



**HILTON VETERINARY HOSPITAL**

# Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Hi to all our newsletter readers,

A recent publication in the South African Veterinary Journal found unacceptable levels of fungal toxins in 10 supermarket and 10 veterinary chain maize based dog foods. What does this mean? None of the actual brands tested have been disclosed. So we do not know. Some of the "lesser known brands" had up to 5 X legal limits. These toxins mainly affect the liver and kidney are also known carcinogens, meaning they may induce cancer. So what? The bottom line is that the study has been peer reviewed and published in the South African Veterinary Association Journal. I have contacted both the World Veterinary Association and the South African Veterinary Council as well as the Veterinary Food suppliers for clarification and transparency. As of yet nothing is forthcoming. My recommendations at this stage is stick to reputable companies that take responsibility and if possible feed your animals with food produced by companies that do not compromise on quality for price. A nutritional assessment is done with every annual check up at Hilton Veterinary Hospital. For more information please contact Lana or Jackson at our front desk.

Osteoarthritis manifests in changes in an animals gait. Pet owners often miss this as a sign of pain. Newer joint therapies including treatments that encourage stem cell healing of arthritic joints. We are pleased to be able to offer this form of therapy to our patients as of the 13 December this year. The treatment is both cost effective and replaces invasive surgery in many cases. One of our long standing patients friendly Jake, a fifty kg healthy body condition German shepherd with surgical in correctible knee arthritis will be our first patient to have this treatment. We look forward to helping many of our canine and feline arthritis patients with this state of the art treatment modality.

The cytokine based stem cell induction therapy may have other exciting regenerative treatment arenas as of yet unexplored. These include wound healing and extending to bite wounds and fractures.

On another note we are continuing our fight against cancer in a few directions. The first is early detection and aggressive cure targeted initial therapies. This starts with appropriate staging, then planning and finally implementation of an integrated surgical and medical treatment plan. A new modality being explored is intra-lesional chemotherapy with increased antitumor effects and decreased side effects.

On a very sad note we had to say goodbye to Smudge, our other practice cat. Vicki has written a tribute to him.

Thank you to all our clients for your support. We hope that you have seen some of the benefits that our new facility, equipment and staff members offer you and your beloved pets. Enjoy reading the newsletter.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Kind Regards

Martin de Scally

Dedicated to the health of your pets.



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**After Hours  
Emergencies:**  
 Please phone  
 (033) 343 4602

**Contact Details:**  
 If your contact details have changed then please inform us.

**This month's  
themes:**  
 Geriatrics, vaccines, the festive season

## Nurse's Clinic Dental Care: Sr Cheryl Marr

Most dogs at some time will suffer from dental or gum disease. Even in puppy stages, problems with temporary teeth can occur, especially in smaller and mini breeds. Trauma to teeth caused by stone chewing, other hard objects or even feces and dog fights.

Doggy breath is a sign that dental problems may exist. If your pet has difficulty eating, is dribbling, has bleeding gums or you notice brown plaque (a substance coating the teeth), your pet will need a dental check.

Bacteria and toxins present in an infected mouth will cause pain and can eventually affect heart and kidney function in extreme cases.



Our aim is for your pet to maintain healthy strong teeth and gums.

These pets will need a dental scale and polish, and special radiographs, if deemed necessary, will indicate whether extractions are needed. Following this procedure we would recommend teeth brushing with a special paste, gum care or a specific diet



## Geriatrics by Dr Martin de Scally

So time has flown and young FIDO is getting on. His gait may have changed or he may be slower to respond to that ball or leash. His muscle condition may be starting to wane a little.

What to do? By now he is part of the family and we just could not imagine life without him?

Here is how we can help you:

Step 1 : Optimise his nutrition. Over time you actually become what you eat. Do not be fooled by great advertising look at the ingredients list and use common sense to decide if the food is healthy or not.

Step 2 : Take FIDO in for a thorough examination. X-ray any sore joints. Perform a screening scan on his heart and abdomen and run some screening organ function tests. Make sure the vet looks at his teeth, and do not just clean them but x-ray them and remove the painful decaying teeth.

