



Hilton Veterinary Hospital

Website: www.hiltonvethospital.co.za

72 Hilton Avenue Hilton 3245

Tel (033) 343-4602

Free Small Animal Veterinary Advice e-mail: martin@hiltonvethospital.co.za

Inside this issue:

We would like to congratulate Derek and Janice Clover on the birth of their son Owen. He is gorgeous!



Our ninth newsletter focuses on epilepsy. Epilepsy is a form of recurrent seizures that has no known cause. It is frightening to see and can be debilitating to the animal. I hope you get something out of the facts mentioned later in the newsletter.

There has been a fantastic response to the rabies concerns. Many people have made use of the vaccinate at home services that we offer and others have taken advantage of our rabies drive specials. Well done! It is certainly not something to play with. Statistically rabies has 100% fatality in untreated people. Despite what you may have heard, one person surviving rabies, 55000 die every year. Most of these are children are in rural areas. By the time you read this I would have spoken at a few schools in the surrounding area and have encouraged other veterinarians in other areas to do the same.

You may have noticed the new dog and cat food in the reception area. These foods are the Acana and Orijen range. They are higher protein foods than even the premium pet foods and basically match what you could do if you scientifically cooked for your pet every day. This places them in the super premium range. Who should consider trying them? Pets with chronic skin and ear problems,

weight loss and vomiting problems relating to intestinal disease, working animals and fussy animals.

Hilton Vet's Large Dog Ward (Great Danes, Boerboels, Irish Wolf Hounds and others) has been constructed. We are doing the finishing touches this month. These cages are large enough for the dogs to stand in and lie down stretched out. They will be fitted with large Me Too mattresses which are 150mm thick and the room will be heated in summer and cooled in winter.

We have also completed our third consulting room and so hope to reduce any waiting time even further. These two events highlight our continued commitment to progression and maintenance of our high standards of care for your pets.

Confucius says "Dog that run in front of car is likely to get "tired". Dog that run behind car is likely to get "exhausted".

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:

Toxicities and Epilepsy

The Nurse's Clinic: I'm not fat, I'm poofy

Is your puss struggling to fit into his boots? Is his lovely long fur being said to make him look "poofy"? An overweight cat may seem to be cute and cuddly and evidence of a much loved pet, but unfortunately that extra weight can be very harmful to your feline friend.



The reality that many don't want to face is that pets even just a few kilograms overweight are at higher risk for health problems like diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure and heart disease. These are not diseases anyone would want to have for themselves so why should our animals have to be put through them?

So, if your kitty is in perfect shape that is brilliant! Keep up the good work. Remember that prevention is always better than cure and the earlier we develop good habits with our pets the better.

Food does play an important role, both in preventing weight gain and in achieving weight loss. If you are unsure about the food your pet is on, or should be on please feel free to come in and chat to one of our receptionists or nurses, we would love to help. We have a variety of good brands to choose from to suite your pets exact needs and your budget.

Now we are sure most of you are well aware that if any of us tried to go on a diet to loose weight, get toned and healthier and so on, we wouldn't only be given advice on the food we ate (and the food we would have to cut out). No, we would be told to get a gym contract or start walking. Any form of exercise that would get our blood pumping and remind our muscles what they were for.

Unfortunately we can't take our cats with us to gym, place them on the treadmill and tell them to keep walking for 20minutes. Apart from the difficulty of smuggling them through the doors cats just aren't that way inclined. So we have to be a little more creative and a little more sneaky when it comes to exercising our kitties.

We'll start with one that most probably gets the most laughs but is a great idea. It is always one area where starting young with the "prevention is better

than cure" thought in mind really helps. Yip, we're going to put your kitty in a harness and on a lead and go for walks. Starting them at a young age will help make it a more natural thing for them as they will be more likely to accept it at that stage, but it is worth a try in some cats at an older age. Judge your cats character and personality to decide whether or not it would work. This will obviously be something that requires time and patience during the training phase so don't expect kitty to be walking on a leash like an expert by day 3 already.

Below we've listed a few other ideas to help get your cat moving, introducing exercise into everyday life. Experiment with them and see what works for your kitty.

1. If it will jump for food - Place a bowl of food on an elevated surface so your cat has to jump to get it. Return the bowl to the floor and repeat. Allow some food to be eaten in between jumps to keep cat interested.

2. Hunting - Put your cat on the prowl by hiding small bowls of food throughout the house. Your cat will be on the move all day "hunting prey." Not advisable if in a multicat household unfortunately as it will make it very difficult to ensure each cat is getting the correct quantity of food. Also watch out for small children eating the food and for ants.

3. Bright lights - Few cats can resist the urge to chase down the light of a laser pointer or flashlight. Be sure to let your cat "catch" the dot every once in a while so he or she stays interested.

4. Controlled chaos - Look for pet-friendly remote-controlled toys like a mouse or small car for your cat to chase. Be sure it's durable enough to withstand a good swat. Catnip in or on the toys can also help entice kitty into a good chase.

