

# vetMarlborough

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## A date for your calendar

### Vet Marlborough OPEN DAY 24<sup>th</sup> Nov 1-4pm

It is several years since we last hosted an open day and we thought it timely to have another to coincide with our rebranding to 'Vet Marlborough'.

On Nov 24<sup>th</sup> from 1-4pm we will open our doors for the public to browse around our clinic to see what goes on behind the scenes. It will be a fun day out for the whole family with lots of displays to show off our facilities and the opportunity for you to win a prize or two.

There will be a colouring competition for the kids (you can pick up the picture from reception before the date) as well as face painting. A barbecue will be provided with all donations going to Marlborough Dog Paws. An ice-cream cart and coffee cart will be on site for you to purchase refreshments.

Don't miss out, mark the date in your diary.



### The Vet Centre is no more!

Yes that's right. We have rebranded to become VET MARLBOROUGH. Since we opened The Vet Centre 22 years ago and chose the name, a number of other Vet Centres around New Zealand have arisen. The name change not only stakes a claim that WE are THE vet to use in Marlborough but avoids any misconception that we are part of a Vet Centre chain from other regions. It reinforces our goal of being a trusted, local source of veterinary knowledge and expertise.

The new name also matches our website [www.vetmarlborough.co.nz](http://www.vetmarlborough.co.nz)

You will have noticed the building has been repainted with a slight change of colour. We have retained the grape colour which is such an important part of our brand identity. The refresh with a new logo signals that we are a progressive practice, modern and relevant.

We look forward to being Marlborough's vets and continue to be YOUR VET.



# Marlborough's Vet

## A case of perforated gastric ulceration

Rosie is a lovely natured, much loved, 11 year old Labrador. When Rosie started vomiting one day there was initially no great cause for alarm as most cases of vomiting settle within 24hrs and are not life-threatening. Rosie's vomiting did settle within 24hrs but then started again a few days later. This time Rosie was also off her food which is always a concern in Labradors! A full routine blood and urinalysis was normal, showing Rosie's internal organs were functioning correctly. An x-ray of the abdomen did not show anything of significance. Treatment with antiemetics, intravenous fluids and a special diet were started.



The following day Rosie was still vomiting and now seemed very uncomfortable in the abdomen. She was also developing a fever. A blood test for C-reactive protein was performed. This is a new test available for pets that indicates if there is a significant area of inflammation or infection developing somewhere internally in the body. The result was very high causing great concern to all. A decision was made to perform exploratory surgery of the abdomen to see if we could work out what was the cause of the elevated C-reactive protein and Rosie's vomiting.

During surgery we discovered that Rosie had a perforated gastric ulcer which had created a 1cm diameter hole right through the stomach wall. The hole was allowing stomach contents to leak into the abdomen, a very serious and life-threatening situation. We were able to cut out the ulcer and stitch the hole closed. Rosie made a great recovery.

Perforating gastric ulcers in dog's are uncommon. The cause of Rosie's ulcer is unknown and she will need to be on medication long-term to protect her from developing more ulcers. The commonest cause of gastric ulcers is cancer of the stomach but fortunately histology showed that Rosie was clear of cancer. Some pain relief medications (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) can rarely cause ulcers but Rosie had not taken these recently. We will never know what caused Rosie's ulcer but we are all very thankful that she has made a complete recover and is enjoying life again.

## Is your pet's vaccine up to date?

Its holiday season again and there is nothing more frustrating than taking your pet along to a boarding kennel or cattery just to be turned away as the pet's vaccination is out of date. This is not an uncommon situation as it can be confusing as to when your pet needs a vaccine. This is partly complicated by the fact that vaccination recommendations change from time to time and different kennels can have different requirements. Some vaccines last for 3 years whereas others need a booster every year.

Below is a summary of vaccination requirements for ADULT pets that have previously had a full course of puppy/kitten vaccines followed by a booster a year later:-



- Adult Dogs
- Vaccine for parvovirus, distemper and hepatitis needed every 3 years.
- Vaccine for kennel cough needed at least once a year.
- Adult Cats
- Vaccine for feline flu needed every year.
- Vaccine for feline parvovirus (panleukopenia) needed every 3 years

As a general rule most kennels will require your pet to have been vaccinated within the last 12 months. If your pet has not had a vaccine within the last 12 months phone your vet to make an appointment. Remember that your pet needs a health check at least once a year regardless of whether they go to boarding kennels.

# Marlborough's only BESTPRACTICE Accredited Clinic

## Planning for your Pet's future

Many of us are familiar with the idea of health insurance for ourselves and our families. It is a personal and financial choice we can make for ourselves. But even if you don't have health insurance, you still have the reassurance that our taxes go towards national health care and if you become sick or get injured, you will be treated (often times for free) even if there may be a waiting time!

Unfortunately health care for pets is not subsidised by our taxes. Pet health care is completely private. This means that if your pet becomes unwell or is involved in an accident, you don't get any government help covering their veterinary care.

In this day and age with all the amazing advances in veterinary medicine, both surgical and medical, you may be looking into the thousands for treatment of your pet for some conditions. This may not be in the family budget (short of annual check-ups, vaccinations and covering the cost of food and parasite control of course!) and finding this sort of money unexpectedly is a shock for many people.

