



Love your pet... love your vet

With summer upon us it is always important to ensure our pets don't suffer from the heat or other seasonal problems. Check out our article on the back page for some top tips.

Do you know someone who has recently got a new pet? Or someone who is not receiving the service and care they deserve at their current vets? If the answer is yes, why not recommend Hillside – we offer a **FREE 1st vet consultation** to all new client registrations. Pass on our details today so that your family and friends can give their pets the best care and attention they deserve.

Check out the new Dorset Dogs website @ www.dorsetdogs.org.uk – encouraging dogs and their owners to enjoy, protect and respect the Dorset coast and countryside. The site includes local dog walking information, events, news, First Aid tips (supplied by Hillside), lost and found and much more.

For those not so nice summer days, why not be seen out and about sporting one of the new Hillside golfing umbrellas? These can now be purchased at reception for £9.99.

Don't forget to log on regularly to our website @ www.hillsidevets.co.uk for up-to-date articles, information and special offers.

Our surgery times

– don't forget late night opening
Wednesdays and all day Saturdays

Mon – Fri: 8.30am-6.30pm

Wednesdays: 8.30am-8pm

Saturdays: 8.30am-5pm

t: 698899 e: mail@hillsidevets.co.uk

Repeat prescriptions

can be ordered on-line at

www.hillsidevets.co.uk

simply click on:



Wriggle your way out of this one!



ALTHOUGH it's not a pleasant thought, our pets are constantly at risk of acquiring worms. Until recently, our main concerns regarding worms have been to ensure dogs and cats are protected against **roundworms** and **tapeworms** –

both of which live in the **intestines**. In addition, an increasing problem in dogs (but not cats) is **lungworm** infestation with *Angiostrongylus vasorum* – see panel right for information.



Roundworms can grow up to 20cm in length and live in the intestines of dogs and cats. They shed thousands of tiny eggs which pass out in the faeces and contaminate the environment, where the eggs can survive for years. Dogs and cats are reinfected by inadvertently eating the eggs. The eggs also pose some risk to children if they are unwittingly swallowed.



Tapeworms also live in the intestines and can grow up to 5m in length. They shed small segments containing eggs which pass out in the faeces, or which may be found around the tail area. As the segments break down, the eggs may be eaten by an **intermediate host**; these include small rodents (e.g. mice) and fleas. Cats commonly catch and eat small rodents and both cats and dogs swallow fleas as they groom themselves, thus reinfesting themselves with tapeworms.

The good news is that worms can be prevented by following a few simple rules: worm your pets regularly, use regular flea control, try to avoid dogs eating snails, slugs and frogs and keep gardens clear of faeces. Check with reception that your worm and flea control are up-to-date and if not book an appointment today.

Lungworm in dogs

Lungworm infestation, caused by the parasite *Angiostrongylus vasorum* is something that all dog owners should be aware of. *Angiostrongylus vasorum* can cause a wide range of symptoms – some severe, including coughing, lethargy, fits and blood clotting problems. However other pets may show no obvious signs of problems.



Adult *A. vasorum* lungworm
These live in the heart and pulmonary arteries

So what is the life-cycle?

In infected dogs, *A. vasorum* lungworms live in the pulmonary arteries and right ventricle of the heart. Here they lay eggs, which hatch into larvae and in turn migrate into the airways of the lung. Larvae are then coughed up, swallowed and passed in the dog's faeces.

Slugs, snails and frogs act as **intermediate hosts**, ingesting the larvae. The intermediate hosts are in turn eaten by dogs (often unwittingly) and the larvae then migrate to the heart and develop into adult worms.

Teeth – time for a check-up?



Did you know that gum disease is probably the single most common long term disease that our pets will suffer from in their lives?

Flip up your pet's lip and take a look at his teeth and gums – a healthy mouth usually has pale pink gums, and bright white teeth. However, over time, accumulation of plaque bacteria on the surface of the teeth can lead to **inflammation** of the gums – a condition called **gingivitis**. This is frequently accompanied by the accumulation of calculus (tartar) on the surface of the teeth, and also very bad breath!

If you are in any way concerned about your pet's teeth and gums book a dental appointment today.

Progression of dental disease



Healthy mouth with white teeth and healthy pink gums



Unhealthy mouth with gingivitis and calculus

Lungworm photo: courtesy Bayer plc



Beat the heat this summer!

As we enjoy the warmer summer weather it is important not to forget our pets and their needs:

- Make sure fresh clean water is always available to all pets – try to avoid dog walking and exercise during the heat of the day and stick to early mornings and evenings. Always take water with you when out on a walk.

- Cats are natural sun bathers, but cats with white noses and ear tips are particularly vulnerable to sun burn and subsequent skin cancer. This risk can be reduced by keeping them out of the sun, or by applying sunblock to these areas during the summer months.

