, glucosamine and chondroitin. Omega 3 is a fatty acid with anti-inflammatory properties. Glucosamine and chondroitin are glycosaminoglycans (GAGs) which are constituents of joint fluid and cartilage. Another benefit is, if your dog is already on anti-inflammatory pain relief, GLM has been found to reduce the risk of stomach ulcers associated with these drugs.

Of all the supplements you may see, there is only good evidence behind green lipped mussel and omega 3 fatty acids; not to say that the others don't work, just that scientific trials providing good evidence are lacking.

Shark cartilage may be included as a source of chondroitin; many people are not comfortable with this, so be sure to check.

Other ingredients include enzogenol (from pine trees) and turmeric – again good evidence for these is lacking.

Dose rates can also be confusing – there is a minimum effective dose but more is not necessarily better. Come into our clinic and chat with our friendly staff

Currently we stock Bomazeal Mobilise, Sasha's Blend and Glyde to cater to our older patients.



PICK OF THE LITTER Royal Canin Cat Calm

Stressy cat? Bladder issues?
Nervous over-groomer?

Fortunately for your fearful feline, Royal Canin has introduced a new diet called Cat Calm. It contains L-tryptophan, which is converted to serotonin (reduces anxiety), B vitamins for stress, and a protein derived from milk which promotes calm (think any baby after a milk feed).

It also contains their patented hairball formula, skin barrier complex, digestive security complex and has the s/o index for any kitties that have crystals in their urine. All in all, the ideal food for any anxious kitty who over-grooms (and gets hairballs as a result), gets bladder inflammation, or vomits with their nervousness. It's also highly palatable

Come talk to your vet if you think it could help your cat! Dog owners – hopefully Dog Calm will be in NZ soon!



Definitely a girl...or is she?

Jeanette Parsons

One of our interesting recent cases is Skylar, a young female German Shepherd we saw for routine de-sexing.

Here at Totally Vets we de-sex over a hundred bitches every year, and they all have a uterus with two ovaries. There may be minor variations in the size of the uterus, depending on the bitch's age, or whether she's had puppies, but the basic structures are the same in everyone.

The first inkling we had that Skylar may be a bit different was after we'd anaesthetised her. She was lying on her back, fully asleep, so we could shave her belly ready for surgery. Out of her female external genitalia (her vulva) protruded a pointy pink organ that looked remarkably like a small penis.

Once inside her abdomen, her uterus appeared to be normal in all respects – position and size were as we expected. However, instead of two ovaries, this special dog had one ovary, and one testicle! See the picture below – on the right is a testicle and on the left an ovary.

Skylar is a hermaphrodite, also known as intersex, which is defined as an individual in which reproductive organs of both sexes are present. Hermaphroditism is normal for some invertebrates, like snails and earthworms. However it is uncommon in mammals. The companion animal vets working here at the Feilding clinic can only recall 3-4 other cases in the last 25 years.

Hermaphrodite or intersex dogs look either male or female from the outside. Most cases are only diagnosed at de-sexing, and the condition rarely causes problems unless the animal is destined for breeding

You'll be pleased to know Skylar has recovered well from her surgery, and is enjoying life with her family.



Christmas Jokes

Helen Ryan

It wouldn't be Christmas without some bad jokes inside your crackers. A company that makes crackers has put together their top 10 jokes. Once in a while we come across a case that catches our attention enjoying a gravel feast!

Q: Where does Father Christmas go to recover after Christmas?

A: An elf farm.

Q: What did Cinderella say when her photos didn't arrive on time?

A: One day my prints will come.

Q: What do you call two happy mushrooms?

A: Fun guys.

Q: What happened to the man who stole an advent calendar?

A: He got 25 days.

Q: What does Father Christmas do when his elves misbehave?

A: He gives them the sack.

Q: What do you give a dog for Christmas?

A: A mobile bone.

Q: What's brown and creeps around the house?

A: Mince spies.

Q: What do witches use to wrap their presents?

A: Spello-tape.

Q: What do you call a train loaded with toffee?

A: A chew chew train.

Q: Why couldn't the skeleton go to the Christmas party?

A: He had no body to go with.

Holiday Hours

FDG AWA TAU

Mon 25 - Tue 26 Dec	Closed	Closed	Closed
Wed 27 Dec	8-6	8-5	8-5
Thu 28 Dec	8-6	8-5	8-5
Fri 29 Dec	8-5	8-5	8-5
Sat 30 Dec	9-2	Closed	8-5
Sun 31 Dec - Tue 2 Jan	Closed	Closed	Closed
Wed 3 Jan	8-6	8-5	8-5
Thu 4 Jan	8-6	8-5	8-5
Fri 5 Jan	8-6	8-5	8-5

Normal hours resume on Saturday 6 January 2018

Please note we have a 24-hour emergency service if required:

Feilding 06 323 6161

Awapuni 06 356 5011

Taumarunui 07 895 8899