



VET mates

YOUR TOTALLY VETS NEWSLETTER ALL ABOUT YOUR PETS

DECEMBER 2016



The Twelve Poisons of Christmas

The poetical stylings of Helen Ryan Vet Nurse

On the first day of Christmas the vet we went to see, 'cos of mouldy bread from the compost heap.

On the second day of Christmas the vet we went to see, 'cos of two rat-bait blocks and mouldy bread from the compost heap.

On the third day of Christmas the vet we went to see, 'cos of three rows of chocolate, two rat-bait blocks and mouldy bread from the compost heap.

On the fourth day of Christmas the vet we went to see, 'cos of four trays of raisins, three rows of chocolate, two rat-bait blocks and mouldy bread from the compost heap.

On the fifth day of Christmas the vet we went

to see, 'cos of five onion riings, four trays of raisins, three rows of chocolate, two rat-bait blocks and mouldy bread from the compost heap.

On the sixth day of Christmas the vet we went to see, 'cos of six toy batteries, five onion riings, four trays of raisins, three rows of chocolate, two rat-bait blocks and mouldy bread from the compost heap.

On the seventh day of Christmas the vet we went to see, 'cos of seven grape bunches, six toy batteries, five onion riings, four trays of raisins, three rows of chocolate, two rat-bait blocks and mouldy bread from the compost heap.

You've got the idea? Sing along...

... Eight Christmas baubles ...

... Nine paracetamol ...

... Ten Christmas Lilies ...

... Eleven slug-bait pellets ...

... Twelve macadamias ...

Disclaimer: I'm sure you've guessed this is tongue in cheek and not actually the toxic dose rates for the poisons mentioned!

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 16th from 10-2 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.





PICK OF THE LITTER

Boot the Scoot!!

Does Fluffy always embarrass you in front of visitors by scooting her bum along the new rug?

Dreading having fastidious Aunt Emily over for Christmas because Rover's foul smelling anal glands keep exploding? Fear not! Brand new product Glandex may be the answer to your prayers! The peanut butter flavoured chewable treats contain measured amounts of fibre to bulk up faeces which helps evacuate anal glands naturally, every time your dog goes the toilet. Glandex also contains natural anti-inflammatories to soothe the anal glands. Fewer visits to the vet to manually squeeze the glands out results in less irritation too!

Improvement should be seen in 3-5 weeks so start now for a blush free Christmas.



Totally Vets Lite Paws Slimmer's Club

Sandy Fitzgerald

Totally Vets would like to give a BIG shout-out to the winner and runner-up of this year's in-house weight loss competition. These owners all seek to 'Battle the Bulge' for their beloved pets to help them lead healthier more fulfilling lives.

We understand this road is often long and bumpy and we commend them on their dedication to not only get their pets to their ideal goal weight BUT also to keep them there. So well done, keep up the fantastic work and stay strong – the rewards are worth it!!!!

1ST PLACE JAKE RAMSAY

Jake started the programme weighing in at 73.3kg, and graduated after losing a whopping 24.8kg. This is a total of 33.8% of his body weight. **This is equivalent to you or me losing 23kg – No easy feat!!!!**

David said that almost ten year old Jake is a transformed dog. Listening to Jake's laboured breathing prompted David to make the decision to start Jake on the weight loss programme. Losing weight not only took the stress off his joints but also he felt that it will prolong his life.

"Getting back the energetic almost "puppy" enthusiasm again and really wanting to run, chase balls, swim and enjoy life so much more, is gratifying from the effort taken to have Jake around for years to come."

RUNNER-UP JESS GORDON

Jess started off weighing in at 40.5kg and graduated after losing 10kg and achieving her ideal goal weight of 30.5 kg. This is a loss of 24.7% - a quarter of her body weight.

There are many factors that make our pets susceptible to weight gain. Breed predisposition, hormonal imbalances, age, reproductive status and, most common, owner perception. De-sexing doesn't cause obesity BUT it does mean your dogs don't require as many calories to maintain a healthy weight. What, and how much, we feed our pets and how much we exercise them plays an important role in their overall health and wellbeing.

