

Companion Animal Newsletter Summer 2012



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Handbooks free from our website:**

www.cluthavets.co.nz

under the downloads page

Welcome

Summer has rolled around again and with it the promise of Christmas festivities and holidays. In all the excitement it is easy to overlook organising pet's holidays. If taking your pet on holiday is not an option the alternatives are to get someone to look after them at your home or to book them into a boarding cattery or kennel. It is never too early to make a booking because kennels will get fully booked over the peak times. Kennels or catteries will require that vaccinations are current when pets board.

The vaccine interval for respiratory virus in cats is now 3 years, where it used to be every year. The exception is for cats going into a

cattery, which should have been vaccinated within a year of entering the cattery.

Once their puppy vaccine course is completed dogs only need to be vaccinated every 3 years for Distemper, Hepatitis and Parvovirus. Kennel Cough vaccine is not one of the essential core vaccines but it should always be given within 12 months prior to a dog boarding.

All animals entering a kennel or cattery should have had a vaccine within the preceding 12 months.

Also relevant to Christmas is **chocolate toxicity** in dogs and cats. Theobromine is

the active ingredient in chocolate that is toxic to dogs and cats, but not to humans.

The concentration of theobromine varies depending on the chocolate type, but ingestion of as little as 120grams of baking chocolate or 450grams of milk chocolate is potentially fatal to a 7kg dog. The amounts that have to be eaten are reasonably large but certainly not impossible. If you put chocolate under the Christmas tree be certain that your dog can't get to it.

Clipping

During the summer months some of our long-haired pets can get overheated, especially if they are doing much exercise or are holidaying in Central Otago. Grass seeds can also be a problem over the summer months, penetrating between the toes or entering the ears. They are a much bigger problem in long-haired dogs. We offer a service clipping longhaired cats and dogs which allows them to stay cool and removes mats that may form after the spring moult.

Clipping is generally done under sedation, especially with cats. The end result is a pet who is much cooler and more comfortable than before, and consequently much more active and playful.

We are offering a 10% discount on all the clips booked in before Christmas. If you have had your pet clipped before call either Balclutha or Milton Clinics to make an booking. If they have never had it done before book in to see one of our nurses at no charge and she can show you before and after photos and explain the process, benefits and costs.

Obstetric Problems

Most pups are born at home uneventfully. The fact that litters are large and pups are relatively small means that obstruction in the pelvic canal is uncommon. The notable exceptions are the Bulldog types which, due to the pup's very large heads and the bitches small pelvic canal are unlikely to be born naturally. Bulldog pups are almost invariably delivered by caesarian. Four recent obstetric

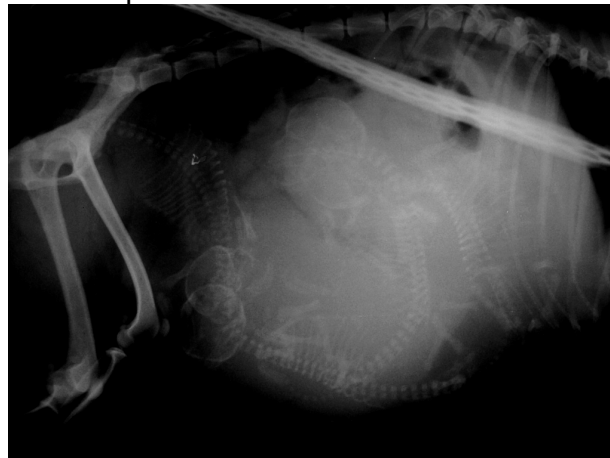
cases demonstrate some of the problems that can occur before or after whelping.

Jade, a pregnant working dog near term was kicked by a cow. Her belly got a bit smaller and she developed a pussy vaginal discharge. A scan showed a mix of dead and live pups so we did an emergency caesarian. There were four live pups but they were too premature to survive and we speyed her.

Jess, a 9 year old Huntaway had a pup one evening and by the next morning no more had been born. On palpating the abdomen more pups could be felt so she had a caesarian. There was a dead pup in the uterus and five more live pups. Surgery went well so Jess went home the same day and has been well since. The presumed cause of the obstetric problems was uterine inertia, related to her age.

Petra, a 5 year old Shih Tzu owned by an experienced breeder had had pups 3 days previously. She was at first well but started straining, developed a yellow vaginal discharge and vomited once on the morning we saw her. On feeling her belly the uterus appeared thickened and firm but not big enough to be a pup. X-rays and a scan showed a thickened uterus but again no pup.

At surgery the uterus appeared abnormal so Petra was speyed. After surgery the uterus was opened and the inner surface of the uterine wall was gangrenous with some retained placenta adherent.



Abdominal X-ray showing 4 pups in a very swollen abdomen.

Fly, an 8 year old collie had pups normally at home and seemed well but four days later was very depressed and off her food with a heavy pussy vaginal discharge. She had more pups in the abdomen and went to theatre immediately. The uterus was partly ruptured and leaking into the abdomen. She was speyed and the abdomen flushed with litres of sterile saline to remove all the discharge and prevent peritonitis. Fly was hospitalised for two days on antibiotics and fluids. Peritonitis was a real risk for Fly but she made a remarkable recovery and has been well since.

