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Newsletter- Spring/Summer 2010



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Welcome to our Spring Newsletter! As part of our ongoing care for your pets, we like to keep you informed of staff news, new services we are now offering and problems which could affect your pets, particularly at this time of year. Our seasonal newsletters will be accessible on our website, from the clinic and via mail out. Let us know if you would like to receive our quarterly publication and we can add you to our mail or email list.

Clinic News

Congratulations to Emma and Tim on the birth of their little boy Joshua Harris. Emma is enjoying the challenge of motherhood but looking forward to coming back to ERVH part-time mid December 2010.

A big welcome to our fabulous new part-time vet Anita Dukes who is working Tuesday and Friday nights and one in four weekends. For more information about Anita take a look at her profile that features in this newsletter. Lee will be spending 2011 with her family in Samoa, working as a volunteer vet. Samoa has a massive unregulated dog population and serious animal welfare problems, so she'll be working hard trying to help improve the conditions of their cats and dogs. Luckily, our wonderful vet Miri will remain at ERVH for a further 12mths to cover Lee's shifts while she is away.

Look Good, Feel Good

Imagine that you haven't washed or combed your hair in months and it's so matted that every time you move, it pulls painfully on your scalp. Your fringe is so long that you can't see anything and to top it all off, you have creepy crawlies running around on your head that make you intensely itchy. You wouldn't be feeling too happy. That is why it's so important that we keep our pets comfortable and well groomed. Not only do they look better, but most importantly they FEEL better. Here are a few tips about grooming:

- * If you have a long haired cat ensure you brush them every few days as mats form quickly and this helps to prevent fur balls. If your cat doesn't like being groomed, we can sedate and clip them every 3-6 months.
- * Brush dogs with long or thick coats, brush every few days. Many breeds of dogs need 6-8 weekly professional grooms. In the warm weather it is very important to keep your dog's coat short to help keep them cool.
- * Use regular flea control.
- * Ensure that their back end is clean and dry as in the warm weather pets can become fly blown, particularly older animals and exotic pets.
- * Our groomers Eilish and Wendy do a great job of making your pet look good and feel great. Give the clinic a call if you would like to book them in for a groom.



On The Move

In this modern age of planes, trains, boats and automobiles, many people are moving and holidaying with their pets. **Motion Sickness** is a common condition that is distressing for you and your dog. Travelling affects the inner ear which sends signals to the brain that can cause increased drooling, anxiety, nausea and vomiting. When driving, plan extra stops to give you and your dog a chance to get some fresh air. We can prescribe an effective, long-acting, non-drowsy medication to help prevent motion sickness, so even after a long car ride your dog will be ready for fun at your final destination.

Also ensure that your dog has a proper **car seat belt harness** for the drive.

Plane travel is sometimes a necessary mode of transport for pets. It was once popular to sedate animals for flights, but we now strongly advise against this. Animals are completely unsupervised in the cargo hold, so vulnerable if any complications occur. When sedated they are unsteady and more prone to injury or trauma when the plane moves around due to turbulence. Many animals die each year as a result of plane travel.

Before you leave home review your travel plans with one of our vets, find out about motion sickness medications and vaccinations and address any other travel concerns.



Canine Flatulence...Oh, not again!

The main cause of flatulence is an imbalance in gut flora as a result of your pet eating poorly digestible or inappropriate foods such as spoiled food, left-overs, milk products, high fat diets, beans or peas. Supermarket foods often contain high levels of carbohydrates that are poorly digested by the dog's GI tract. Sudden changes in diet may also cause flatulence until the intestines have had time to adapt. Eating food too quickly or feeding just after exercise may lead to swallowing air with the food which can also lead to increased gas in the bowels and result in flatulence.

If your pet has a problem with flatulence the first step in managing this rather unsociable problem is to feed a good quality, easily digested diet such as Eukanuba, Hills or Advance. Avoid any sudden changes in their diet and prevent your dog getting access to spoilt food or rubbish. For dogs with ongoing problems we can prescribe special GI diets and/or try dog pro-biotics. If you pet eats too quickly, try feeding small meals more frequently to reduce air gulping.

If the problem persists it is best to organise a consult with our vets to ensure there isn't an underlying medical reason for the condition and to discuss the best way to manage the flatulence.

Palm Oil- Did you know...?

Most of the world's palm oil comes from Malaysia and Indonesia and it is contained in about 40% of the food on our supermarket shelves as well as many shampoos, soaps and beauty products. The most common cause of deforestation in Indonesia is related to palm oil development and this typically costs the lives of up to 50 Orang-utans each week. 90% of Orang-utan habitat has been lost already.

We did some research into all the foods, shampoos and products that we sell and were pleased to find that none of them contain palm oil. This means that you can use our products to keep your animal in great condition whilst still making ethically sound choices.

If you would like more information on palm oil and what you can do to help to save the lives of the magnificent Orang-utans please go to: www.zoo.org.au/PalmOil.



Staff Profile

Dr Anita Dukes grew up in rural Queensland and graduated from the University of Queensland in 2001. She commenced working at a small animal practice in Toowoomba and remained there until late 2008 when she embarked on a working holiday in the UK. During her year and a half in the UK Anita worked as a locum for a group of small animal practices in London. She has recently returned to Australia and has decided to settle in Melbourne. Anita has a cheeky but beautiful Australian Cattle Dog, "Tessy", who is still living in QLD but will hopefully be joining her in Melbourne soon. Anita loves all aspects of being a vet but when she's not working she enjoys hiking, photography, travelling and playing with her sister's Schnauzer "Winston".



Clinic Hours (By Appointment)

8am-7pm Weekdays

8am-4pm Saturday

10am-12 noon Sunday

HOME VISITING SERVICE AVAILABLE