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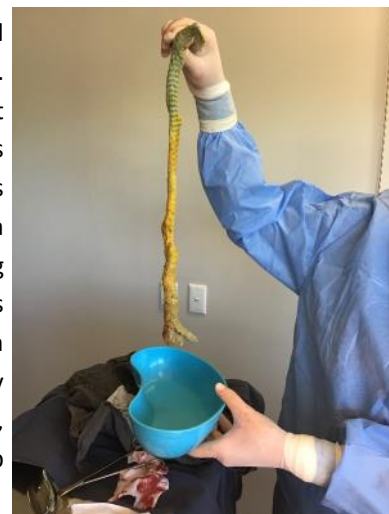
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- **Ever wanted to know when is the best time to neuter?**
- **Recommendation information.**

Foreign Body Obstructions

Those of you that have attended our Puppy Preschool classes will have seen the collection of foreign bodies that have been surgically removed from dog's stomachs and intestines. They range from bones, corn cobs, golf balls, socks, ear tags, stones etc. Unfortunately dogs, especially when they are young are not particularly discerning in what they will eat!

We have had two recent cases that required surgery to remove string and a Chux dish cloth. The first involved a young Labrador puppy that was presented with string hanging out of his mouth. The string would not move when it was gently pulled. An X-Ray showed the puppy had a very full stomach but no sign of anything attached to the end of the string. Surgery was required to open the stomach and remove a large volume of putrid garbage to find a tightly wound up ball of string. The string was removed, the stomach and abdomen sutured and the pup fortunately made an uneventful recovery.



The second case involved a Cavoodle x Cocker Spaniel that has a propensity to eat socks and undies. She was observed to have eaten a Chux dishcloth 2 weeks previously and not seen to pass it in her stools. Ebony became lethargic, inappetent and started vomiting. X-Rays of her abdomen showed dilated loops of bowel typical of an intestinal obstruction. Surgery confirmed an intestinal obstruction and fortunately the intestine was still healthy. The offending dishcloth was able to be removed through an incision in the small intestine, without the need to remove a section of intestine and re-join it end to end.

These cases highlight the fact that dogs are scavengers and some will eat almost anything! It can be very costly to operate to remove these foreign bodies, especially if a section of damaged intestine has to be removed. In the worst case scenario, peritonitis can develop if the intestine becomes punctured with a sharp foreign body or the intestinal wall has been badly damaged by the foreign body and ruptures. Peritonitis is often fatal in dogs. Pet insurance is certainly a good idea to cover the costs of surgery, especially in a dog's first year of life when they are most prone to eating foreign objects.



The Vet Centre Difference

Combination diets for pets with more than one health issue

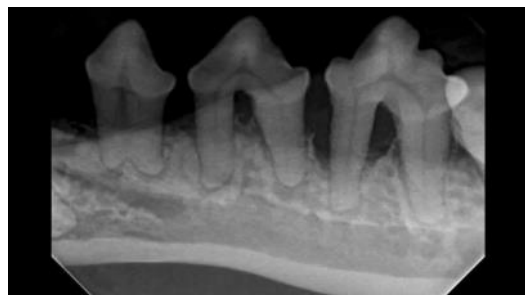
It has always been difficult advising on the best diet to use for pets that have more than one health issue. Hills pet food manufacturers have realised this and have recently developed a range of pet foods designed to help with a combination of health problems. The following is a list of currently available combination diets:-



