



# Drumahoe Veterinary Clinic

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## NEWS

### Going on holiday?

**Remember to book your kennels.**  
 We have excellent DARD approved kennels for dogs and cats.



We require all animals to be fully vaccinated including Kennel Cough in the case of dogs.

The dogs and cats are kennelled in heated separate kennels and are not in contact with any other dogs or cats. We cater for a range of dogs, small to large in size and can accommodate groups of dogs as well as groups of cats.

We endeavour to ensure that your pet is safe, warm, comfortable and well fed to make sure their stay with us is a happy one. Food and bedding are provided.

The cats have their own little gym to allow them to exercise and equally have fun.

Special arrangements can be made to cater for rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters and other small companions and provide for their individual needs.

### Consulting Times

*Monday - Friday:*

8.30 - 9.30am, 1.30 - 4.00pm,  
 5.00 - 7.00pm

*Saturday:*

8.30 - 9.30am, 1 - 2pm

**Please note:**

**Consultations by appointment**

**24 HOUR SERVICE  
 FOR EMERGENCIES**  
 ☎ (028) 71 311448



### Lynne Montgomery, 19 ANA

Finishing school at the age of 16 I decided to go to Greenmount College, Antrim to do the Level 2 Diploma Animal Nursing Assistant (ANA) course. This course was one day a week, and with it I did not have to be in an RCVS Accredited Practice, although I did have to do at least 18 hours a week placement.

From here I then went on and did the Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing, which is a lot harder but I'm glad I did the ANA course as this helped me with the veterinary terminology. Veterinary Nursing is 2 days a week and you must be employed in an RCVS Accredited Practice.

I have been at Drumahoe Veterinary Clinic just over 2 years now. I enjoy it thoroughly as there are never 2 days the same! It's great that there is a range of small and large animals and also equine, which means there is plenty to see and do.

My roles in the practice are:- reception duties, cleaning kennels and cattery, assisting the vet with operations and holding animals for examination. I also go out TB testing on farms along with the vet.

What I love most about being a nurse is working with the hospitalized animals, and watching them get better, and then able to go home, knowing that I had helped with this. I also enjoy doing free nurse checks as I get to speak to clients on a one to one basis getting to know new and friendly faces.



### Catherine Lindsay

After completing my A-levels at St. Cecilia's college I went onto Jordanstown where I completed my first year in criminology, it was at this time that I realised that the course wasn't suited for me and that I wanted to study a course relating to animals, I have always had a keen interest in them as I was growing up. I applied for a HND course in animal care and management at Belfast Metropolitan College, which I completed in 2012. I found the course very interesting and it made me more determined to further my knowledge in working with animals. I worked in retail while studying and is very different from working in a veterinary practice. I am very passionate about animals and caring for

them, which is why I felt that I would be suited to veterinary nursing. I have worked at Drumahoe Veterinary Practice for 2 years now, my job roles within the practice include, preparing animals for surgery, assisting the vets during surgery, post operative care, caring for in patients and administrative duties. I have just completed the ANA course at Greenmount College and will be continuing onto college next year to begin my first year of Veterinary nursing. Working in a veterinary clinic is a very rewarding job and I love that every day is never the same; there are always new things to experience and learn.



### Firework Fear!

As firework night draws nearer, it's worth thinking about how to keep your pets safe and calm, as many pets are afraid of loud noises.

The key to helping them is preparation: on the days when you know fireworks might be used, make sure you give dogs a good walk to tire them out, but are home well before dark. For cats, shut the cat flap and provide a litter tray, so you know they will be safe indoors. Shutting the curtains and turning on the TV or radio will muffle the bangs to some degree and cut out the flashes. You should also make a den where they can hide and feel safe. Try to avoid reassuring your pet excessively, as this can feed into their distress.

Calming pheromones (Adaptil for dogs and Feliway for cats) can really help to reduce anxiety. These come as plug-ins, sprays (great for spritzing dens) and collars (for dogs), which give them constant security. These products should be started 2-3 weeks before the event.

If you are worried about your pets and fireworks, please **come and chat about how we can help!**



## Microchip Alert!

Did you know that microchipping of **dogs** is already required by law in Northern Ireland and will become compulsory in England, Scotland and Wales from April 2016?

However it's not just dogs that will benefit from being microchipped! The good news is that microchipping is a *permanent* method of identifying your cat, dog, rabbit or pretty much any other pet (including birds and fish!)