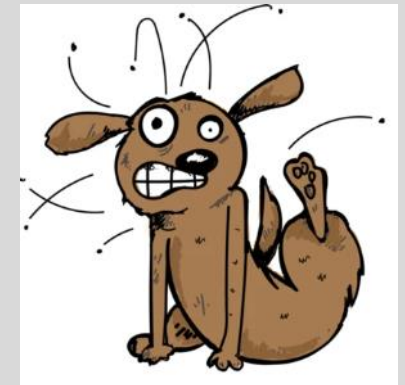
I met a lovely vet nurse on her way up from Christchurch with a very bouncy border collie. She was heading to Auckland to VSG (Veterinary Specialist Group) to have a benign brain tumour which was causing the dog to seizure, removed. I was curious as to how much something like this would cost! Initial diagnostic costs (MRI and blood testing was around \$2000) and the brain surgery itself was expected to cost \$15,000 with 2 weeks of 24/7 veterinary care in the specialist hospital being an extra \$10,000. Luckily she had pet insurance so this was going to cover most of the veterinary expenses, otherwise she said treatment would not be an option.

Unlike other parts of the world where it is very common to have your pets insured, NZ is a bit behind the times. Luckily we are catching up and there is now a range of five major pet health care insurance companies – and with more insurance options available, you can shop around and find a policy that suits your pet and your budget. The next time you are at the vet you can confidently say 'yes' to the best diagnostic and treatment options without crossing your fingers behind your back!

But if pet insurance is not what you are after at the moment and your pet has to have an unexpected vet visit – we do offer Oxipay as a payment option at Vet Marlborough.

## Fleas, fleas and more fleas

Yes it's that time of year again. As soon as the weather starts to warm up in early spring, flea numbers start to increase dramatically. The best approach to preventing an infestation of fleas in spring is to use good quality flea product all year around including winter. If you keep your pet and house free of fleas all winter there will be no fleas around by the start of spring and you will not get a rapid rise in flea numbers. It is far easier to prevent an infestation of fleas than it is to treat one. Once a house becomes infested with fleas it takes a good 2 months to break the flea cycle and rid the house of fleas again.



There are several excellent quality flea products on the market today that are more effective than their predecessors. The best product to choose depends on you and your pet's circumstances and it is best to discuss which product is most suitable for your situation with the team at Vet Marlborough.



### A word of caution when applying spot-on's

Just a quick word of caution when applying Spot-on type flea products to your pets. Please be aware that if the freshly applied product accidentally gets on to your furniture it can sometimes leave a stain. This can happen if the pet shakes or rubs against the furniture soon after application whilst the product is still wet. As a precaution it may be wise when applying these products to leave the pet outside for a while until the product has soaked into the coat and dried sufficiently.



# Vet Marlborough

## Staff News

Our lovely vet nurse Barb is a now a newly wed! She and Pavel have been officially hitched after going home to wed in their home country of Czech Republic. We were lucky enough to celebrate with them in a post-match function at Pine Valley - tents and all - for a weekend of fun.

We are excited to announce that Hayley has taken over the reins of running our vet nursing department from Kate. Kate has done an amazing job over the last 6 months and has introduced some fantastic new patient care and surgery protocols. We are looking forward to seeing Hayley's ideas being implemented in the new year. Hayley has got a busy time ahead for her as our Head Nurse because she and husband Karl are also expecting the pitter patter of tiny feet in winter next year. We wish her the best of luck in the coming months.

It's all action in the nursing department with a new addition to our team starting in December – Courtney, who is a local Marlburian – is in her final year of vet nursing school and will bring new ideas and enthusiasm to our team. She is replacing Jaz who has now moved to Whanganui to be with her partner Liam.

Moving away from the vet nursing team news – we have had a couple of vets recently travelling overseas to gain cutting edge experience with new veterinary treatments. Stuart has just returned from a trip to Romania to be trained in veterinary laparoscopy (key hole surgery). More information on what services can be provided with these new skills (available in 2020) to be detailed in the next newsletter.

Elizabeth has also just returned from Melbourne where she completed training with Veterinary Dentistry Specialist Dr David Clarke in new techniques in saving teeth. In 2020 this will give our clients options - other than teeth extraction - if their pet fractures or damages their teeth, and treating teeth with periodontal disease. She will also be able to make special orthodontic plates to help guide adult teeth into their correct position in dogs with “narrow base” canine teeth. There are few vets with similar dentistry training in the South Island, so Elizabeth's new knowledge can save you a trip to Christchurch or Massey University if you'd like your pet to keep their teeth for as long as possible.

Mary has recently under taken training in canine hip rehabilitation therapy for dogs (and cats) after hip surgery or injury or in dogs diagnosed with Hip Dysplasia. Mary has also completed a course in stifle rehabilitation for dogs after surgery. Rehabilitation and physiotherapy are an important part of a dog's recovery from surgery and injury. Rehabilitation can also be beneficial for our senior pets. If you would like to know more about rehab for your pet then give Mary a ring.



## Wobbly kitten syndrome

Viruses can cause some pretty bizarre symptoms, especially if an animal becomes infected whilst it is still developing in the mother's uterus. One example of this is 'wobbly kitten syndrome' where the kitten has an underdeveloped cerebellum due to infection with panleukopenia virus.



The cerebellum is the part of the brain involved in coordination of muscular activity for control of posture and balance. If the cerebellum is underdeveloped there is a general lack of coordination of movement with a resultant tremor and an appearance of being 'drunk'. The clinical term for an underdeveloped cerebellum is cerebellar hypoplasia and in cats this is specifically caused by infection of the unborn kitten with feline panleukopenia virus, whilst the kitten is still in the mother's uterus.

If a cat becomes infected with panleukopenia virus AFTER it has been born then the cerebellum will be unaffected but instead the kitten may develop a potentially life-threatening gastroenteritis. The good news is that panleukopenia virus can easily be prevented by routine vaccination or protection against cerebellar hypoplasia the mother cat needs to be vaccinated prior to becoming pregnant.