- Hills metabolic urinary stress for cats – This is the latest addition to the range of combination diets and is specifically for cats with stress related bladder issues who are also overweight. It contains ingredients that reduce anxiety, bladder inflammation and increases fat metabolism.
- Hills k/d mobility for cats – This diet is specifically designed for cats with kidney disease who also suffer from arthritis. It is a very palatable diet and so we now use it for all cats with kidney disease regardless of whether they also have arthritis. It contains ingredients to help relieve joint inflammation as well as reducing the workload on the kidneys.
- Hills metabolic plus mobility for dogs – This is a very useful and popular diet for dogs that suffer from arthritis and are also overweight. It is very common for arthritic dogs to also be overweight as painful joints lead to less exercise and hence weight gain. We also know that being overweight actually predisposes to development of arthritis. This diet contains the same ingredients as Hills j/d (joint diet) to relieve joint inflammation as well as the fat burning properties of Hills metabolic diet.
- Hills Vet Essentials is a combination diet available for healthy pets that do not have any health issues. It is designed to help prevent development of a number of common health problems. Vet Essentials is available for both cats and dogs and provides the following benefits:-
 - Helps keep the teeth clean
 - Helps maintain a healthy body weight
 - Helps prevent bladder inflammation (cats only)
 - Helps maintain gut health
 - Helps maintain the coat and skin in top condition
 - Helps maintain joint health (dogs only)

Dental radiographs - why are they so important?

We have recently updated our dental radiography equipment to allow us to take excellent quality images of your pet's teeth. Just like with human dentistry it is important to get decent images of the teeth including the crown, roots and surrounding jaw bone to be able to make informed decisions on how best to manage dental problems. It is the things we can't see with the naked eye that we need to know about to help us decide if a tooth needs extracting or can be saved. We need to know if there has been any loss of the bone that holds the tooth roots firmly in the jaw. If too much bone has been lost we need to extract. An x-ray will also show us if there is a tooth root abscess present, if there is a fractured root or even if the tooth is dead.



Once we have made a decision to extract a tooth we need to know if there is anything that could make the procedure more difficult and prone to complications. We need to know if the shape of the root is normal so that it will come out cleanly or whether we need to remove a lot of jaw bone first to make the extraction easier. Sometimes the tooth root may have become fused with the bone, which is common in cats and we need to know this so we can choose a different extraction technique.

Dental x-rays have become an essential part of dental procedures in cats and dogs and we are very fortunate to have an excellent quality facility, specifically for this purpose.

Marlborough's only BESTPRACTICE Accredited Clinic

Ileus in Rabbits – a life threatening situation

Ileus is common in rabbits and refers to the lack of peristaltic movement of the gut. Peristalsis is the rhythmic contractions of the gut needed to push food along in a forwards direction. Without peristalsis the food doesn't move and stagnates in one place causing a build-up of gas and harmful bacteria. This can quickly lead to death if left untreated.

Signs that indicate your rabbit may have ileus include reduced output of faecal pellets, lethargy and not eating. If your rabbit doesn't eat for 24 hours you need to see your vet.

The causes of ileus include:-

- Low fibre, high carbohydrate diet – Rabbits need a lot of fibre in their diet to keep the bowels moving. All rabbits need to be fed hay ad lib and have access to grass for grazing plus green leafy vegetables. Muesli type diets are too high in carbohydrates and should be avoided.
- Stress is a big cause of ileus and there are many things that cause stress in rabbits including – pain, illness, dehydration, predators (cats/dogs), aggression from a more dominant rabbit, transport, weather extremes (too cold/ too hot), loss of a companion, anaesthesia/surgery.
- Lack of exercise – as with all animals, exercise is needed to keep the bowels moving
- Anorexia – the process of eating stimulates movement of the bowels. If your rabbit stops eating for any reason for 24 hours it is at risk of ileus.

Diagnosis – gas distension of the bowels caused by ileus can be seen on an x-ray.

Treatment – Hospitalisation for fluids, pain relief and drugs to help stimulate peristalsis is usually needed. Feeding a high fibre food is also an important part of the treatment

The take home message is IF YOUR RABBIT DOESN'T EAT FOR 24hrs YOU NEED TO SEE YOUR VET.

