



Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Wow, we are nearly half the way through the year. Time really does seem to fly.

Jane has completed her studies for veterinary nursing. She will write her exams in September. At the moment she is assisting Debbie and Cheryl. She is now exploring something she has always wanted to pursue. We know that the patients will be treated with lots of love and care. Good luck Jane.

As I am sure you are all aware of the recent events as far as the Rabies outbreak is concerned, we have been encouraging our clients to make sure that their vaccinations are up to date. Martin has been talking at the schools in the area to educate children, the highest risk population, about rabies and what to do if a suspect rabid dog is encountered. We have been running a special for the month of June and this will be continuing in to July as well. Many of our clients have made use of the house calls to get their pets vaccinations done. Please be vigilant in this regard. If you phone the practice our receptionists can explain the special to you.

Alternatively please contact Lauren at lauren@hiltonvethospital.co.za.

We are seeing a lot of poisoned dogs again. Some of them from unknown sources but unfortunately most still from accidental exposure from household toxins. Please be vigilant and read the warning labels on products. If it is poisonous to dogs it will probably also kill

We have been fortunate enough by shifting things around to make space for a third consulting room. I hope this means even less waiting and greater efficiency even in busy times.

My news, is my exciting appointment as the African representative on the World Small Animal Veterinary Association Nutrition Committee. This does mean some more travelling once a year to the World Veterinary Congress, as well as many nights answering e-mails and reading literature, but it promises to help keep our knowledge current which should be of benefit to your dogs and cats.

Please read the Spirocercalupi article carefully as this is a serious, but easily preventable disease in dogs.

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



After Hours Emergencies:

Please phone
(033) 343 4602

Contact Details:

If your contact details have changed then please inform us .

This month's theme:

Guide Dogs

The Nurse's Clinic: Guide Dogs, A dog with a Job

As early as the mid 1700 s there is evidence of dogs being used as a guide for blind people. With many wounded and blinded servicemen returning to America and Europe after WWI and WW2, the potential was seen in using dogs as a guide for the blind. One of the first documented guide dogs was "Buddy", the "eyes" of Morris Frank, an American who went on to establish The Seeing Eye in 1929, one of the first guide dog schools.

The original guide dogs were small mongrel types. The most common breed of dog seen leading a blind person worldwide nowadays is the Labrador Retriever. Why is this breed so well suited to being the eyes of a person who cannot see? Mainly, his personality, being a friendly, energetic, intelligent and good natured dog. He also has a good work ethic.

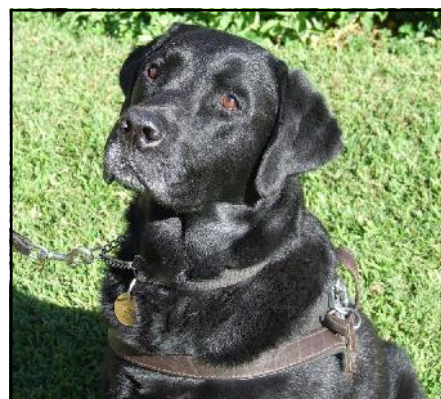
The guide dog spends his first months with a family called Puppy Raisers, doing basic training and socializing with other dogs and humans, visiting shopping centres, restaurants and most other possible scenarios that a blind person would encounter. Being a Guide Dog puppy raiser is a lot of hard work but it is also a lot of fun and very rewarding. Puppies soon lose their puppy cuteness and become naughty and destructive. They are not born Guide Dogs and need to go through the learning process just like every other dog to become confident, obedient and well mannered dogs. Guide Dog puppies need patience, persistence, consistency, positive feedback and above all, unconditional love from the puppy raiser. When it is time for the dog to return to the Guide Dog Training Centre (after 12-18 months) for their formal training, the puppy raiser must be able to "let go" knowing that that the dog will be the "seeing eyes" for a blind person and give that person



Hoby and Abbey

mobility, independence and companionship. He will be checked for internal and external parasites before advanced training begins. The Labrador also fulfils the physical requirements weighing between 25kg and 36 kg, depending on sex. He will learn to respond to verbal commands eg "left" "right", "forward" etc. He will learn to avoid obstacles and watch for traffic, starting in quiet areas and progressing to busier and busier areas. Overhead obstacles can present a problem and the dog is taught to identify them up to a height of 2.5 metres. During its training, the dog's concentration is improved, learning to ignore possible distractions. After 6 months of advanced training at the Guide Dog Centre, the guide dog is matched with a blind person according to the blind person's requirements, personality and lifestyle.