5. High stepper - Put your cat's food in places (a permanent placing as compared to the first suggestion) where he or she has to climb stairs to get it and back down again.



The Nurse's Clinic: I'm not fat, I'm poofy (cont)

6. That old yarn - A classic. There's no better way to get a cat off the couch than the sight of a big ball of yarn rolling across the floor.

7. Brown bag - Give your cat a paper bag or box to play in - you'll both be entertained.

8. Tub pong - Ping pong balls make great cat toys; roll one in the tub or along a long passageway and let the fun begin.

9. Social climber - Buy a multi-tiered cat tower. Hide treats in it to encourage your cat to climb and play.



These are just a few ideas to start you off and give you some inspiration, get creative and experiment with other fun games and ways to get your cat moving more. Remember also that cats can become bored so mix and match the exercises of your choice so it always feels like something new. Have fun and remember if you have any queries please feel free to phone us or pop in.



Facts on Epilepsy by Dr Martin de Scally

- ❧ Epilepsy is a genetic cause of fitting related to leaking electrolyte channels in the brain.
- ❧ Most cases of fitting are actually toxic related fitting and therefore not true epilepsy.
- ❧ It is usually diagnosed by ruling out other possibilities, such as toxins, infections, tumours and trauma.
- ❧ It is often hereditary so these pets should not be bred.
- ❧ Usually epileptic seizures begin between one and four years of age.
- ❧ They can show initially as a period of weakness or unawareness or as a focal neurological sign

TREATMENT:

Not recommended if seizures are mild, non progressive and four to six weeks apart or longer.

Medication:

- ❧ May require a combination of drugs.
- ❧ There is no cure only attempt at control.
- ❧ It takes time to get seizure medication regulated properly, some severely affected dogs require initial intravenous therapy.

- ❧ Liver Function Tests and drug levels are necessary every six months while on some medications because drugs can be detrimental to the liver
- ❧ Newer medications are less liver toxic.

If your pet has a seizure you should:

- ❧ Remain calm.
- ❧ Do not put your hand into your pet's mouth.
- ❧ Be sure the dog is in environment where s/he will not harm itself. Remove nearby sharp objects and water.
- ❧ Observe your pet closely and call the Veterinary Hospital if the actual seizure is still continuing after 10 minutes.
- ❧ Get the animal to a veterinarian as soon as possible but especially if the seizure persists or worsens in time or nature.

Please remember rabies is a possibility with any neurological sign.

Home treatment is also available but only after a proper diagnosis is made.

Treating life threatening toxicities by Dr Derek Clover

Hydro-carbon Toxicities.

We have recently had two cases of unusual poisonings at Hilton Vet Hospital that fall under the broad group of hydro carbon poisonings. Hydrocarbons are substances like oils, fuels or propellants for aerosols. They are found in a large number of products and the two that we recently dealt with were old car oil and Woodoc.

Olivia

Olivia (a 2 year old Siamese cat) was found swimming in an oil pit on the farm. She was rushed into the surgery in a critical condition. Olivia was very weak and collapsed and her skin and eyes were chemically burnt and very painful. She also had diarrhoea and we were concerned about the oil causing parts of her intestines to ulcerate. Luckily she tolerated a feeding tube through her nostril into her stomach, a drip, and twice daily washes. This allowed us to give her all her pain medications, food, fluids and other treatments with minimal fuss and after 4 days in hospital she was able to go home.

Before treatment

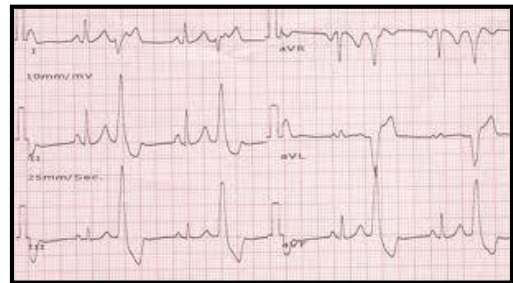


After treatment



Duma

Duma (a 4 year old Ridgeback) has a passion for eating old rags. He was brought to us after eating a rag that had been soaked in Woodcock. Unlike Olivia's skin exposure to a hydrocarbon he had ingested the poison. In his case the main effect caused his heart to beat extremely erratically. As a result of the poor circulation he also had an accumulation of fluid in his abdomen. After 1 week in hospital with regular ECG monitoring and intravenous drugs used to normalize the heartbeat we were able to take him off medications and send him home.



Abnormal ECG

The lesson to take from this is that we must all be very aware of what "poisons" are in our household (no matter how innocuous they seem) and ensure that they are kept safely away from pets and children. If your animal eats something other than the normal please contact your vet to check if it is likely to cause any complications.



Acana and Orijen Foods

By your request we have recently started stocking the Acana and Orijen Food range.