These cases illustrate that there are real risks and pitfalls in breeding. While all of these bitches (except perhaps Jess) stood a real risk of dying they all survived. The lessons we can take from these cases are that:

- 1) Fetuses are vulnerable to physical injury from a blow to the abdomen and this is increased because a pregnant bitch is less agile. Appropriate precautions should be taken to prevent injury.
- 2) A caesarian is a safe and effective means of delivering pups if they are not delivered naturally, provided there is not a uterine infection.
- 3) Even after an apparently normal whelping pups may still be present and this can be detected by a post-whelping check at the clinic the next day.
- 4) Uterine infections can occur even after pups are all delivered. Bitches normally have a mucous, bloody discharge for a week or so after whelping but pus or bad smell indicate infection. While there are medical options to treat uterine infections the safest and most effective way to resolve a uterine infection is to spey the bitch.
- 5) Not all owners are comfortable with the risks inherent in breeding and if this is the case they may be best to spey bitches before their first heat.

Microchips

Microchipping of non-working dogs prior to registration has been mandatory for some years now. Microchips provide a near tamperproof means of permanent identification of animals. They have been reliable and in most cases should outlast the animal they were implanted into. Recently however we have been advised by our supplier of microchips that certain batches of microchips may contain faulty chips due to a manufacturing error. They believe they have rectified the issue and that in future all their chips will be free of this problem. According to our supplier this problem has been seen worldwide and in a large number of different brands.

The affected chips have numbers starting 900088000 or 90008800 up to 90008800259208. Next time you are at the clinic ask to have the microchip checked or just call in and one of our nurses can scan the chip. If your pet has a microchip implanted by us and it is defective we will replace it free of charge.

Update on Diabetics

In last summers Small Animal Newsletter (available on our website – cluthavets.co.nz) I wrote about 3 recently diagnosed diabetic cats. All three of the cats are doing well and we have had a number of new diabetic cats and dogs diagnosed since then. There is lots of talk in the media about the human diabetic epidemic and it sometimes seems there is a pet diabetic epidemic as well.

Facebook

Have you checked out the Clutha Vets Facebook Page? We will keep you up to date with the clinics promotions, news and our cat and kitten re-homes. We have also started running some competitions. Some of these will be for Small Animal Members only so make sure you sign up.



Balclutha A&P Show

Thanks to everyone who came to see us at the show. It was a great success and a lot of fun. The winners of the competitions are:

- **Clip the Coupon Draw** from the Clutha Leader – Julia Evans of Clydevale.
- **X-ray competition** – Dr Rebecca Canner. There were 7 correct entries out of 34 and these names went in a draw.
- **Match the Staff to their Pet** – Nyree Dickie of Balclutha

Opening Hours Christmas 2012 and New Year 2013

Date	Day	Balclutha	Milton	Clydevale
24 December 2012	Monday	8.00 am 3.00 pm	8.00 am 3.00 pm	9.00 am 3.00 pm
25 December 2012	Tuesday	Closed Public Holiday (Christmas Day)		
26 December 2012	Wednesday	Closed Public Holiday (Boxing Day)		
27 December 2012	Thursday	8.00 am 5.30 pm	8.00 am 5.00 pm	Closed
28 December 2012	Friday	8.00 am 5.30 pm	8.00 am 5.00 pm	Closed
29 December 2012	Saturday	Closed Weekend		
30 December 2012	Sunday	Closed Weekend		
31 December 2012	Monday	8.00 am 3.00 pm	8.00 am 3.00 pm	Closed
1 January 2013	Tuesday	Closed Public Holiday (New Years Day)		
2 January 2013	Wednesday	Closed Public Holiday		
3 January 2013	Thursday	8.00 am 5.30 pm	8.00 am 5.00 pm	8.30 am 4.30 pm
4 January 2013	Friday	8.00 am 5.30 pm	8.00 am 5.00 pm	8.30 am 4.30 pm
5 January 2013	Saturday	Closed Weekend		
6 January 2013	Sunday	Closed Weekend		

Diarrhoea in Horses

Horses, like other mammals, have a small intestine and a large intestine. The large intestine has evolved to break down (ferment) the carbohydrates that they eat by the action of microbes in the gut, so that the horse can get energy from them. It also has a major function of absorbing water.

Each day the body secretes large amounts of fluid into the intestine, and then normally reabsorbs it. In an adult horse it has the capacity to reabsorb up to 100 litres a day. So diarrhoea that starts suddenly and severely (acute diarrhoea) can rapidly become life threatening because of the massive fluid loss and the dehydration that this causes, partly due to impaired reabsorption. It is also dangerous because the microbes that break down the carbohydrate can release endotoxins that can enter the blood stream. Affected horses require quick treatment to rehydrate them and prevent complications.

Chronic diarrhoea is less severe diarrhoea that has been going on for more than a month or so.

Some causes of diarrhoea are carbohydrate overload, long term non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug use, infectious organisms such as Salmonella, sand (which irritates the lining of the gut), and cyathostome infection (a type of parasite). However, in a lot of cases the cause of the diarrhoea is never found.



The staff at Clutha Vets wish you and your family – both two legged & four

**Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year**