Hudson is a very special handsome black Labrador that is seen regularly at our clinic, a guide dog belonging to Robin Giles. Hudson is instrumental in raising funds locally for the Guide Dog Association and has also enabled Robin to continue his hobby of walking, thus not only giving his owner eyes but legs, and most important of all, independence. Hudson also allows Robin to stay fit.



Hudson



Whisper

Spirocercalupi By Dr Martin de Scally

Spirocera lupi is a worm that affects dogs. It is unlike any other worm in that it causes masses to develop in the oesophagus. Dogs get infected by eating dung beetles or by eating animals that have eaten dung beetles. The worm larvae have to pass through a dung beetle to become infective.

The faeces of other dogs and animals that eat dung beetles are not infective to the dog, unless it has a contaminated dung beetle feeding on it. So you cannot get *Spirocera lupi* from eating Hadedo poo, but you can get it from eating the whole bird if it contains *Spirocera lupi* larval cysts.

If the dog eats an infective immature worm it will burrow through the intestinal wall into one of the bowel arteries. From there it will move along to the aorta where it can cause an aneurism. It then migrates a short way across the chest from the aorta to the oesophagus where it breeds in a nodule that is formed by the connective tissues of the oesophagus.

The most common symptom shown by infected dogs is pain on swallowing or vomiting food (actually regurgitating) but this will often go unnoticed by the owner unless they are aware to watch for these symptoms. Typically, a dog with an oesophageal pain will eat for a while then stand back from the bowl and swallow a few times before carrying on. Sometimes an aneurism can burst and cause the dog to die from blood loss. It is important to diagnose and treat this disease early. In fact, because of its high prevalence it is even better to try prevent it. You can do this by regularly deworming, every 3 months with Milbemax or by using a new flea product once a month that also treats *Spirocera* called Advocate. If the disease is left unchecked, it can turn cancerous making treatment and possible cure difficult and expensive.

Figure 1. Adult *Spirocera* worm

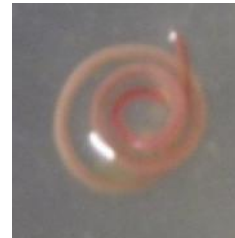


Figure 2. *Spirocera* granuloma in the oesophagus visible on x-ray



Figure 3. *Spirocera* granuloma in the oesophagus visible on video endoscope



Figure 4 CT scan of a dog with thoracic aorta and abdominal aorta aneurisms



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 Candace for your requirements.

Mischief By Sue Abernethy

Mischief (as we were to discover is a very appropriate name) is a female Siamese. I live on a golf estate and managed to get permission to keep one cat. Unfortunately before we could sterilize her, she escaped and had 3 kittens, so I ended up with 4 cats! As this was illegal, I tried to keep a low profile until I managed to find homes for them.

Well, for some reason this was a turning point in Mischief's life - she became a cat 'thief'. One day she brought a balled up pair of socks home, how cute, then it progressed to 5 balls of socks, and then anything from a tube of lip gloss, to a pair of shoes, yes a pair. She brought one shoe home and later in the evening arrived with the other one. Because of the security on the estate, many windows and even doors are left open at night which made easy pickings for her.

At first we thought this was so precious, bringing us all these 'gifts' until we filled up 3 black bags with underwear, shirts, shorts, towels, jerseys, hats, gloves, underwear, etc, etc. You name it, she brought it home. One night I counted 14 items, dropped all the way from the back door leading upstairs to my bedroom! Nothing was labelled with a name so I gave the 3 black bags to the poor! This went on for about a year until one day she brought a pair of PE shorts home with a name in it. I returned the shorts and told the owner my story - I let the cat out the bag! Well this was Mischief's undoing as when things went missing, people knew who the thief was, and I was in for a hard time (not that I can blame anyone!).



Now bear in mind I still had the kittens and was getting more and more attached to them, so home finding was very low on my list of things to do. The final undoing of Mischief was when a guy from across the road came knocking on my door one day and gave me such a mouthful, saying "I'm sick and tired of your cat running up and down the road with my skants in her mouth". I then saw him chasing her in front of a car one day, and he eventually threatened to expose to management the fact that I had 4 cats!

