



Snippets

Small animal newsletter

Issue 9

Summer 09

INAPPROPRIATE FELINE URINATION

Recently we saw a much loved cat which had caused so much contamination and ruination of furnishings in the house that his owners had to make a major decision about his future. The problem began with occasional incidents which escalated and became an ingrained habit.

Cats are particularly expressive with their bladders and when a previously toilet trained cat urinates in inappropriate places indoors it should set alarm bells ringing. There are three possible causes, medical reasons, behavioural reasons or a combination of both. Medical problems can indicate kidney disease, diabetes, infection, or crystal formation in the bladder, as a short list of the most common problems.



Behavioural causes most often are related to a perceived threat from another cat, either in the house or neighbourhood. One of the most damaging transgressions occurs when a stray cat regularly enters the home to pinch the resident's food. Sometimes the resident cat may seem quite unconcerned or tolerant of this, but express the stress of the situation, with urinary problems. The first step when urination indoors occurs is an evaluation of health and a urine sample taken at the clinic. These steps alone can often elucidate the cause of the problem.



Besides medical treatment of the specific condition management plans for the home environment can be implemented to reduce stress. Covered litter trays in a restricted area initially and pheromone sprays/diffusers help create a secure feeling to toileting, along with limitation of access by other cats. Discussion of aspects of the home environment and cat behavior can help us develop a specific plan.

It is important to seek help early, to avoid habit development or worsening medical conditions.

CONTACT DERMATITIS

Frequently young dogs are prone to red itchy skin conditions especially along the underside, legs and feet related to contact with plants or pollens causing dermatitis/eczema.



This condition is most commonly seen in the summer time. Probably due to greater exposure to allergens. A likely suspect in the lineup of possible causes is Tradescantia (also known as Wandering Willy or Wandering Jew) a spreading plant with a small dark green pointed leaf and tiny white flowers. Usually found among weeds/rough grassed areas especially on public land.



Just walking through these areas can cause a skin reaction to the plant.

Facts of the day.....

'Like human babies, Chihuahuas are born with a soft spot in their skull which closes with age'



'Three dogs survived the sinking of the Titanic - a Newfoundland, a Pomeranian, and a Pekingese'

Diary Dates...

⇒ 21st - 23rd December - Festive fever will be all over Town & Country Vet Richmond during! Come in and join us for a glass of wine and piece of Christmas cake!

VACCINATIONS - WHY DO WE NEED THEM?



Puppies and Kittens are commonly acquired over the summer raising the issue of vaccinations. Holiday planning brings our attention to checking our existing pets vaccinations too.

Core vaccinations for dogs are Distemper and Parvovirus vaccines, for cats it's the 'Cat Flu' (Rhinotracheitis and Calicivirus) and feline enteritis vaccines. Additional vaccines given depend on lifestyle/exposure and environment of pets. Research into vaccine protection suggests core vaccines may protect animals for longer than previously thought.

Recommendations for vaccination frequency depend on individual's health and exposure level. So based on this, puppies and kittens should have at least 9 and 12 week vaccinations, followed by a booster a year later. Parvovirus vaccines for dogs can then be given on alternate years. Leptospirosis vaccines are given annually to dogs living or visiting in rural areas or places inhabited by rats (the main source of canine infection) such as rivers and waterways. Kennel cough vaccine is also an annual vaccine, given to dogs attending kennels or shows. Cats are vaccinated annually if attending catteries or alternate years if not.



Rabbits should be vaccinated against viral hemorrhagic disease. A single vaccine after 12 weeks is required when young, then an annual booster.

An annual visit for a health check gives us the chance to evaluate any deterioration of condition, or early signs of disease.

'TIS THE SEASON!



For Fleas!! Treatment for fleas with Frontline or Advantage/Advocate is so effective that we rarely see fleas on pets that are regularly treated with these products. These treatments can be given from 8 weeks of age to puppies and kittens. Treatments are repeated monthly (Advantage/Advocate) or bi-monthly (Frontline for dogs) in a convenient application to the back of the neck.

Both products will usually eliminate fleas hatching from eggs accumulated in carpets/furniture within a 3 month period. So if there are eggs in the environment it may take this long to eliminate them. Humidity and warmth encourage egg hatching, which is why summer is the time to be especially committed to regular treatment.



\$1 off

When you present this voucher you will receive \$1 off a packet of flea products (excludes singles)

Offer valid until 31st December 2009

Its also the season for.....Chocolate!

Remember that this can be toxic to dogs and cats, especially if dark chocolate, and consumed in any quantity!!



THE HOLIDAY SEASON

When taking your pet to boarding kennels/catteries it helps to settle them in if you:



- Take familiar bedding or toys along
- Leave contact details for someone with authority to make decisions on your behalf, and a contact number of your regular vet
- Let the carer know if there are any medications, ailments, special diets or requirements for your pet
- Ensure vaccinations are updated at least 14 days before the visit
- If very young or old, or specific in their appetite, leave some of your regular food so that the carer can slowly change over to the regular food

