



HILTON VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Hi to all our newsletter readers. 2017 has held a rapid pace for us at Hilton Veterinary Hospital with some positive changes taking effect.

Our veterinary staff remains at 5 vets but they are now supported by 3 receptionists, 5 nurses and 9 kennel managers. This has enabled us to have 2 people all night to take care of your pets that have been hospitalised. There are also 2 nurses on duty over the weekends to help improve patient care.

We are very excited that Sr Rebecca Upfold has re-joined our team at Hilton Vet Hospital. She went to study Veterinary nursing at Onderstepoort for 2 years. It is great to have her back.

We would also like to welcome Dr Sujatha Harrylal and Dr Sarah Halstead. They are the vets who have joined our night shift rota. We also welcome Senzo, Prosper and Thomas who are joining the team of our very caring and capable kennel assistants. Their staff profiles will follow in subsequent newsletters.

We say goodbye to Dr Anuschka Smith who is very keen on rowing and decided to move closer to Durban and this has enabled her to row more frequently. We appreciate the expertise she brought to Hilton Vet Hospital.

We have upgraded our lab facilities and are now able to test for numerous conditions immediately and accurately, this even includes testing for anticoagulant toxicity, or as it is commonly known, rat poison, immediately.

Our X-ray facilities have also been upgraded to direct digital which will give us faster and more accurate radiographs with a back up system should anything break, as does happen from time to time.

Jeannette has put down some roots in the form of buying a house in Hilton, so I hope the hospital continues to grow on her.

The 24 hour emergency service has been a great success, but a lot of hard hours for us. Most of the veterinary practices in the area now refer cases after hours to us because of the night care and point

of care facilities that we offer. Of course this also has helped us improve the facilities for our normal patients.

The Hospital will continue to invest in resources, expertise, equipment and people in order to continuously improve our patient care. We have made this a central theme to everything we do and I hope it is visible to all those who trust us with their animals.

Our local orthodontist Ilza van der Merwe kindly assisted us in our first dog tooth filling recently. We are very grateful to our human doctor specialists that are willing to collaborate with us, as it opens up treatment avenues otherwise unavailable to animals. Thank you.

We have also tried to go a little greener and are harvesting rain water to help reduce the drain on Midmar dam. This should enable us to cut water consumption by 50% on average throughout the year depending on rainfall.

Thanks to Guy Hickenbotham from Bundu power, we have a smoothly functioning 65kva generator capable of running the hospital through our regular power outages. So the hospital is Hilton compliant in that regard. This is obviously important to the hospital especially when animals are on life support etc.

We also now have enough emergency parking where cars can be protected from hail.

Please remember to keep your animals vaccinated, dewormed, microchips, on good food to prevent disease and put them on medical aid so that they can be treated if they do get sick.

On a very sad note we had to say goodbye to Ginger, our practice cat. Rebecca 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 and staff members offer you and your beloved pets. Enjoy reading the newsletter.

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:**

Spirocerca

Nurse's Clinic: Bandage Changes by Sr Rebecca Upfold

Composition

A good bandage has 3 main layers. The primary layer or contact layer is the layer against the skin or wound. In the case of a wound, it provides the environment which should preferably allow for any drainage, while keeping the site slightly damp and countering any infection.

The secondary layer has its own 2 layers, the first which is called the cushioning or intermediate layer. This provides padding and acts as an absorbent layer. The second layer is the bandage layer which provides even uniform pressure across the surface area.

The final layer also called the tertiary or finishing layer is for protection against outside contaminants and support.

Purpose

Bandages serve many purposes which include; providing pressure in wounds which stops bleeding, oedema and dead space forming, promoting wound healing and immobilisation of bones and limbs, especially in cases of fractures where the bones are unstable, and the joints must not rotate.



Care

While humans are generally quite good at looking after their own bandaged limbs, it's difficult to explain to a dog or cat why the thing on their leg is there and has to stay. Unfortunately this generally means the animal needs a Buster Collar or something similar to stop them attacking the bandage. Confinement is another method for bandage care as it prolongs the bandages lifespan. The less the animal moves, the less chance the bandage has of slipping or loosening. As an owner there are certain points you can monitor to make sure the bandage is serving its purpose.

- 🐾 Check any exposed toes for swelling, eczema or discolouration at least twice a day.
- 🐾 Make sure and keep the bandage **clean** and **dry**. This is important as the Elastoplast on the outside swells when it gets wet, and if the inside materials get wet it provides a great environment for bacteria to grow. If it's wet outside (as always for Hilton) temporarily cover the bandage with something waterproof like a plastic bag.
- 🐾 You can also check for any pain or discomfort. Signs of this would be chewing at the bandage or not placing weight in the case of a limb.
- 🐾 Watch to see if the bandage slips or moves in any way or loses its shape.
- 🐾 Monitor for any suspicious odours coming from the bandage, especially if it was a draining wound, Watch the animal's habitus. Is he his usual happy self? Or is he a bit lethargic and listless?