I put poor Mischief in a very nice cattery for 2 months hoping this would break her habit, but it did not. A few months later I tried a second stint in the cattery, and while she was there a very good friend of mine said I should let Mischief go and live with her. She also lives on the Estate so I gave this a try. I was very sad to see her go, but at least I could visit from time to time. My friend fetched her from the cattery after 2 months, and she seemed quite happy to go with her. She was kept inside for a couple of months, and when she eventually started roaming the neighbourhood, nothing came home with her! This lasted for about a year, and then inevitably a ball of socks arrived one day! She is still bringing things home, but not on the scale that she did with me.

Hope you enjoyed this 'true' story



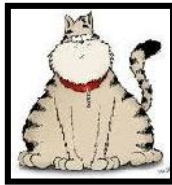
Health Tips

By Dr Trish Mills

Health tip no 1: Does your pet have a weight problem?

All excuses aside ... excessive weight in an otherwise **healthy** pet is a direct result of **consuming unnecessary amounts of food**. If your pet is overweight it should be examined for **thyroid** or other metabolic disorders and a detailed history should be taken with emphasis on **frequency of exercise** and **amount and type of food** being provided.

As in people, pets carrying extra weight place extra demands on virtually all the organs of their bodies. When we overload these organs, disease and sometimes death are the consequences. The **health risks** to overweight dogs are **serious** and include conditions such as **Arthritis, Diabetes Mellitus, Heart Disease** and many more. *Speak to us to help you identify your overweight pet and get him/her back in shape.*



Health tip no 2: Does your pet have smelly breath?

It is a common mistake to believe that "**doggy breath**" or "**tuna breath**" is something to be expected in our pets but most often **bad breath** is caused by **dental or gum disease**. There can be **other causes** of bad breath (such as kidney failure) and so a thorough physical examination is a necessary part of the diagnostic protocol. A **detailed oral exam** may require a short anaesthetic, this would then also allow us to do dental radiographs.

One of the dangers of lack of dental care is **infection** spreading to other areas of the body. Bacteria that surround infected teeth continuously break off into the pet's bloodstream and lodge in other organs such as the heart valves, kidneys, and liver. The infection can also cause **pain** in the mouth resulting in a poor appetite.

Speak to us about options for **at-home preventative care** such as brushing your pets teeth or oral care diets. Or book an appointment with one of our vets or vet nurses to check whether your pet needs a dental.



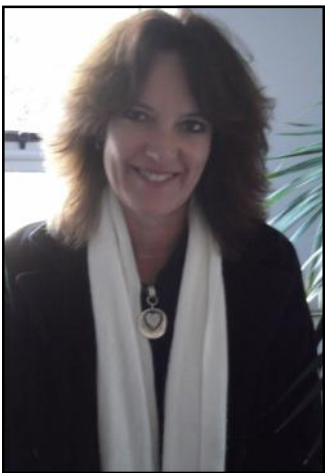
Staff Profile

Wendy Godfrey

Wendy joined the practice in 2008. She is our very competent, hard working and dedicated Practice Manager and Bookkeeper. Wendy has 3 sons. Matthew is a 3rd year student at Stellenbosch University, studying B-Comm Logistics. Ryan is a Sports Coach and Boarder Master at Howick High. He is starting to study Sports Management/Psychology and is a keen cricketer. He had the opportunity to train with the Proteas and New Zealanders while at the TUKS cricket Academy last year. Dale is 9 years old and is a keen sportsman. He enjoys mountain biking, canoeing and cricket.

Wendy thrives on working with figures and balancing spreadsheets. She enjoys the challenge of keeping clients and staff happy, but still finds the time to love some of our patients. This includes a monkey that was hit by a car.

Wendy enjoys spending quality time with her boys, water sports and travelling. She even manages to find the time to crochet blankets for her beloved dogs, Russie (5yrs) and Kasey (14yrs)



Dog Rules

1. The dog is not allowed in the house.
2. OK, the dog is allowed in the house, but only in certain rooms.
3. The dog is allowed in all rooms, but has to stay off the furniture.
4. The dog can get on the old furniture only.
5. Fine, the dog is allowed on all the furniture, but is not allowed to sleep with the humans on the bed.
6. OK, the dog is allowed on the bed, but only by invitation.
7. The dog can sleep on the bed whenever he wants, but not under the covers.
8. The dog can sleep under the covers by invitation only.
9. The dog can sleep under the covers every night.
10. Humans must ask permission to sleep under the covers with the dog.



We have 2 very special patients called Beetle and Rosie. They are very educated and enjoy watching animal planet. In the first photo Beetle is watching by himself and in the second photo, Rosie has joined him.



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