



Drumahoe Veterinary Clinic

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NEWS



SUMMER 2018

We are pleased to be able to offer you our extended opening times:

Monday

8.45-10.00am
1.30-4.00pm
5.00-7.00pm

Tuesday

All day appointments!
8.45am-5.30pm

Wednesday

8.45-10.00am
1.30-4.00pm
5.00-7.00pm

Thursday

8.45-10.00am
1.30-4.00pm
5.00-7.00pm

Friday

All day appointments!
8.45am-5.30pm

Saturday

8.45am-9.30am
1.00-2.00pm

Sunday Emergencies only

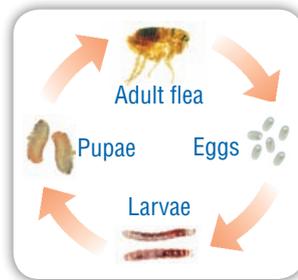


Pesky Parasite Problems

Our temperamental summer weather is here at last. For our dogs and cats don't forget to be on your guard for two very pesky parasites- fleas and ticks!



Fleas - As the weather warms up, any flea eggs lurking in carpets and bedding or outside in parks and gardens, will start to hatch. The eggs develop, via larval stages, into adult fleas (see flea life cycle). Adult fleas are very small wingless insects that can easily jump onto pets, taking up residence in their coat and repeatedly feeding on their blood. They can



The flea life-cycle

create red spots where they have been feeding and cause pets to become incredibly itchy, resulting in them scratching and biting the affected areas. Worse still, female fleas can lay 30-50 eggs per day which drop off pets and fall into carpets, bedding and outside areas. With a life cycle of about a month in warm summer (or centrally heated) conditions, the number of fleas in a household can quickly reach epidemic proportions! Make sure also to observe our small furries like rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters!

Ticks - in contrast are relatively immobile, waiting in long grass and woodland for an animal to brush past. Once attached, ticks feed on your pets blood, often for several days, ticks can cause problems in two main ways- firstly they can sometimes cause a marked tissue reaction at the attachment site and secondly, whilst feeding can cause anaemia, or they can transmit dangerous infections.

So now is a good time to make sure you are up to date with your spot on flea and tick treatments. Please let your vet advise you on the best form of flea and tick treatment for your pets!!

Let's not forget our precious equine friends, flies and midges are our main culprits, but ticks can also be a problem. There are many different treatment and management options, to help control this are, so don't hesitate to contact us here at the practice to help us advise you!



Attached ticks with buried mouthparts are often found whilst grooming your pets



How to remove ticks

A simple twisting and pulling action is all that is required to remove the tick while minimising disease risk. Specially designed v-shaped tick removers that remove ticks by rotation are very effective at removing ticks



Close up of removed tick complete with mouthparts

Booster time!

Your pet's yearly check-up and vaccinations are VERY important!



Dogs are shielded against Parvovirus, Distemper, Hepatitis, Adenovirus and Leptospirosis in

routine boosters. All of which are unfortunately still regularly seen. We can also protect them against Kennel Cough, which although not as serious, is highly infectious.

Cats are usually protected against Cat Flu, Feline Enteritis (a cat form of Parvovirus that can be very damaging to unborn kittens), and Feline Leukaemia. Cat Flu is an extremely common virus, especially in youngsters, and Feline Leukaemia, although more unusual, is a fatal condition.

So - if your pet hasn't been to see us for a while, call us today!

Could my pet have toothache?



It is important for your pet's teeth and gums to be checked regularly to look out for any signs of problems.

A healthy mouth usually has pale pink gums, and bright white teeth. When your pet eats, the sugars in the food mix with bacteria in the mouth to develop a substance called plaque. Accumulation of plaque will lead to *inflammation* and reddening of the gums (gingivitis).

This is frequently accompanied by the accumulation of calculus (tartar) on the surface of the teeth and very bad breath! Worse still, if left unchecked, this will progress to severe gum disease, toothache and eventually tooth loss. However the good news is that dental problems can be prevented!

Don't let gum disease and toothache ruin your pet's life - please let us advise you on caring for your pet's teeth and gums.



Healthy mouth



Gingivitis and calculus



Severe gum disease



Kindly sponsored by Boehringer.

24 HOUR SERVICE FOR EMERGENCIES ☎ (028) 71 311448



Ticker trouble – is my pet affected?

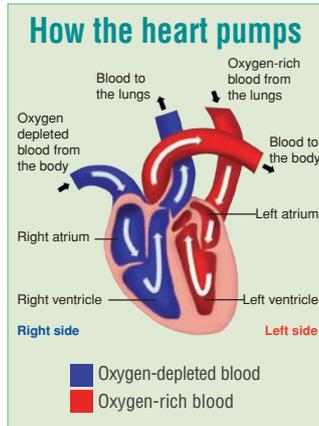


The heart is a large muscular pump, continuously pumping blood around the body. Like us, animals have four heart chambers, with valves to ensure that blood flows in only the forward direction. The heart is responsible for supplying the tissues of the body with oxygenated blood. The heart receives de-oxygenated blood from the tissues of the body and pumps it to the lungs where it is re-oxygenated. This re-oxygenated blood flows back to the heart, where it is then pumped back round the body. If the heart stops functioning properly, it can have serious consequences.