If any of the above is present or seen, bring the animal in for a check-up ASAP. Most bandages need to be checked every 5 days unless otherwise stipulated by the vet. The bandage might not need to be changed but better safe than sorry.

Spirocerca: by Dr Martin de Scally

Spirocerca lupi is a worm that dogs get by eating dung beetles or the muscle of secondary hosts like birds and lizards.

They do not get it from eating stools, unless the dung beetles are in the stools. It is the small dung beetle and not the typical one seen in wild life videos that contains the parasite. In some ways it is the African form of heart worm with a filarial phase and an adult phase. The filarial phase affects blood vessels and can cause aneurisms and even rupture and acute death. The adult phase causes a parasitic node in the esophagus. If left untreated this nodule commonly undergoes neoplastic transformation.

Initial clinical signs include pain on swallowing, regurgitation, vomiting, coughing and inappetence.

The condition is usually suspected clinically and diagnosed with radiography, endoscopy and sometimes advanced imaging such as CT.

The parasite is 100% treatable if it is detected early on and only solvable in some circumstances by tumour resection from the esophagus once neoplastic transformation has taken

place.

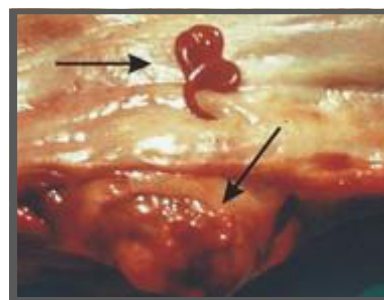
Milbemax dewormer and Revolution are the only registered treatments for this disease.

We also do not yet know how to prevent it although monthly Milbemax and three monthly Revolution has been suggested.

We see about 10 cases a year and we think more go undiagnosed due to sudden death after artery rupture.

If you see your animal stand back from their bowl during eating to make repeated swallow attempts, if they show pain on eating or if they vomit or regurgitate, have them investigated for *Spirocerca*.

Remember it is 100% treatable if caught early enough.



Tribute to Ginger: Sr Rebecca Upfold

My name is Ginger. Hilton Vet was my home for as long as I can remember, long before Dr Martin arrived. I was a tough street cat, brave enough to take on any dog that crossed my path, even Rottweilers. I wasn't used to human attention. No human was allowed to pet me without permission. But these humans loved me anyway. And I slowly learned to love them back (especially since they fed me every day)

I learned that cuddling and petting aren't so bad. I actually enjoyed the attention, so much so that I demanded it on a daily basis. Meowing worked on occasion. The best way though, was to find someone sitting at a desk and jump on their lap, and sit on their work or even their keyboard. So much for the tough street cat. I had a rough life before all this though. Turns out I managed to get FIV when I fought other cats. I have to protect my turf somehow though. FIV is the cat version of what you humans get. It affected my immune system, so it took me longer to recover when I got sick. I also managed to damage my tail so badly, part of it had to be removed. Although the short stub of my tail was great for chasing. I still managed to catch it sometimes. This was also good for getting attention.



I'm in a better place now. Lots of people to pet me and dogs to chase. Although now it's all for fun. No more getting sick or injured. I do sometimes miss my humans though. Hopefully I'll see them soon

Rest in Peace, handsome boy. We miss you.

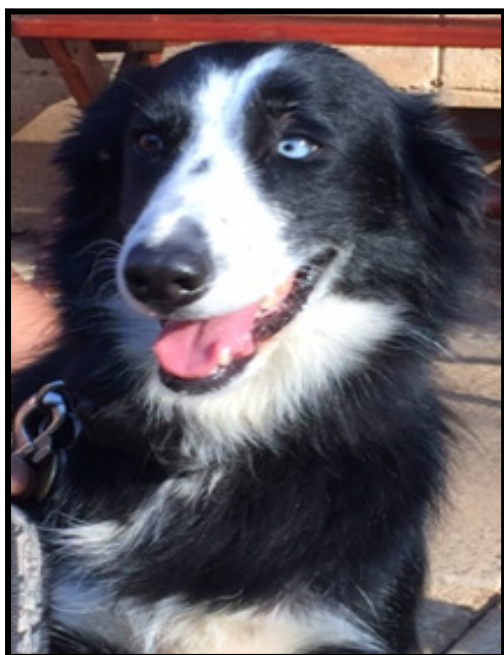
PT/PTT Machine: Dr Sarah Halgreen



Rodenticides

We have had a few cases of rodenticide toxicosis over the last few months. Rodenticides (Rat poison) works by targeting the enzymes responsible for recycling vitamin K which ultimately results in the reduction of vitamin K dependent clotting factors. Normally a mild case of rat poisoning takes a few days for symptoms to be seen. The symptoms to look out for are: weakness, pale gums and later bleeding from the gums, bleeding from the nose (epistaxis), profuse bleeding from any wounds, blood in the dogs vomit or urine or faeces, difficulty breathing, sudden death to name a few.