- Watch out for grass seeds (awns) of the meadow grasses. They commonly become trapped in dogs ears – causing violent head shaking, or may become embedded in the feet or other areas.

- Don't forget to keep treating your pets regularly against fleas, ticks and worms.

- If your pet is going into kennels this summer, don't forget to make sure they are up to date with their vaccinations!

- Bee and wasp stings are another seasonal problem. Some pets are allergic to their stings and may need prompt veterinary attention.

- Finally, **NEVER** leave a pet in a car on a hot day!



Ear tip of a cat showing cancerous changes



Grass awns of the summer grasses



Paw of a dog with an interdigital cyst caused by a grass seed



Bees and wasps can be a summer hazard for inquisitive pets



Infectious disease: is your pet vaccinated?

IS YOUR dog up to date with his vaccinations? What about your cat or your rabbit? The good news is that we can protect pets against a number of potentially fatal infectious diseases, and if your pets haven't been vaccinated in the last year – then it's worth bringing them in for an appointment to discuss what is both available and advisable.

We strongly recommend you regularly vaccinate your pets against the following infectious diseases:

Dogs: Distemper, Infectious canine hepatitis, Parvovirus, Leptospirosis and Para influenza virus. Most boarding kennels also require protection against Kennel Cough. Rabies vaccine is obligatory for pet dogs and cats travelling abroad under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS). We offer a free pet travel check with a vet ensuring all vaccines are up-to-date and your pet's passport details are correct.

Cats: Cat flu virus, Feline panleucopenia virus, Feline leukaemia virus.

Rabbits: Myxomatosis and Viral Haemorrhagic Disease.

At this time we will carry out a yearly health check allowing us to pick up *early* signs of disease, so that any problems that might have developed can be treated promptly and effectively. Early detection of a wide range of conditions can make a real difference to the long term health of your pet. We can also discuss any problems that may be concerning *you* about your pet's health such as lumps and bumps or stiff joints, and also advise you on diets and flea and worm control.

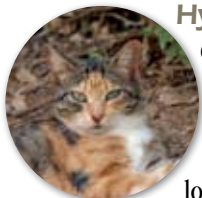
Don't take any risks with your pet's wellbeing! Keep them healthy with regular vaccinations and health checks. Please contact us for an appointment today!

Thyroid disease – is your pet affected?

MOST of us have heard of the thyroid gland, but did you know that thyroid problems are surprisingly common in pets?

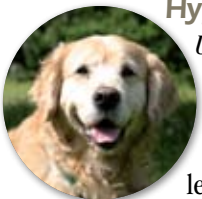
The thyroid gland consists of two lobes, located on either side of the trachea (windpipe) in the neck – see diagram. The thyroid gland produces thyroid hormone which regulates your pet's metabolic rate. Too much thyroid hormone speeds up the body's metabolism, whilst too little slows it down.

Hyperthyroidism in cats



Over production of thyroid hormone is called *hyper*-thyroidism and is a relatively common condition in cats over eight years of age. In the majority of cases this is caused by benign (non-cancerous) enlargement of one or both thyroid lobes. Hyperthyroid cats typically have an increased appetite, but *despite* this show signs of weight loss, and often become quite unkempt in appearance. In addition, excess thyroid hormone usually increases the heart rate, frequently causing heart problems. As well as the above, a variety of other signs may be seen including hyperactivity, vomiting and diarrhoea. However the good news is that in the majority of cases, hyperthyroidism can be successfully treated. If you are concerned your cat may be hyperthyroid, come and see us for a check-up.

Hypothyroidism in dogs



Under production of thyroid hormone is called *hypo*thyroidism, and is a relatively common condition in the older dog. Lowered production of thyroid hormone leads to a decrease in the metabolic rate, usually leading to weight gain (with no increased appetite) and generalised lethargy. Other signs often include coat problems, and recurrent skin and ear infections.

Diagnosis of hypothyroidism can be more tricky, but in confirmed cases, daily treatment with oral thyroid supplements can be very successful in treating this condition.

As you can see, thyroid conditions are relatively common in pets, but the really good news is that with an appropriate diagnosis, *both* conditions are very treatable. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you are concerned that your pet is showing any of the signs described above!

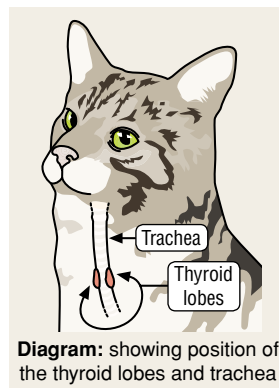


Diagram: showing position of the thyroid lobes and trachea