



Pet News

Autumn 2017

Jasmine Delves into Dental Disease:

Hi! I'm Jasmine and I am a vet nurse in Havelock North. I began at VetEnt in October 2016 and love my job and the welcoming team in Havelock. Out of work I am busy with my three beautiful children, my husband, our two cats Duncan & Mia and our Staffy Oli.



They were super easy to use and maintain whilst giving such a huge benefit to any team undertaking a dental.

We see dental issues on a daily basis. Approximately 80% of dogs over three years of age and 50% of adult cats have some degree of disease! Dental pain can present in a number of different and sometime subtle ways so it is often missed by owners. Dogs and cats will tend to suffer in silence to avoid showing signs of weakness. Most animals will carry on eating until the pain is so severe that they would rather starve! Not only are animals with dental disease in pain, they are also exposed to infection that can spread via the blood to vital organs such as the liver, kidneys and heart.

Recently several vets across the country, including myself, were given the fantastic opportunity to go to a Practical Dentistry Workshop in Australia. We learnt from passionate professionals, who shared an extensive amount of knowledge of the complexity of dental disease, surgery and dental x-rays.

We were introduced to the latest and greatest dental equipment and x-ray machines.

Learning how common and painful dental disease is in cats and dogs was a major wake up call for me! To discover the amount of animals living their daily lives in major pain or discomfort has motivated me to communicate this information onto our clients and to get them committed to treating their pets dental disease.

Dental disease is progressive. If caught early

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CLINIC FACEBOOK COMPETITION

Win a premium diet for you pet...

Did you know we now have clinic Facebook pages?

- ✿ Head on over to your local clinic Facebook by simply searching VetEnt followed by your preferred clinic location for example VetEnt Mosgiel.
- ✿ Like our page and our April photo competition picture and go into the draw to win one of 22 large bags of Hills VetEssential Canine 12kg or Feline 6kg.
- ✿ Post a selfie of you and your pet for an additional entry, plus every person who posts a photo will receive a 10% off voucher to use on Hills Feline or Canine food at your local VetEnt clinic.

Competition runs 1st April - 30th April 2017, see terms and conditions on our Facebook page for more details.



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enough the process is reversible and simple to treat with a 'Scale and Polish' to clean away plaque and tartar (liquid and calcified pus!). However, if the pus remains in contact with the gum, the disease can progress causing irreversible damage to the tooth's supporting ligaments and bone. In this case, dental extractions are necessary to alleviate the pain and prevent recurrence of infection.

I have always found dental procedures really interesting and rewarding but the biggest stress with them for me, has been the unknown lurking

beneath the gum line. Ordinarily less than 1/3 of the tooth

(the crown) is visible for us to examine. The

remaining 2/3 of the tooth

(the root) lies beneath the

gum line embedded in bone.

Often what may first appear

to be a simple scale and

polish, could turn into a

full mouth extraction

once the probe has

sunk beneath the

surface!

Due to the positive feedback we relayed about our training in Australia, VetEnt has invested in a number of Dental X-ray machines for a select number of clinics, including our own! Our new dental x-ray machines have uncovered the mystery of what's lurking beneath. We can now step into a dental surgery fully prepared with a plan for each tooth, as we know what to expect!

These X-Ray units differ from standard x-ray machines as they allow our vets to take high definition images of your pet's mouth which in turn provides a much more accurate diagnosis and understanding of the extent of your pet's dental disease. They allow us to assess the tooth roots and surrounding bone, and therefore, identify an otherwise undetectable (but still painful) disease. It is amazing to see in detail the tooth and be able to rate its health!

The dental x-rays also give us the opportunity with future dental procedures, to compare how quickly the tooth has degenerated or maintained with time. This is now another tool to give our clientele the best possible service with the latest technology.



When Should I Desex My Pet?

Traditionally veterinarians would neuter cats and dogs of all breeds at around the six month of age mark. This was, and still can be considered a time when animals have reached maturity i.e. they are of sufficient size to withstand the surgery.

More recently there has been research done in to the effects of early age neutering (EAN) on cats and dogs to see if there are any reasons to, or not to undertake the surgery at a much younger age. Research has also been undertaken to see the effects of age of neutering on large and giant breeds of dogs.

Early age neutering has advantages in that owners have better control over unwanted pregnancy which in turn gives better control and management of animal populations. Investigations into animal populations has shown that many animals suffer unnecessarily from abandonment, cruelty, starvation, neglect and inhumane death. Much of this can be prevented by responsible pet ownership, which may include early age neutering.

Studies completed in New Zealand have shown that male and female

cats and male dogs can be neutered from 8 weeks of age, as long as the animal's physiologic status is taken into consideration and surgical and anaesthetic protocols are adjusted to compensate for age. Female dogs should ideally be neutered from 4 months of age.

In large and giant breed dogs both early age neutering and very late neutering can have adverse consequences on skeletal development, some cancers and urinary incontinence. It is generally recommended to spay large breed females between their first and second heat, and to castrate large breed males after they have reached skeletal maturity.

In all cases we recommend you discuss neutering your pet with one of our veterinarians who are all very experienced in this process.



New Health Risk to Pet Rabbits:

Background

Owners of pet rabbits are urged to ensure their pets are vaccinated in light of the risk from a new strain of the rabbit calicivirus (RHDV).

The new Korean strain (K5) is planned for release in Australia in the first week of March. The NZ rabbit coordination group and Landcare Research are seeking approval from MPI and the Environment Protection Authority to introduce the K5 strain to New Zealand. They are proposing the release of K5 in the Canterbury, Otago and Marlborough regions. If it goes ahead, the virus may naturally spread beyond these areas in time.

Once the K5 strain is released in Australia, it is likely that it will appear in New Zealand, through either planned or unplanned release.

RHDV causes acute, severe hepatic disease in susceptible rabbits. Clinical signs may include anorexia, depression, constipation or diarrhoea, paddling and convulsions. Frequently rabbit are found dead without clinical signs being observed.

How to protect domestic (pet) rabbits:

While there is no registered vaccine for the K5 strain of Calicivirus, a small pilot study in Australia demonstrated efficacy against the strain with the Cylap vaccine. Cylap is the vaccine which is currently in use in NZ for protection against the resident strains.

It is not known how complete this protection will be, or the duration of immunity against the K5 strain, regardless, the Companion Animal Veterinarians branch of the NZVA recommends that pet rabbits are vaccinated with Cylap as per the manufacturer's recommendations.

Vaccinating with Cylap:

Rabbits should be vaccinated at 2.5-3 months of age. If rabbits are vaccinated before this time, they should be vaccinated again at 3-4 week intervals until they are 3 months of age. An annual booster vaccination is recommended.

Biosecurity Measures:

There are some other measures you can take to reduce the risk of Calicivirus for your pet rabbits:



- ❖ Control insects (especially flies and fleas) as much as possible both indoors and outdoors. Flies are the main vector through which the virus is spread
- ❖ Remove uneaten food on a daily basis
- ❖ Keep your pet rabbit indoors where possible
- ❖ Rabbit-proof your backyard to prevent access by wild rabbits
- ❖ Regularly decontaminate equipment and materials including cages, hutches, bowls etc., with either 10% bleach or 10% sodium hydroxide
- ❖ Limit contact between and handling of unfamiliar pet rabbits
- ❖ Wash hands, shoes and clothing after handling other than your own rabbits

For further information or queries relating to this new virus or protecting your pet rabbit please do not hesitate to contact your nearest VetEnt clinic for help and advice.

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