Some pets are born with heart defects. These can include small holes within the heart wall, valve malformations and abnormalities in the vessels leaving the heart. These defects can cause abnormalities to blood flow through the heart and vessels, usually causing a heart murmur which can be heard on examination.

Some pets will develop heart conditions later in life. The most common condition affecting small dogs is a degenerative disease of one of the heart valves, resulting in blood flowing backwards through the left hand side of the heart, usually causing a heart murmur. Larger dogs can suffer from valve disease, but are also predisposed to a condition where the heart dilates and is no longer able to pump blood as effectively. Affected dogs may or may not have a heart murmur.

In dogs, signs of heart disease include: reluctance to exercise, weakness or collapse and laboured or rapid breathing. Coughing can also be associated with heart disease.



Cats are prone to developing a condition where the heart muscle excessively enlarges and results in a poorly functioning heart. This is very common, with around 1 in 7 cats of all ages affected. Older cats are at an increased risk. Signs of heart disease include reluctance to exercise, weakness or collapse and laboured or rapid breathing.

If you are concerned your pet is showing any signs of heart disease, please come and see us for a check-up. We may recommend imaging, such as chest x-rays and/or an ultrasound scan of your pet's heart. In some cases, blood tests and/or electrocardiography 'ECG' may also be helpful. The good news is that novel medications can delay the onset of heart failure or help manage the signs, thus improving length and quality of life for your pet. If you have any questions regarding your pet's heart health, please contact us at the surgery.

Be sure to insure!



Pet insurance is something that we advise all our owners consider for their animals. We know that vet bills are often unexpected and can mount up over time, so having a good policy will really combat the worry of being able to afford their care; whether it is a one-off misadventure or an on-going illness.

There are lots of companies offering pet insurance and picking one out can be daunting! Here are some tips:

- Choose a 'lifelong' policy – this should cover your pet for the whole duration of an illness, even if it is a permanent problem.
- Ensure there is a substantial amount claimable for every condition.
- Look at other benefits offered – these can include third party cover (vital if, for example, your dog slips the lead and causes a car accident),
- Check-out the potential for premium increases – some companies will increase them after a claim, whereas others will remain the same.

So – if you would like further information on the benefits of insuring your pet, please don't hesitate to contact a member of our team.



It's getting hot out there!

We all love the warmer weather and summer is a great time to be outside with your pets, so here are some topical seasonal tips to keep them fit and healthy:

Grass seeds of the meadow grasses are easily trapped in the coats of pets, particularly dogs. They often migrate and become lodged in a variety of places including the ears and between toes. Regular grooming, especially after walks is helpful in preventing problems associated with grass seeds.



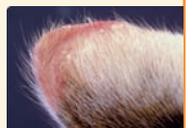
Bee and wasp stings are another seasonal problem. Some pets are allergic to their stings and may need prompt veterinary attention.

Heat stroke is caused by a drastic increase in body temperature, usually from periods of exercise in the sun. It is difficult to treat and often fatal. Most dogs do not know when to stop and will keep chasing balls despite becoming over-heated. It is very important not to play with your pet outside in the hot weather. Use paddling pools and ice cubes in water to help them keep cool, and walk your pets early in the morning and late in the evening. Remember, **NEVER** leave your pet in a warm car – with their furry coats they can over-heat very rapidly.



Guinea pigs and **rabbits** need to be kept in a cool, shaded area. If in direct sunlight they struggle to lose heat and can also succumb to heat stroke.

UV Alert: Cats with white noses and white ear tips are at risk of getting these areas sunburnt and this can lead to cancerous changes. High factor special pet safe sun creams applied to the at risk (white) areas helps to minimise this risk.



Ear tip of a cat showing cancerous changes



Flystrike is a huge problem in the summer months. Flies are attracted to moist and dirty areas to lay their eggs, which will rapidly hatch into maggots. This is especially concerning for bunny rabbits that can have periods of diarrhoea. Flies lay eggs within the coat and once hatched, the maggots feed on the skin.

This condition is very painful and results in death in cases that are not treated rapidly. It is imperative to check your rabbit's fur twice daily, keep their hutches clean and treat any loose stools quickly. There are licenced products that can be applied to your rabbit's fur to prevent fly attraction.

Enjoy the summer months, have fun and keep your pets safe. If you would like any further information on summer hazards, please just ask a member of our practice team.