



Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Inside this issue:

I have just returned from an exciting pain and cancer congress in Barcelona. This was kindly sponsored by Meriel Pharmaceutical Company. I hope to bring some of this new knowledge to the clinic and share it with other veterinarians. We also had a chance to see Barcelona, swim in a glassy smooth clear sea and meet a giant foreigner. My two sons



were partially compensated for their dad's absence by receiving a David Villa and Lionel Messi soccer

shirt. I also paid for my absence by having to endure two 40 hour flight periods before seeing a bed, both on my departure and return flight.

On the practice front, Derek has fitted in well and we are very pleased to have Lana back.

There is a new concept of ethical health care for pets been promoted world wide by veterinarians. Basically it is a call from responsible pet owners to veterinarians to make responsible pet care easier for them. It includes health programmes based on preventative medicine such as vaccinations, deworming and flea and tick control as well easy access to medical care should the need arise. One of these health programmes is run at the Glasgow University and involves an annual health check questionnaire filled in online. Amazingly these systems are

able to pick up on potential pain, hormonal disturbances and cancer that require addressing by a veterinarian.

This month presented two cases on opposite extremes of the emotional spectrum. In the first one two healthy house mates fell ill and were referred to Hilton Veterinary Hospital by the third veterinarian that they saw. Unfortunately they both had severe renal failure and after deteriorating on treatment they had to be put down. Both kidneys in both dogs were calcified and we are still trying to establish a cause. We strongly suspect a toxin so please be diligent and report any excess drinking by your dogs to your veterinarian immediately. The obvious devastation for their "dog parents" was particularly painful to see.

The other case was a young dog where a full thickness gastric ulcer had ruptured and led to severe peritonitis (infection in the abdomen). She endured 3 hours of internal reconstructive surgery and abdominal flushing as well as a week in ICU. Her owner whom I have nick named the "dog whisperer" was dedicated to her recovery and spent hours administering love to her. All her house mates and the resident stray Jack Russell were allowed to join the party on our back lawn. We also learnt that our dog whisperer administers to humans. He has recently reopened the Lavender Trout Restaurant on the Meander. If you do go for a meal, remember to look up Sheba, the dog with nine lives.

Kind regards Martin de Scally.
Dedicated to the health of your pets.

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Emergencies:

Please phone
(033) 343 4602

Contact Details:

If your contact details have changed then please inform us.

This month's theme:

Blood Donors



The Nurse's Clinic: Think Puppy?



Chewed up bits of shoe, destroyed couch and various items from your rubbish bin scattered all over your garden.....Ah yes, you just got a new puppy.

Now certain things when done by a pup might be considered cute or funny, but when an adult dog jumps through the roof at the sound of a car approaching, or chases your cat every time it comes down from the cupboard, it's a slightly different story. Preventing bad behaviour and developing appropriate behaviour in a dog is something best started at an early age.

Puppy socialization is basically exposing your puppy to a variety of people, animals, environments and situations during a time in their lives when they are most likely to respond positively rather than with fear. Providing pleasant encounters during these times results in a happy, friendly and well adjusted puppy. This attitude the puppy then takes with it through into adulthood.

Taking on a puppy means taking on the responsibility for its future. In its first 3 months, puppies develop the responses and reactions they will have toward people and situations. Any early interactions, good, bad or lack thereof, will affect future behaviour and possibly have an affect on the dogs adult personality. Therefore it is vital that initial socialization should be done before the puppy turns 3 months old. As Puppies only go to their new homes at around 8 weeks old, part of that learning period has already taken place. If you make sure you are getting your puppy from a reputable breeder they should already have started the puppy's socialization and you can continue once you get your pup home.

This is not to say that once your puppy turns 3months socialization is no longer important or helpful. Once that foundation of confidence and good behaviour has been built, it is ideal to continue with socialization and training till the puppy is at least one year old. This reinforces everything the puppy has learnt and allows you and your dog to benefit even more from that initial period. There are two parts to socialization, what you do personally with your pup, and attending socialization classes.

Before we go any further into either of these, let us spend a moment on the topic of puppy vaccinations as they relate to socializing. Until your puppy is protected by vaccination it should:

- ✎ Not be allowed to mix with dogs of unknown vaccination status
- ✎ Not be taken to parks or walked in other areas where other dogs have fouled
- ✎ Be taken out and about often in "non-doggy" areas, carrying if necessary to avoid contact with other areas.

Until their immune systems have been boosted by the vaccinations it is recommended that most of the socialization done, is with people rather than other dogs, leaving that till they are not so susceptible to disease.

So what can you do? As soon as your little one is settled in, start taking him/her out, as much as possible. Start slowly at first, remembering we don't want to overwhelm the puppy and that the aim is to be creating good experiences and positive responses. It is also important to encourage correct positive behaviour. A puppy might need to be kept under control whilst initially being introduced to other animals such as cats, to avoid it learning to give chase.