Here is a simple test you can do at home to tell if your pet is overweight. Simply place your thumbs in the middle of your pet's back, alongside the spine, and feel the ribs with your fingers. If the ribs are easily felt, then your pet is at a healthy weight. If the ribs are hard to feel, or you can't feel them at all, then your pet has a weight concern.

Totally Vets would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and give thanks to Karla Henson and Royal Canin, and Fiona Cavanagh and Eukanuba, who supply the prescription-only diet food. We would not be able to run such a successful weight loss programme without them.



Demystifying omega 3

Helen Sheard

Omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids are what is known as essential fatty acids (or EFAs) i.e. the body cannot produce them so they must be provided in the diet (note that some supplements will include omega 9 – this is not an EFA for cats and dogs as they can manufacture omega 9 themselves). EFAs such as omega 3 have important roles in

many different areas of the body. They form a part of cell membranes and are precursors for substances in the body that help regulate various processes such as inflammation. EFA supplementation then can be useful for joint inflammation, heart disease, skin and coat health, cognitive function and bladder health. The balance of omega 3 and omega 6 is important. Omega 3 fatty acids regulate cellular gene expression in a manner that reduces inflammation. Omega 6 fatty acids are vital to health but can promote inflammation when consumed in excessive amounts. This is why you might see phrases such as 'omega 3 and 6 in the ideal ratio' when looking at supplement labels.

Alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) is a plant-based omega 3 found in products like flaxseed oil. Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) are longer chain omega 3 fatty acids found mainly in fish oils. EPA and DHA are much better at regulating inflammation than ALA.

ALA in the diet can be metabolised by the body into EPA and DHA but this is a very inefficient process in dogs, especially those with atopic dermatitis (environmental allergic skin disease); so when it comes to supplementation, it is better to provide EPA and DHA rather than ALA.

Meet Roy!

Helen Sheard

Roy first came to us through Retired Working Dog Adoption NZ, a charity that rehomes farm working dogs if they are no longer able to stay on farm.

He had been rehomed from a large sheep and beef property to a smaller dairy farm as he had become lame in a front leg and couldn't cope with the work required on a big station. His new owners took him to their local vet, who took x-rays of a swollen joint in his front leg. The x-rays showed that something was destroying the bone around his joint.

A radiologist advised that it could be a chronic injury or possibly cancer, but without biopsies he couldn't say for sure. Things were looking bleak for Roy, but after chest x-rays at his local vet (to make sure that if it was cancer, it hadn't spread to his lungs), he hitched a ride with a vet student making her way back to Palmerston North (barking at any sheep he happened to see out the window on the way) and arrived in style at our Feilding clinic. With a team of hospital staff (who donated their time to reduce the cost to the charity) and UCOL vet nurse students, Roy underwent surgery to amputate his front leg, as the joint was damaged beyond repair. The Massey Vet Teaching Hospital took Roy's amputated leg for student autopsy class, and after testing informed us that it had been a chronic



infection that had destroyed the joint, likely started by a small foreign body they found within the joint itself. So Roy got the all clear – no cancer! After a week at the Feilding clinic getting post-op antibiotics, pain relief and lots of treats, he travelled back home.

Last we heard he'd had his stitches removed and was doing well – even jumping fences to get back to work when he was left at home to recuperate!

PICK OF THE LITTER BECAUSE...

...YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CAT IS EXTRAORDINARY – EXPECT THE EXTRAORDINARY!

We are excited to introduce a new long-lasting flea and tick treatment available now for your cat - **Bravecto® spot-on** provides 3 months flea and tick protection in just one dose!

Bravecto spot-on allows you to spend more quality time with your cat and less time dealing with fleas and ticks. Bravecto not only kills the fleas present on your cat at the time of treatment, but also continues to kill any new fleas that land on your cat for a full 3 months.

See us at **Totally Vets** and make the switch to **Bravecto spot-on** for your cat – you'll be on your way to enjoying a flea and tick-free household!



WHY USE BRAVECTO SPOT-ON FOR CATS

-  **Long-lasting, 3 month** flea and tick protection, in a convenient spot-on
-  **Easy – a year's protection** in only 4 treatments
-  **Kills fleas** to control **Flea Allergy Dermatitis**
-  **Fits easily** with worming regimes



Canine Allergies

Helen Sheard

Canine atopic dermatitis (CAD) is an allergic reaction to one or more environmental allergens – things like dust mites, tree, grass and weed pollens.

