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CLINIC HOURS

Consultations are by appointment during the following hours:

Monday to Friday: 9 – 11:30am and
 2 – 4.30pm

Saturday: 9am – 11am

Sunday: Closed

After hour emergencies – at night, on weekends and Public Holidays – will be attended by the rostered Vet from this practice. Call the main clinic number and a recorded message will direct you.



YOUR VET

AUTUMN 2021

FREE!

In this edition we talk about...



CAT, THIS IS DOG.
 DOG, THIS IS CAT.



SHOCKING
 TRAINING TOOLS



BAIT PESTS,
 NOT PETS



FISH MAKE
 GOOD PETS TOO

The truth about brachycephalic breeds

Brachycephalic breeds may be cuddly and cute, but severe health issues are compromising their wellbeing.

Brachycephalic animals are those that have been bred to have unnaturally shortened skulls in order to create a flat-faced appearance. The shortened facial and nose bones change the animal's anatomy, which can cause physical problems.

These breeds include dogs such as pugs, bulldogs and Boston terriers, cats, like Persians, and rabbits such as the Netherland dwarf. These breeds have become increasingly popular, mainly because people find their squashed faces cute. They also tend to be small and have sweet temperaments.

Some brachycephalic breeds may not encounter obvious health issues, but the reality is that with their facial structure, they're at high risk of Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome (BOAS).

WHAT IS BOAS?

This term refers to abnormalities that lead to varying degrees of airway dysfunction and obstruction in Brachycephalic breeds.

An animal with BOAS may have a combination of these conditions:

- An underdeveloped windpipe (hypoplastic trachea) which restricts air intake to the lungs.
- The palate (the soft part of the roof of the mouth) is longer or thicker than normal, which blocks the windpipe's opening.
- Narrowed nostrils (stenotic nares) due to cartilage malformation, restrict air intake through the nose.
- Excess soft tissues (everted laryngeal sacculles) located inside their airways can obstruct airflow.

BOAS can affect your pet's life in many ways. Their compromised airways can lead to fainting and collapsing. They can suffer from chronic sleep deprivation. They can find exercising an effort and overheat easily, sometimes resulting in death.



Brachycephalic breeds may struggle to breathe on a daily basis – similar to the sensation of being suffocated.

BOAS can also cause secondary complications such as hernias, vomiting, and irreversible heart damage.

QUALITY OF LIFE AND WELFARE

Brachycephalic animals can also suffer dental problems because their jaws and teeth are deformed. They may find it difficult to pick up and eat food. Bulging eyes and wrinkly facial skin can lead to eye trauma and an increased risk of skin issues.

Their quality of life can be poor, which is why organisations in many countries are calling for change.

Many organisations such as the Australian RSPCA, the SPCA in New Zealand, and the British Veterinary Association are doing their best to educate owners and highlight ways to improve brachycephalic breeds' health and welfare.

Here in Australia, the RSPCA and Australian Veterinary Association promote the 'love is blind' campaign, which raises awareness of the health problems caused by exaggerated physical features in certain breeds.

If you own a brachycephalic pet, consult your veterinarian for ways you can ensure your pet is happy and healthy. As a prospective pet owner, you can do your part by considering the welfare of these animals before making a decision to purchase.



Our newsletter is free! You can take a copy with you.

Keeping fish as pets

Not everyone has the time or space for dogs and cats, but that doesn't mean you have to give up on owning a pet altogether. In fact, several ornamental fish species can brighten up your home while filling that pet ownership void. But which ones make the best pets?

It's a good idea to start with a few hardy, low-maintenance species.



TETRAS

These hardy, non-aggressive fish are ideal for first-time fish owners. You don't need a large tank, and you can keep several together.



CROWNTAIL BETTA

Not only are they beautiful, but these fish are low maintenance and can live in nearly any aquatic setup.



GUPPIES

From their small size to their vibrant colouring, it's no wonder guppies are so popular. They're also extremely adaptable to various tank environments.