Up to 70% of pathology occurs below the gum line. So no x-rays, no dental!

Step 3 : Make sure all other prophylaxis is optimal. Deworm at least every three months. Ensure protection against ticks and fleas. Get them on a medical aid. To avoid exclusions as young as possible.

Step 4 : Keep them exercising but within their capabilities, and, organs permitting increase their high biological value protein intake to reduce muscle mass loss.

Step 5 : Older animals are the most prone to cancer. Treat this aggressively if it is found with the mind-set of a first time cure. Under treated cancer at the initial diagnosis is one of the biggest reasons for treatment failure and poor long term outcome.

Step 6 : If FIDO is in pain give him safe pain killers. You would ask for them for yourself.

## Nurse's Clinic The Festive Season : Sr Lezaan Alexander

The festive season is probably one of the most stressful & sad times for us at a veterinary practice. We see many lost & hurt animals due to fireworks. Our reception is trafficked with clients coming in to get drugs for their animals.

Fireworks can be fun for us humans, but animals don't have the same reaction. Their hearing is a lot more sensitive than ours. What we hear, are amplified to them.

Christmas & New Years are around the corner, fireworks inevitably come along with this holiday season. A lot of humans will agree that this time is the worst period of the year for their dogs.

Below are a few tips to arm you with ways to help your dogs over this holiday season. If it is too late for this season, hopefully this will get you prepared for the years to come.

🐾 Make sure your dog gets plenty of exercise earlier in the day.. This will make them more relaxed and sleepy.

🐾 Keep your dogs inside during fireworks, preferably with human companionship. If it's hot, air conditioning will help. Bringing your dogs to a fireworks display is never a good idea. Put the TV / radio on. Groom them or play their favorite game to distract them for what is happening outside.

🐾 Provide a safe place inside for your dogs to retreat. When scared of sounds they can't orientate themselves, dogs often prefer small enclosed areas. If your dog is comfortable in a crate, that is a good option. Put them blanket that they are used somewhere that is visible.

🐾 If possible, keep the windows and curtains closed. Covering the crate or lowering the blinds can also be helpful. Removing visual stimulation can also help to calm them.

🐾 Make sure all your dogs are wearing ID tags with a properly fitting collar. Microchipping is even better as a collar can get lost when climbing under a fence or strangle them when jumping through palisade fencing. Please ask at reception about microchipping your animals. You don't need a veterinary consultation. Any one of us nurses / vets can microchip your animals.

🐾 Leave your dog something fun to do - like a frozen Kong filled with his favorite treats. As I already mentioned above. Play their favorite game. Save meal time for when you expect the fireworks to be the worst.

### Using sensory enrichment to calm dogs:

🐾 Sound Therapy: The psychoacoustically designed music of *Through a Dog's Ear* has been specifically designed to reduce canine anxiety and has been successfully utilized by dog lovers worldwide. It is most effective when you first play the music well before the fireworks

start, at a time the dog is already feeling peaceful and relaxed. He will begin to associate the music with being calm and content. Then play the music a couple of hours before the fireworks start and continue to play through bedtime. The music doesn't need to be loud to be effective as it has been *clinically demonstrated to calm the canine nervous system*. I think you can also download these from the internet.

🐾 Sound Therapy combined with Desensitization: The *Canine Noise Phobia series (CNP)* consists of four CD's that can be used individually or as a set: Fireworks, Thunderstorms, City Sounds, and Calming. CNP is an innovative desensitization training tool that combines three distinctive elements for the treatment and prevention of sound-sensitivities and noise-phobias

- 🐾 progressive sound effects (distant/close)
- 🐾 specially-designed psychoacoustic
- 🐾 music reward-based reinforcement protocols

🐾 Tactile(touch): There are two canine wraps on the market that reportedly help sound phobic dogs. You can look these up on the internet. Below I have attached a picture. Some people have claimed that even just a doggy jacket has helped to give some extra comfort & security.

🐾 Medication: Rescue drops / tablets are a natural & safe product to use. They might not work as well from one animal to the next. We also keep Calmeze in bulk during this period. Please feel free to come chat to anyone at the practice about Calmeze or alternatives. Anything "stronger" will have to be prescribed by one of our veterinarians after a physical examination for safe use.