The first signs of itching usually start between one and three years old. Itching can occur in the axillae (armpits), groin, inside the earflaps, and on top of the front feet. Some dogs will also get hay fever type symptoms such as sneezing and watery eyes. CAD has a genetic basis and is more common in certain breeds, such as German shepherd dogs, Labrador retrievers and several terrier breeds. The root of the problem is twofold; firstly, the skin of atopic dogs is not a perfect barrier to the outside world, allowing allergens to penetrate the skin. Secondly the immune system is more likely to overreact to these allergens, resulting in an allergic reaction every time the dog is exposed.

It doesn't stop there. Once the skin is inflamed as a result of the allergic reaction, it is more likely to become infected with yeast or bacteria, which worsens the itch. The more the dog licks and chews, the more the skin is damaged and the more likely infections will occur. It becomes a vicious cycle of itch-scratch.

Depending on which allergens affected dogs react to, they may have a seasonal itch (e.g. tree pollens) or a year round itch (e.g. dust mites for an inside dog). Note that being allergic to grass pollens doesn't mean they can't walk on grass – the blades of grass are not allergenic, only the pollen from the seed heads (just to complicate matters though, some dogs will get contact allergy to kikuyu or paspalum grass blades; this is a different problem altogether!)

Untangling a dog's allergy problem isn't simple and often involves lifelong management. Bottom line, there is no one-stop magic bullet to cure allergies! Come and see us at the clinic for our tailored skin consults, and we can help find some management strategies that might help your pooch.

Heatstroke

Debbie Asplin

Summer is a fun time for all but the heat can be lethal to our pets.

Every year, a number of Totally Vets' clients sadly lose their dogs to heat stroke.

The most important thing to realise is dogs and cats cannot sweat like we do. They wear their coat all year long and they do not sweat through their skin. They release heat through their tongues primarily and to a lesser extent foot pads and nose. This is much less effective than sweating so even if you are comfortable your dog may be too hot. This means that when you leave an animal in an enclosed space such as a car, even if the vehicle is in the shade and even if the outside temperature is cool, the temperature and humidity build up very quickly once panting begins. There are also a number of predisposing factors: big dogs, dogs

with flat faces, overweight, older, dehydrated or anxious pets are all more likely to develop heat stroke. Symptoms include agitated panting, bright red gums, and weakness. Once the body temperature exceeds 42°C, damage can occur to the kidneys, liver, gastrointestinal tract, heart and brain. If left unchecked, your pet will become progressively weaker, go into a coma and die.

If you suspect heat stroke, ring us to let us know you are coming, so that treatment can be started quickly. To help, you can hose down your dog with cool water (not cold). Let the water run continuously in the groin area where there are large numbers of blood vessels which will allow for more rapid cooling of the blood. The most important message is this: heat stroke is usually avoidable. Don't leave your pets in an enclosed area for any length of time. Don't exercise your pet during the hottest part of the day.

Ensure there is access to shade and lots of fresh water, both before and after activity.

Opening hours over Christmas:

| | | FDG | AWA | TAU |
|--------|-----|--------|--------|--------|
| 24 Dec | Sat | 9-2 | Closed | Closed |
| 25 Dec | Sun | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| 26 Dec | Mon | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| 27 Dec | Tue | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| 28 Dec | Wed | 8-6 | 8-5 | 8-5 |
| 29 Dec | Thu | 8-6 | 8-5 | 8-5 |
| 30 Dec | Fri | 8-5 | 8-5 | 8-5 |
| 31 Dec | Sat | 9-2 | Closed | Closed |
| 1 Jan | Sun | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| 2 Jan | Mon | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| 3 Jan | Tue | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| 4 Jan | Wed | 8-6 | 8-5 | 8-5 |
| 5 Jan | Thu | 8-6 | 8-5 | 8-5 |
| 6 Jan | Fri | 8-6 | 8-5 | 8-5 |
| 7 Jan | Sat | 9-4 | Closed | Closed |