Oxipay – a convenient way to spread the cost over 8 weeks

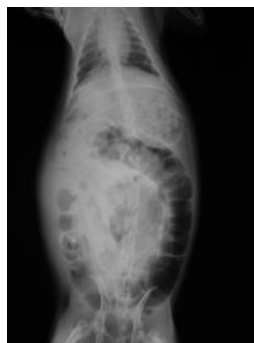
The Vet Centre Marlborough is now able to offer Oxipay to our clients. With Oxipay you will have the ability to pay for product or a procedure (minimum purchase of \$50) over 4 easy fortnightly payments There is no fee to join up to Oxipay.

To utilise Oxipay you will need to meet the following criteria: Live in New Zealand, are at least 18 years old, have a valid and verifiable email address and a New Zealand mobile number, have a New Zealand Mastercard or Visa credit or debit card, have a New Zealand residential and shipping address, have a New Zealand drivers licence.

Your first payment will be 25% of the purchase or procedure price for any purchase under \$1,000. The first payment is charged at the time of the purchase. If you purchase something over \$1,000 (up to a maximum of \$1,500) your first payment will be 25% plus the amount over \$1,000. Each subsequent instalment is charged every fortnight after the purchase date.



For more information see www.oxipay.co.nz or please talk to our friendly reception staff if you would like to take advantage of Oxipay.



Antinol – now available for cats

Antinol is a joint health supplement that has been successfully helping arthritic dogs for a number of years now and the great news is that it is now available for cats.

There are many nutritional supplements on the market that claim to help joint health in arthritic cats and dogs. Many have no data to support their claims and it can be difficult choosing a supplement that works. Antinol is one of our favourite supplements for the following reasons:-

- Antinol is made from oil extracted from the NZ green lipped muscle, sourced in Nelson. It is rich in free fatty acids and other factors needed for maintenance of healthy joints. The active ingredients are isolated from green lipped muscle oil and the desired components then combined together. This extraction and isolation procedure results in a product that is more concentrated in active ingredient than other green lipped muscle products.
- Palatable, therefore easy to give.
- Safe to use with no side effects

The claims made by the manufacturers are backed up with data from clinical study's which is often not the case with similar products on the market.

Antinol can be used on its own in early arthritis to help improve mobility and joint health. It can also be used in combination with anti-inflammatory pain relief in more advanced cases of arthritis.

The Vet Centre Marlborough Improving Lives

Broadline Spot-on for cats now available in a 3 pack



Broadline has been a favourite with cat owners for many years now and is still a very useful general purpose flea and worm product for cats. It is still the only product that treats both tapeworm and roundworm as well as fleas in one application. Broadline is now available in a 3 pack. Please

note that Broadline should be applied once every 4 weeks as it starts to wear off after this time.

Whilst Broadline is a very good product there have been some populations of fleas found overseas that have developed resistance to the active ingredient in Broadline. Whilst this is not yet a problem in New Zealand it is worth noting that there are newer, faster acting flea products available in New Zealand that have no known resistance. These newer products include Bravecto, Bravecto PLUS and Revolution PLUS. All these products kill fleas quicker and for longer than Broadline. Bravecto PLUS and Revolution PLUS also kill roundworms.

New Vet Clinic Companion App

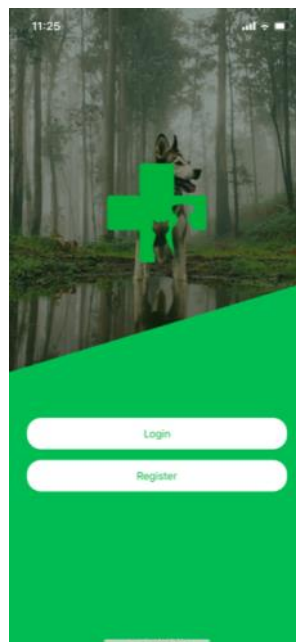
The Vet Centre is proud to be the first practice in New Zealand to introduce the new Vet Clinic Companion App. This innovative new mobile phone app has been developed by Peter Spreull, a young English veterinarian who, with his wife Lucy worked with us as a locum last summer.

The multiple features of the app make our products and services more accessible and convenient than ever before and gives you, our clients a communication tool to improve your pet's health care.