We hope these tips will have help to make this festive season a less stressful one for you and your pets.

Although most of the tips above are mainly aimed at dogs, they can also be applied to cats.

Have a safe and blessed holiday season from all of us nurses at the Hilton Veterinary Hospital.



## Tribute to Smudge sr Vicki Smith:

Smudge came into Hilton Vet Hospital as a referral and was diagnosed with a liver shunt by Dr Burchell. He had the aberrant vein closed off by Dr Meyers at St. Helier's Vet Hospital after which he returned to us for post operative nursing care. Smudge had many complications post op and it was his strong will to survive that attracted all of us to this beautiful natured cat. Sadly, despite everyone's best efforts Smudge suffered a stroke and lost the ability to use his front legs. He adapted very well and eventually could walk on his back legs. Along with impaired mental functions Smudge had a tough road in front of him.

Smudge's owners immigrated shortly afterwards and Hilton Vet Hospital adopted Smudge knowing it was the best possible place for him. Through this process the Hilton Vet community and staff fell in love with Smudge because of his determination,

Smudge would often go home with Staff members over the weekends, where he would be pampered and loved. He would come home with me and my girls would spend hours spoiling him with pram rides, cuddles in the sun, movies on the couch, tea parties and many more.

Smudge would often come and help me drop the girls off at school and meet all the children who were always fascinated and full of questions. I will never forget one morning whilst dropping off the girls( aged 4 and 5), a little girl asked me why he walks like a T-Rex, to which a little boy says he is a cat so he is a C-Rex not a T-Rex.

Smudge passed away peacefully at Hilton Vet Hospital after several complications resulting from his condition.

Smudge met a lot of people and I'm sure no one will forget the cat who walked around on his back legs, like a C-Rex. RIP Smudge.



## Vaccines by Dr Martin de Scally

Have vaccines prevented disease in countless cases?  
Yes

Do vaccines have potential side effects? Yes

So where is the middle road?

Step 1 is to follow the law of the country.

VACCINATE AGAINST RABIES TWICE AS A PUP OR KITTEN (WITHIN THEIR FIRST YEAR) AND THEN EVERY 3 YEARS.

Step 2 is to use core vaccines according to WSAVA recommendations and manufactures registration claims.

VACCINATE AGAINST CORE VIRUSES every 3 years.

Use intranasal kennel cough (BORDETELLA) vaccine annually in high risk animals.

Step 3 is to take your animals for an annual assessment to your veterinarian and discuss the need for other prophylaxis in isolated cases.

Always vaccinate cats in the loose skin of the flanks in case of vaccine induced sarcoma.

Vaccinating sick animals is ineffective and dangerous.

The internet says vaccination is dangerous, am I putting my animal in danger by vaccinating?

If we could see the outcome in every case we may chose to do things differently up front. Unfortunately we do not have the benefit of hind site in individual cases.

I think the thing to avoid is over vaccination and not vaccination. You should ask your trusted veterinarian whether they have considered the benefit to risk ratio of everything they do for your animal. Including vaccination.

I have found far more value in prolonging quality rich lives in animals through thorough examinations and selected screening examinations, such as abdominal scans, than over vaccinating them.

LASTLY VACCINATE ANY SUSPECT RABIES CONTACT ON DAY 0 AND 3 EVEN IF VACCINATED ANNUALLY OR TRIANNUALLY

## Dr Sarah Halgreen:

## To make you smile:

Sarah joined Hilton Veterinary Hospital in March 2017. She is one of our dedicated, caring and for ever smiling, veterinarians that form part of our team. Sarah qualified as a vet in 2015 and she has spent her time practicing as a state vet as well as locuming at a small animal after hours clinic and volunteering with the coastal horse care unit.

Before Sarah studied Veterinary Science she taught at the SA jockey academy for 5 years while finishing her masters degree in animal science.

Sarah is very enthusiastic to learn as much as she can in all aspects of veterinary science

In her spare time Sarah enjoys the outdoors particularly going to the beach and mountains. She also enjoys reading.