Acana and Orijen pet foods are new to KZN but have been around since 1985. They are produced by Champion Petfoods in Alberta, Canada. Champion is an independent, family-owned-and-operated business. Unlike a large amount of pet foods companies who only market a brand and outsource production, Champion is different, they produce all their food in their award-winning factory. They have complete control over the manufacturing process which allows them to guarantee quality. Champion have a different philosophy to most pet foods on the market. Champion have developed "biologically appropriate" foods, matching the same variety of foods that dogs and cats would find in their natural environment and which most closely match their biological adaptation.

Dogs and cats jaws, teeth and digestive systems are designed to eat a varied, meat-concentrated diet. Unfortunately pet food has become a very profitable dumping ground for the by-product and waste of human food production. One of the main points separating Acana and Orijen from others, is that there is no maize, wheat, soya or any other high GI grains to be found in them unlike other foods which can be anywhere from 60-95% grain. Grain is not a natural part of dogs or cats diets and high GI grains get quickly converted into sugar which can lead to obesity and has been linked to allergies. Dogs and cats get their energy from fat and not sugar like humans. Orijen is grain free and some Acana formulas have 20% low GI, whole steel-cut oats. All cat foods are grain free.

Another huge point of differentiation is that every ingredient that Champion uses is certified "fit for human consumption"; they are the only pet food maker to be able to make this claim.

They also use high levels of fresh meat, whole fruits and vegetables, plus botanicals in the food production. The top quality ingredients arrive fresh, not frozen from local farms and are then made into kibble using a low heat steam-production method, ensuring the integrity and goodness in the food is maintained

Champion must be doing something right because their foods get the highest ratings from all credible reviewers worldwide plus they have won numerous awards. Orijen is the only six-star rated food in SA and Acana is the only five-star rated food plus Orijen has been voted 'Pet Food of the Year' worldwide every year since 2009. It does not necessarily cost you more per day to feed these foods, even if a bag costs more, because they eat less and you get more feeds per kg out of these foods compared to others. Acana can even work out cheaper than other big brands.

www.championpetfoods.com



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 two years 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 Candace for your requirements.

Staff Profile

Lana Payne

Lana joined the practice in August 2010. She is one of our very competent, hard working and friendly receptionists.

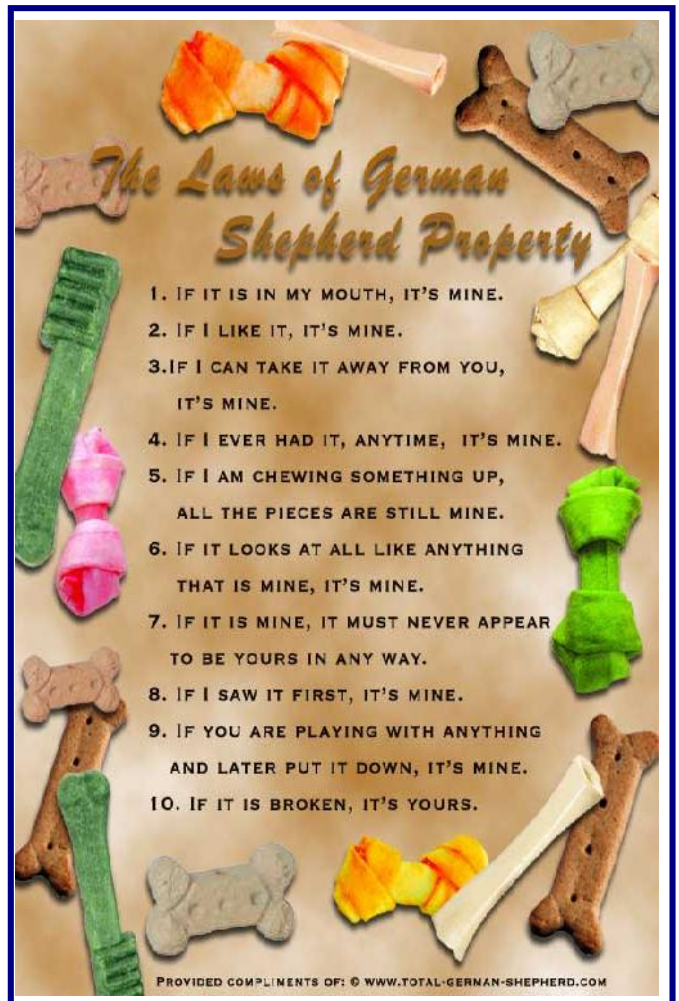
Lana is married to Richard and they have identical twin sons, Garth and playing soccer and cycling.

Lana enjoys working in reception and dealing with clients and their animals. She has the very important task of making sure Ginger (our practice cat, aka as "The Boss) is seen to first thing in the morning, even before coffee is made.

In her spare time Lana enjoys baking, gardening and jogging to stay fit.



To Make you Smile



To all non-pet owners who visit and like to complain about our pets:

1. They live here. You don't.
2. If you don't want their hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture. That's why they call it 'fur'-niture.
3. I like my pets a lot better than I like most people.
4. To you, they are animals. To me, they are adopted sons/daughters who are short, hairy, walk on all fours and don't speak clearly.

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