Features include:

- Health information
- Conveniently request repeat prescriptions in seconds
- Request appointments
- Clinic news
- Medication and treatment reminders
- Share pet photos

You can find our App on the App Store or Google Play "VCC YourVet"



Staff News

Winter is finally here and there is no shortage of love in the air at The Vet Centre!

Wedding bells are ringing for our vet nurse Barb who is 'eloping' with her fiancée Pavel to get married in July back home in the Czech Republic. We wish them all the best for their big day and look forward to sharing a celebration with them when they return.

Romance is definitely catching, as our Head Nurse Kate is also newly engaged. Her English fiancé, Luke, proposed in Fiji on a recent holiday and Kate has been glowing with happiness ever since.

Tom and Gabby our fantastic new graduate vets have been growing in leaps and bounds with their veterinary experience and confidence over the last half a year and we are very lucky to have them as part of our veterinary team. We congratulate them on their recent graduation from vet school – such a fantastic milestone to reach for all the hard work they have put in!

We are saying goodbye to our lovely UK locum Lucy at the end of May as she and her vet husband Pete are heading off on their next adventure. Lucy has been filling in mainly as our large animal vet, for the last 6 months, and also helping to mentor one of our younger vets, Tom, to ease him into full veterinary responsibility!

Zoe has recently joined the vet nursing team as a locum vet nurse. She comes from a semi-rural Marlborough upbringing and is a real cat lover. But she is also a big softie for the lovely natures of working dogs. Her helpful, friendly personality has quickly made her a favourite and she is looking forwards to helping make your pet's visit to the clinic as stress free and comfortable as possible.

Mark has recently attended a 'fine and fiddly' fracture workshop in Brisbane to learn techniques for fracture repair in cats and small breed dogs. He was awarded a scholarship from 'The Vet Company' to assist with associated costs.

Mary has recently attended a workshop to learn about different techniques for gastrointestinal surgery in dogs.



Every dog and every household is different and so your vet will work with you to see that the best decision is made for you and your pet.

In general, the Vet Centre's recommendations are as follows:

- Large breed male dogs – wait until 1-year-old to castrate
- Large breed female dogs – spay between 6 months and 1-year-old
- Small breed dogs – spay/castrate at 6-months-old
- Shelter animals - may be neutered earlier to aid in controlling populations and also to support adoption of new animals.

We think it is important that you as an owner are aware of the risks and benefits associated with spaying/castrating so that you may contribute to the decision of when the timing is best for your pet. Please feel free to talk to any of our vets here at the Vet Centre if you have any further questions or concerns.

Visit our website for more
Information.

www.vetmarlborough.co.nz

Recommendations on the best time to neuter.

There is an immense amount of research out there on what age is best to neuter your pet. A paper published in 2017 reviewed a large chunk of the current literature, analysed it and compiled the findings. The following is a summary of the key points from the article, highlighting the potential positives and negatives of early age neutering (defined as an animal under 4 months old).

Pro's of neutering <4 months old:

- Better population control (lower numbers of unwanted litters)
- Lower risk of developing mammary neoplasia (*see table below*)
- Reduced unwanted behaviour (roaming, aggression)
- Prevention of diseases (e.g, pyometras, uterine torsions)
- Faster operation

Con's of neutering <4 months old:

- Higher anaesthetic risks
- Immature organs leading to altered metabolism of anaesthetic drugs.
- Risk of abnormal bone development (cruciate disease and hip dysplasia)
- Reduced hormonal influence on bone growth resulting in possible immature bone development and abnormal skeletal conformation.
- Increased chance of bone cancer (osteosarcoma) development in Rottweiler breed (3-4x more likely to develop if spayed < 1 year of age).
- Increased chance of urinary incontinence (5% incidence in dogs spayed over 3 months old and 12.9% if under 3 months old).

*Mammary cancer – time of spaying

	Before 1 st heat	1 st heat	2 nd heat
Risk of mammary cancer (%)	0.5%	8%	26%