*So how are microchips implanted?* A microchip is hardly bigger than a grain of rice and just takes a few seconds to implant. Like a normal injection, it is inserted under the skin at the back of the neck, and once there, lasts a lifetime.

Should your pet go missing and is found, veterinary practices, the police and welfare organisations all have special microchip scanners and will routinely scan stray pets. So – don't take any chances – get your pets microchipped today, and of course it is rapidly becoming a legal requirement for dogs in all parts of the UK.

## Arthritis – is your pet affected?



The cooler Autumn weather often unmask arthritic disease and joint stiffness, so keep an eye on your pet's mobility and comfort.

Arthritis is a common disease in dogs and cats, and generally worsens with age. In most cases, it results from

wear and tear to the surface of the joints, but can also occur as a result of joint trauma or as a consequence of a joint malformation (for example hip dysplasia).

The joints most susceptible to arthritis are those permitting limb movements – called synovial joints. The ends of the bones which meet at these joints are covered by smooth articular cartilage and the joints are lubricated by synovial fluid.

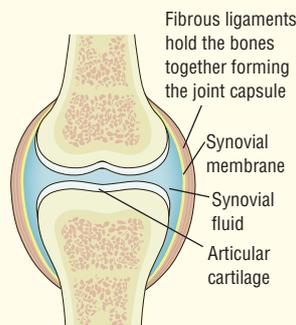
In pets with arthritis, the smooth cartilage covering of the bone ends becomes roughened, irregular and damaged, the joint fluid becomes less shock absorbing, and the joint capsule becomes swollen, (see diagram) resulting in stiffness and pain on movement.

Affected pets typically show signs of lameness, stiffness, difficulty rising, and problems negotiating steps. They may also become slower, less active, and more grumpy, and may show obvious signs of pain such as crying out, whimpering, or avoiding contact with painful areas. X-rays can be helpful, confirming the degree of bone changes and allow assessment of the joints affected.

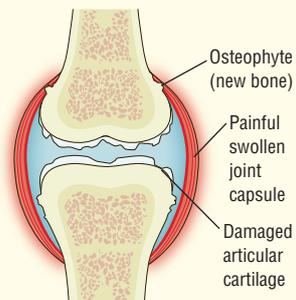
**So what can be done? Weight loss** can make a massive difference to many affected pets, as they are often overweight. Reducing food, and splitting meals into several smaller meals can aid weight loss. **Regular gentle exercise** is also important, and it helps if it is consistent (i.e. the same amount of exercise twice daily every day, and no unusually long walks on the weekend!) whilst physio exercises can aid mobility. **Joint supplements containing glucosamine** may be helpful, but the majority of pets also benefit from **anti-inflammatory pain relief medication**.

Ask us for more information if you think your dog or cat may be showing signs of arthritis, and let us help you get the spring back in their steps!

### Joint Anatomy



Healthy synovial joint with smooth articular cartilage



Arthritic synovial joint with damaged articular cartilage

## Autumn hazards!



As temperatures drop and the nights draw in it's great to get out and active in the Autumn, but there are some factors that still need to be considered to keep our pets fit and well. With this in mind, here are a few topical tips:



The bright orange mites often cluster together and are commonly found between the toes

**Harvest mites** are a problem in late-summer and Autumn. These very seasonal parasites are picked up in woodland and long grasses and swarm onto passing pets where they tend to congregate on the

ears, eyelids, feet and the underside of the abdomen. They are identified as tiny bright orange dots adhering tightly to the skin and are usually a cause of great irritation with itchy, crusting lesions developing.

**Ticks** are particularly active in the Autumn months, living in long grass and woodland areas. Ticks clamber onto passing pets, firmly attaching themselves and feeding on their blood. Worse still they can also spread a range of infectious diseases such as Lyme disease and Babesiosis.

**Fleas** are more of a year-round problem, and unlike the parasites mentioned above, fleas love central heating and will make themselves comfortable in your home and on your pet!

So – make sure you regularly check your pet's coat for any signs of parasites and let us advise you on the best treatments for your pet.

Around the house and garden, keep a wary eye out for toxins at this time of year. Pets are very attracted to **ethylene glycol (antifreeze)** which is easily spilt when topping up radiators. It is very sweet tasting and extremely toxic to pets, causing kidney failure and often death. In the garden, try to ensure pets don't eat **fermenting apples** and also **conkers** – both of which can lead to digestive upsets and a visit to the vet!

*Enjoy the Autumn weather and take care!*



Harvest mite down the microscope



Harvest mite photo: courtesy Cat Henstridge