MOLLY

While they aren't as colourful as other ornamental fish varieties, molly fish are still lovable. They're gentle fish and may require supervision in community tanks, as other species could bully them.



How to introduce a dog and cat

Many people would like to own more than one pet, but the thought of introducing a cat and dog to each other can seem a little daunting.

Despite the stereotype that cats and dogs are arch enemies, they can live together in harmony. It just takes hard work, patience and consistency. Here are five tips to consider.

1. PROVIDE A DOG-FREE SPACE

If you're introducing a cat to your dog, having a dog-free zone may help them settle in with less stress. While the room doesn't need to be large, it should have a secure door and necessities such as food, water, and a litter box. Toys, hiding places and tunnels can also make your new furry friend feel safer.

2. KEEP YOUR CAT AND DOG SEPARATE

Whether you're welcoming a new cat or dog to your home, keep them separate for the first few days. This gives them both a chance to get used to the smells and sounds of each other, but without the sometimes-overwhelming face-to-face contact.

3. FEED THEM TOGETHER – BUT APART

Consider feeding your cat and dog on opposite sides of a door. With each meal, move their bowls closer to the door until they can eat comfortably next to it.

4. CARRY OUT A CONTROLLED MEETING

Once your pets are happy eating near each other in separate rooms, conduct a face-to-face meeting in a common area of your home. Keep your dog on a leash and let your cat move around freely.

Ask your dog to sit, and reward them with treats for calm behaviour. If you notice signs of aggression, distract them until you can put them back into their confined areas. Repeat these controlled meetings daily, but end them before any animosity or stress starts to show.

5. CARRY OUT A FREE MEETING

Keep your dog's leash clipped onto them so that you pick it up at a moment's notice. After several days of on-leash meet and greets, you may feel comfortable letting your dog move without a leash. Make sure your cat has access to a dog-free space during this meeting.

If your dog attempts to run at your cat, go back to controlled meetings and work your way back up to free meetings.

Introducing a new pet to your family can take planning and effort, but it's achievable. Talk to your vet about tips and tricks they recommend before beginning the introduction process.



A 'shocking' method of training dogs

Electric shock dog collars are now banned in many countries and some parts of Australia. The Australian Veterinary Association does not support their use. Do you know why?

Electric shock collars – also called e-collars and training collars – are behaviour-modifying tools designed to deliver an electric shock to a dog's neck. There are three different types to achieve different outcomes: manual collars, anti-bark collars, and containment devices.

Manual collars work with a wireless remote to deliver a shock at the touch of a button and are often used as a training aid. They can be set at different intensity levels, which means they rely on the restraint of the operator.

Anti-bark collars, as the name suggests, are for stopping a dog barking. These collars have a vibration sensor that detects barking and produces an electric shock. Barking is normal dog behaviour, but problematic barking may have underlying causes which won't be addressed by shocking them.

Containment devices act like invisible fences around a property's perimeter to keep a dog inside. The dog's collar often produces a warning noise to let them know they're getting close, followed by a shock if they cross that boundary. However some dogs will endure the shock if they're desperate to escape.

While these devices might achieve a result of obedience initially, scientific literature shows they can cause pain, fear, long-term stress, anxiety, reduced motivation, aggression, and helplessness. Owners may discover problematic behaviours increase, rather than decrease; and an unhappy and unmanageable relationship with their dog can result.

Inflicting pain and distress from electric collars, when alternative training techniques are available, is difficult to understand. Research shows that rewards-based positive reinforcement training is more effective than punishment-based methods. It can also build a relationship of trust, rather than fear.

If you're trying to tackle problematic behaviour and general training, make an appointment with your local vet. They can advise you on the most beneficial course of action for you and your dog.