Whatever the pup might be exposed to in its adult life, sights, sounds, scents, situations, people of different ages, it needs to be introduced to during this socialization period, so that later in life it is not a scary situation. Try to think of the situation from your puppy's point of view so you can prevent unpleasant events, rather making the encounters pleasant and rewarding for your puppy.

Choosing a good puppy socialization class is essential, but remember these training times should just be supplementing and helping to reinforce what you are doing at home. Usually puppies between the ages of 12 - 20 weeks are accepted and the whole family is encouraged to attend the class. This gives all the puppies a chance to meet a wide variety of adults and children.

Think Puppy (continued)

A few things to look out for when choosing a puppy class would be:

- 🐾 The area the puppies are going to have free play time in, is a safe enclosed one.
- 🐾 The other puppies attending are going to be healthy vaccinated puppies.
- 🐾 Is it a small controlled class where the puppies look happy and comfortable and the owners happy and relaxed?

Maybe attend one session without your puppy first to see what you think, it might also help you gain some more information from the person taking the class without being distracted by your new cute bundle of chaotic joy.



So now you know more and are all ready and geared up to take on the world of puppy hood, its fun and worth every moment. One of our nurses, Sr Debbie, does run puppy parties here at the practice every 2nd Wednesday. Please feel free to call for more information about these classes or any questions you have regarding this article.



Competition: Calling all children

We would love you to write a poem about your pet animal.

Please send it to Lauren at: lauren@hiltonvethospital.co.za.

The winner's poem will be published in the next newsletter and the winner will receive a R100.00 CNA voucher.

Good luck!



Me Too Mattresses

Me Too mattresses are used throughout Hilton Vet Hospital in the animal's domicile. So they have been tried and tested for over a year and a half, with fantastic results. They are foam mattresses sealed in vinyl plastic and come with summer and winter material covers. We carry standard stock but they can be ordered to your specification. Please speak to Lana, Jackson or Jane for your requirements.

Gashes caused my gnashes (Bite Wounds) By Dr Lillian Hirzel

The bite wounds we see come in all shapes and sizes. Most often we see dogs having been bitten by other dogs at the park or during a food related fight at home. Cats often come in a few days after a fight with a limp or an abscess. Other bite wounds include monkey, spider and snake bites. In this discussion we will be focusing on dog and cat bites.

Bite wounds are often the consequence of dominance related fights within a family. Pets try to protect the most valuable assets, while another pet may try to steal these. Fights often ensue during feeding times, when a new pet is introduced into a family or when they find themselves in other stressful situations. Beyond the home front fights often happen through fences or when pets go for walks. Cat bite wounds most often result from territorial behaviour. The severity of the bite wounds will determine the actions of the owner. With simple puncture wounds, the owner can attempt to stem the bleeding and then to flush the wounds with clean water to remove any debris. Antiseptic ointment can then be applied. Even small wounds have a tendency to become infected and painful though and should be investigated by a veterinarian. In these cases antibiotics and pain medication will most often be prescribed to prevent any complications.

In the case of a serious bite wound, the patient should be presented to a veterinarian as soon as possible. Large tears, broken bones, injured eyes and profuse bleeding are injuries that are obviously serious. One should be aware though of what seems like a minor puncture wound. The 'Ice Berg Effect' refers to the situation where a small external wound overlies serious internal injuries that may not be obvious with the naked eye. Internal bleeding, ruptured spleens and lung injuries can hide behind a simple tooth hole. It is therefore advisable that all bite wound patients should be seen by their vet.

At the hospital a bite wound patient receives a preliminary overview to determine if he or she is in shock or bleeding profusely. These patients receive emergency treatment such as intravenous fluids and oxygen supplementation. Bleeding is stemmed and antibiotics and pain medication started. Once patients are stabilized a more in depth examination

is performed to determine the extent of the damage. X-rays can be taken to look for broken bones or lung injuries. Ultrasounds can be performed to explore the body cavities and look for internal bleeding. Measures are taken to address all the injuries found. A broken bone will be bandaged or stabilized until a patient is stable enough for surgery. Wounds will be flushed to clear out any dirt. Ongoing pain medication will be administered to make the patient as comfortable as possible.

Bacterial infection is one of the common complications of bite wounds as mouths harbour a large volume of bacteria. The puncture wounds created by a cat bite can close rapidly and bacteria trapped under the skin multiply and can form an abscess. For this reason bite wounds are often treated as an open wound (not stitched) for a couple of days during which time the infection is halted. When the wound is sutured a drain is often placed to allow for the flushing and drainage of infected material. An abscess will often be lanced to allow the puss to drain. A course of antibiotics help control and eliminate the infection.