Pyper was rushed to Hilton Vet Hospital on Saturday the 13th of May after having chewed open a long forgotten bag of rat poison that had fallen off a shelf.



We were able to induce vomiting quickly, which would help decrease the absorption of any rodenticide. We were unable to find any evidence of the rodenticide in her vomit and she was given something to help stop the vomiting once her stomach was empty and she went home for close monitoring. She was brought back to us on the 16th for us to run some tests on her blood to determine if she was indeed experiencing any delay in clotting. Hilton Vet Hospital is fortunate to now own a machine that will run the tests for us and so we can get the results within minutes. This is unlike before, where we would need to send blood away and wait days for results. Lucky for Pyper, her results showed she had good clotting times and was out of the woods.



Sujatha Harrylal:

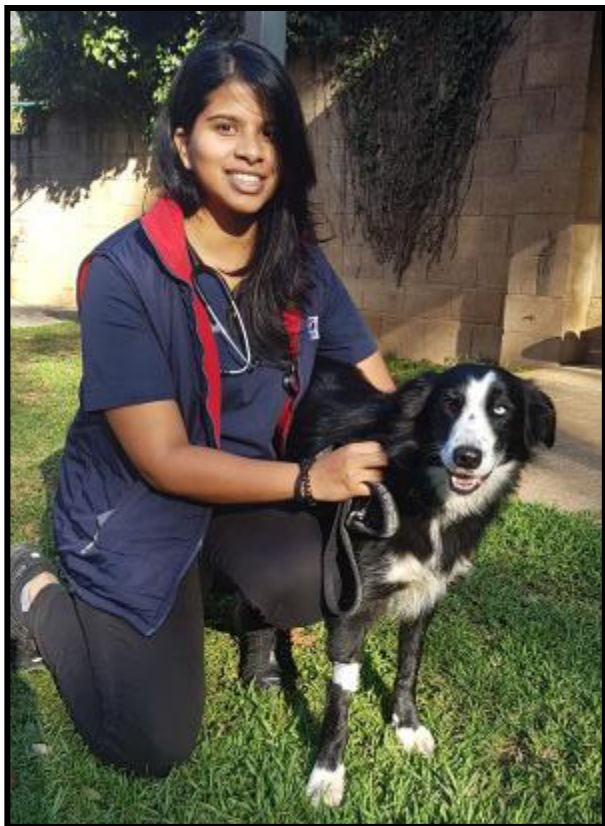
Sujatha joined Hilton Veterinary Hospital in January 2017. She is one of our dedicated, caring veterinarians that form part of our team. Suj, as we fondly call her, has an amazing sense of humour and keeps us entertained.

Sujatha is in a relationship with Delon who is also a vet.

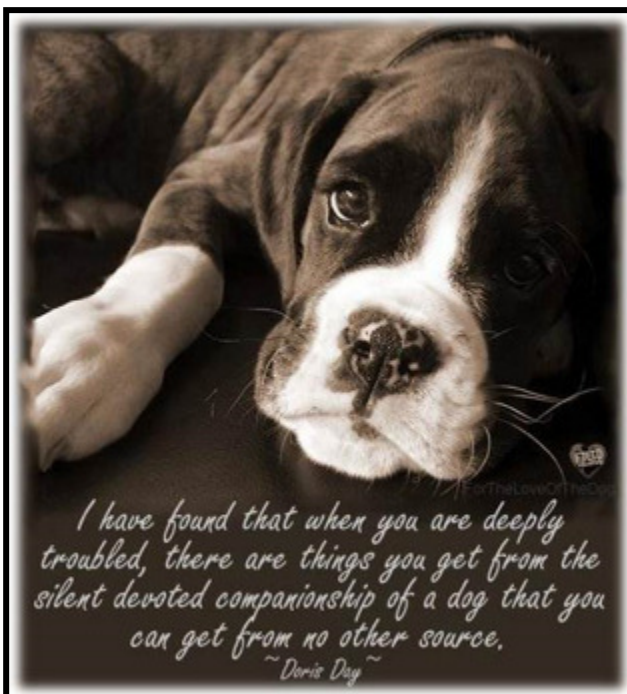
She enjoys internal medicine and the treatment of the odd abscess.

Sujatha has 3 dogs. 2 German pointers, Ellie and Noah and a Boerboel cross named Luna.

In her spare time Suj enjoys cycling, playing the piano and doing field work with her dogs.



To make you smile:



In the next issue: Geriatrics and Blood pressure in cats