WORD SEARCH

F S J M B O C B R A C H Y C E P H A L I C T E H
 N N D B T X A Y I J E G J O N Y F W J Y H B H X
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ADAPTABLE GUPPIES
 AGGRESSION HYPERTENSION
 ANXIETY LEASH
 AQUARIUM METALDEHYDE
 BARKING METHIOCARB
 BEHAVIOUR OXYGEN
 BOAS PERSIANS
 BRACHYCEPHALIC RSPCA
 CAT SHOCKING
 DEMENTIA SNAIL
 DOG STRESS
 DROOLING TETRAS
 FATAL TOXIC
 FISH VOCAL
 FURRY WINDPIPE

Tips for fish ownership

1. Check ownership rules in your state. Not all fish species are permitted throughout Australia.
2. Do as much research on their unique needs as possible.
3. Keep good quality water in their tank or pond.
4. Don't mix aggressive and passive fish.
5. Be careful not to overfeed your fish.
6. Don't overcrowd your tank.
7. Don't release aquarium fish into the environment.

If you've got the space for a suitable tank or aquarium setup, fish could make excellent pets for you. Make sure you do your homework before deciding on the best species to welcome into your home.

Dealing with dementia

It's estimated that over 400,000 Australians have dementia, but did you know our pets do too?

Quality veterinary treatment means our pets are living longer, fuller lives. With longer lives comes age-related conditions such as dementia. Also known as cognitive dysfunction, this condition causes behavioural changes in pets.

Dementia is common in older dogs and cats and is similar to Alzheimer's in humans.

Often, the signs are mistaken as being part of normal ageing – but in recognising and understanding these behaviours, you can help your pet. It's not a curable condition, but it is one you can manage as you navigate your pet's senior years.

DEMENTIA IN DOGS

Disorientation is one of the most common signs. Your elderly dog may become lost in familiar places, forget their routines, wander aimlessly, get lost in corners or behind doors, not recognise familiar people, or fail to respond to commands.

It's also worth looking out for other abnormal activity in your dog – such as less interest in play, reduced response to stimulus, and changes to their sociability and sleeping patterns.

Dementia can also affect toileting behaviour; if your elderly dog starts soiling indoors it may indicate forgetfulness about where to toilet, or when to signal their need to go.

Some dogs may also start barking, howling and whining, which is out of character. They may also display repetitive behaviour such as pacing or licking. This behaviour may indicate anxiety due to brain changes outside of your dog's control.

DEMENTIA IN CATS

Your cat may wander away from home, stare blankly at walls, become indifferent to food and water, lack interest in playing, sleep excessively, and change their toileting habits. Some cats can also become far more vocal than is normal for them.

Some of these symptoms are also associated with physical conditions, rather than dementia. For example, kidney failure can cause changes in toileting habits, while excessive vocalisation is common in cats with hypertension.

Keep your litter boxes in accessible places, and avoid bringing other animals into the house that could increase your cat's stress levels.

LOOK FOR THE SIGNS

As your pet ages, it's essential to look out for dementia signs. If you believe your pet is suffering from cognitive dysfunction, seek veterinary care to rule out any other conditions first. If your pet does have dementia your vet may recommend a special diet, practical toileting tips, and appropriate routines and exercise.

The aim is to provide advice on the best ways to help manage and ensure your pet gets the best quality of life.

Pet safety around slug and snail bait

Right about now, Australian gardeners are arming themselves with bait, getting ready to stop snails and slugs in their tracks.

While this is one of the most effective ways to take care of these pesky creatures, it's essential to make sure you've got your pets' safety in mind. Slug and snail bait can be fatal for cats and dogs, and even brands marketed as 'pet-friendly' can make animals unwell.

IDENTIFYING SLUG AND SNAIL BAIT

Whether you plan to lay some bait or you suspect that someone else has, identify what it is you're dealing with. There are three primary slug and snail bait types: metaldehyde (green pellets), methiocarb (blue pellets), and iron EDTA (brown/yellow/red pellets).

Metaldehyde and methiocarb are two of the most toxic varieties. While some contain a bitterant to prevent animals from tasting it, that's not always enough to deter a curious pet. If swallowed, these types of bait can affect their nervous system and cause death.