Other complications seen due to bite wounds include patients losing large volumes of important proteins through seepage. A plasma transfusion may be required. Seriously injured tissues may necrose (die off) and require reconstructive surgery. Punctures of the trachea may require surgical intervention and oxygen supplementation. These are a few complications on a long list of possibilities.

The first course of action is naturally to try and prevent the bite wounds from occurring. If socialization or training does not help or your pet is bitten by a unknown dog, it is advisable to consult a veterinarian as soon as possible. Try to obtain the vaccination history of the other dogs involved. Be careful not to get bitten yourself during the fight and if you do, consult with your health care practitioner and consider a tetanus vaccination. Remember that for both you and your pet, what appears to be even to be a small bite can have serious consequences and may need early and intensive attention to avoid complications. We are there to help you with any gashes caused by gnashes.

Health Tips

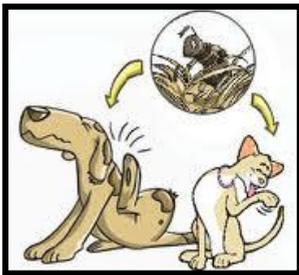
By Dr Trish Mills

Health tip no 1: Does your Pet have Itchy or Sensitive Skin?

Does your pet have itchy or sensitive skin?

Depending on the severity of the symptoms we may advise a consult with a veterinarian but there are many tools to help manage this chronic condition.

Medicated shampoos, omega 3 supplements, a diet of prescription skin foods, and stringent flea control can all help ease the itch - speak to us about a solution for your pet.

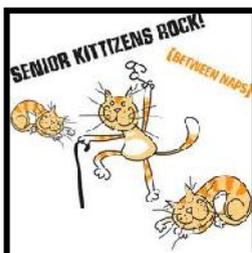


Health tip no 2: Is your Pet a pensioner? *Gerontology (the care of the aged)*

Older pets do not handle **change** or **stress** well. They are less tolerant of **hot** and **cold** weather. They need opportunities to **relieve themselves** more frequently and **more rest** periods during exercise. They are **more dependent on you** to compensate for their **poor vision**, **hearing loss** and **limited locomotion**. Senior dogs and cats also rarely **groom** themselves as well as they once did. All these things (and more) need to be taken into consideration when you are planning to care for your elderly pet.

There are **treatments** available for many of the problems of old age to correct, manage or at least slow down the process but, although we dream of cure, there are no cures. Veterinarians can only determine what the **most important health issues** are in your pet and treat them to **maximize your pet's quality of life and life expectancy**.

Ask us about our "*geriatric check-up*" that is designed to detect the common health hazards of old age, as well as give you advice on all aspects of caring for your senior pet.



Staff Profile

Sister Cheryl Marr

Cheryl joined the practice in 1998. She has been nursing for 34 years.

Cheryl is married to Ian and they have 3 children. Megan has just started studying Veterinary Science at Onderstepoort, Jackie is a physiotherapist and Richard is an engineer.

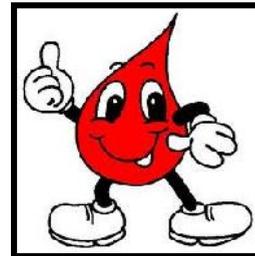
Cheryl has 2 dogs, 4 cats, a parrot, a few geese and a few horses. Cheryl enjoys hospital care and interacting with the clients and their pets.

In her free time Cheryl enjoys gardening, painting, sewing and baking. Cheryl will often bake some goodies as sustenance for the hardworking team at Hilton Vet Hospital. Thank you Cheryl!



Canine blood donation

By Dr Trish Mills



To follow on from the insert in last month's newsletter, here is some more information on how your pet can help save lives by donating blood.

Your pet can be a blood donor only if he/she is:

- ✎ Between 1 and 8 years old.
- ✎ Weighs 28kgs or more, with optimal body condition.
- ✎ Calm, relaxed temperament.
- ✎ Is up to date with annual vaccinations, has regular deworming and tick and flea control.
- ✎ Is not on any chronic medications.
- ✎ Has never received a blood transfusion and has never had puppies

Blood is used as a life-saving treatment for a wide range of illnesses - some of these include biliary, snake bites, rat poison ingestion and parvovirus. An animal in good health can donate blood every 2 to 3 months. 15 to 20% of your dog's blood volume can be safely donated - a standard blood donation is +/- 450mls - and can be stored for up to 5 weeks. Blood is collected in special containers - we use human blood collection packs. During donation the blood flows into the bag using gravity and vacuum assistance.

After your dog has donated blood it is advised to restrict exercise for a few days and make sure he/she is eating good quality food.

If you have a story about your pet that you would like to share with us, then please e-mail it to lauren@hiltonvethospital.co.za