Iron EDTA is marketed as pet-safe bait but can lead to vomiting and diarrhoea if eaten in large amounts. The iron can also cause damage to the liver, spleen, brain, kidney, and heart.

IF YOU SUSPECT POISONING

If you think your pet has eaten bait, immediate vet care is essential. If you can, bring the packaging so your veterinarian knows what type it is. Your vet may begin by helping your pet vomit up the pellets. Some cases may require an anaesthetic in order to have their stomach flushed out and be given an enema. Your pet may also receive IV fluids and medications.

KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE

If you must use bait, lay it in an area that slugs and snails can access, but your pets can't. Consider natural pest deterrents instead, like coffee grounds and garlic spray. Slugs and snails like to hide under things such as boards or pots – simply flip these over to remove and dispose of them each morning.

As snail and slug season kicks off, vigilance is essential. If you suspect your pet has ingested any bait, seek emergency vet care.



STARTING 2021 WITH A SMILE :)

We would like to thank all our amazing clients for a wonderful 2020! Although we had our ups and downs with the COVID pandemic and many changes were made in the way we live our lives, we were blessed at Moorong Vet Clinic to have beautiful clients who made a difficult time for everyone a lot easier. Thankyou!

Moving into 2021 we hope everyone had a great break and holiday period, whether you stayed at home with loved ones or travelled around locally. The new year is already in full swing with clinic bookings reaching an all time high. Working together as a team we are encouraging all clients to book their appointments as far in advance as possible to allow the opportunity to get the best available appointment for their pets needs.

We look forward to working and growing together in the 2021 year :)

WEBSITE UPDATE

Have you visited our new website recently? We have re-vamped our page to include all the mod-cons we're used to in this ever-changing technological world. You can make an appointment via our online booking page 24/7. You can have a sneak peak at who our current staff are and what they like to do when they're not busy saving our patient's lives. Our most recent addition to this convenient one stop website is the introduction of our 'Prescription Medication Requests' page. If your animal is on regular prescription medications, you can now jump on to our website www.moorongveterinaryclinic.com.au and fill out the 'Prescription Medication Requests' page. We strive to process these requests within 24 hours but may take up to 48 hours. When your request has been approved, a text message is sent to you to notify you your prescription is ready to be picked up. Please note; as part of the Prescribing Laws veterinarians are governed by, we must have examined your pet within the last 12 months to be able to approve the continued supply of the medications being requested.

SMS UPDATE

We have recently set up a sms reminder system to assist with our appointment schedule. Please ask our friendly reception team to double check your contact details when visiting next so we can assure that the correct people are receiving the reminders and to assist you in the future for all your appointment needs.

QR SCANNER

Moving into the 2021 year and with all of us learning to live with COVID precautions in our lives. We have recently set up a COVID QR scanner at the clinic. There are currently three scanning options, one outside on the front table with our provided hand sanitiser, and two in reception on both sides of the desk. We ask all clients to please use these scanners when visiting our clinic, whether it is an outdoor consult or just picking up prescriptions. Thankyou for working together with us!

SIGNS OF SLUG + SNAIL BAIT POISONING IN YOUR PET

- anxiety and panting
- rapid heart rate
- excessive drooling
- muscle tremors, twitching and restlessness
- vomiting and diarrhoea
- seizures

Appointment reminder

Ask our receptionist to record details of your next visit. Take this newsletter home and keep it somewhere handy as a reminder. Help us to help you keep your pets happy and healthy.

PET NAME	DATE	TIME

- Annual check up
- Follow up examination
- Vaccination
- Worming
- Flea/tick treatment

Disclaimer: The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only, and is not intended as a substitute for sound health care advice. We are not liable for any adverse effects or consequences resulting from the use of any information, suggestions, or procedures presented. Always consult a qualified professional in all matters pertaining to your pet health.

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