



## OUR VETS

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## CLINIC HOURS

Consultations are by appointment during the following hours:

**Monday to Friday:** 9.00 – 11:30am and  
 2.00 – 4.30pm

**Saturday:** 9.00 – 11.00am

**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

SPRING 2021

FREE!

In this edition we talk about...



THE SIGNS OF  
 CHERRY EYE



HOW TO BE  
 FUR BALL FREE



THE IMPORTANCE  
 OF DENTAL CARE



FLEA BITE  
 ALLERGIES

## Do you know your doggy's doo?

You pay attention to what goes in, but are you inspecting what comes out?

Just as you would pay attention to your own bowel movements to determine your state of health, it pays to do the same with your pets. Ok, you may not like the thought of that... but any changes in their faeces could signal a health problem that requires a trip to see your vet.

### DETERMINING WHAT'S NORMAL

Even though every dog's 'output' is unique, they do share some common features. To notice any changes requires you to know what a healthy stool looks like.

**Colour:** the ideal colour is best described as chocolate brown (apologies to all chocolate lovers!). If you're feeding your dog something with added colours, you may notice extra colouring.

**Shape:** a healthy stool is log-shaped and maintains its form.

**Consistency:** a normal dog stool should be moist, compact, and easy to pick up.

**Size:** the size can depend on how much, and what food they consume. A diet with high fibre content can cause larger stools.

### WHAT'S NOT NORMAL

Once you can set a baseline for what's normal, you can be on the lookout for any of the following stool types:

**White and chalky:** dogs with white, chalky faeces may be eating raw foods with too much bone or calcium. They can be at risk of

severe constipation. If you're unsure about how to rectify the problem, speak to one of our vets.

**Signs of blood:** if you notice that your dog has black and tarry faeces, it could mean there's old blood in the digestive system. Fresh blood – with any stool consistency – indicates recent bleeding. Both can be signs of a serious condition such as cancer, or a gastrointestinal tract injury. Seek immediate treatment from your vet.

**Grey and greasy:** has your dog been eating a lot of fatty treats? Their waste can look grey and greasy as a result. Too much fat in their diet can lead to inflammation of the pancreas, known as pancreatitis.

**Mucous:** your dog's waste may be soft with a thick coating of mucous. This could indicate parasites or an intestinal infection. It could also be sensitivity to an ingredient, or a reaction to something unusual they've eaten.

**Runny:** many things can cause dogs to experience diarrhoea, such as food intolerances, diet changes, infections, and parasites. However, it can also signal more serious issues such as gastrointestinal tumours, irritable bowel syndrome, and ulcerative colitis.

By feeding your dog a high-quality vet diet, you may be able to avoid many potential dietary digestion problems.

If you notice changes in your dog's bowel movements that don't correct themselves within 1-2 days, contact the clinic for advice.



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

## A diet fit for a duck

There are few better ways to spend time with family than a trip to the park to feed the ducks. But could you be making them ill?

One of the first things you might grab as you head out to feed the ducks is a bag of bread. You may have been saving up the crusts for this very occasion. However, according to many bird and wildlife experts, bread isn't a healthy option for any wildlife.

### WHY IS BREAD BAD?

According to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, white bread has no real nutritional value for ducks. Filling up on high-carbohydrate food from human visitors can result in deficiencies that affect their immune systems. As a result, they may be more susceptible to calluses, infections, and bowed feet.

It can also cause a wing deformity known as angel wing, which can prevent them from flying and prove fatal.

Additionally, uneaten breadcrumbs can attract predators, which is dangerous for ducks that have become too trusting of humans to use their natural instincts.

Rotting bread can grow mould which can make wildlife sick; and also contributes to harmful algal bloom and cyanobacteria growth in the water.



Wild ducks eat a variety of natural foods such as aquatic plants, grasses, fish and insects.

### WHAT CAN YOU FEED DUCKS?

On your next family outing, you can still gather a bag of treats for the ducks. There are many alternative options available which you may already have in your home.

- Defrosted peas and corn (uncooked)
- Chopped salad leaves
- Duck pellets or birdseed
- Grapes (cut in half)
- Mealworms, earthworms
- Wheat, barley, oats or similar grains
- Vegetable peels (chopped)

Just because bread is off the menu for your local duck population, it doesn't mean your trips to see them have to stop. Arm yourself with some healthy options instead. If you're unsure what's safe for ducks to eat, contact your local animal health expert.

## Could your pet be allergic to flea bites?

Flea bite hypersensitivity is a strong reaction to the bite of the flea. It can affect many animals, including cats and dogs. If you suspect that your pet is allergic to flea bites, it's essential to act fast to save them from this distressing condition.

Flea bites are an uncomfortable experience for any pet, but can be even more so if they're hypersensitive and develop flea allergy dermatitis (FAD). Studies have pointed to the allergenic proteins in flea saliva as the cause. FAD is a common skin condition, particularly in dogs.

### HOW TO SPOT FLEA PROBLEMS

Fleas are not just seasonal; they can be a year-round problem, so you need to check your pet regularly. This usually involves sitting your pet down and using a flea comb to identify fleas or flea dirt.

If you don't notice any fleas, that doesn't mean your pet hasn't been affected by them. The saliva of just one or two fleas can make them miserable, itchy and uncomfortable for weeks. Your pet may constantly chew, lick and scratch themselves, which can lead to inflamed, infected areas of skin that are painful and sensitive.

Odd behaviour in your cat, such as a frenzied skin attack, could signal flea allergy. They may also suddenly become hyperactive – like they're trying to escape from something.

Even if you're proactive in grooming and removing fleas and flea dirt, the allergic reaction can remain long after the fleas have gone.

### TREATMENT

Treatment can vary based on the severity of the reaction and how many fleas there are – treating the fleas will alleviate the allergic reaction, but it may take time. Your vet can also offer advice on how to keep your pet and their environment free of fleas.

If you notice any signs of itchiness, rashes and hair loss; or just general discomfort and restlessness in your pet, make an appointment at the clinic. We can help you get to the root of the problem – whether it's fleas or something else.



### HANDY HINT

Combing your pet over a light-coloured mat or towel can help you spot fleas and flea dirt.

## Freeing your feline from fur balls

It's alarming and disgusting and could make you leap out of bed in the middle of the night when you hear it – it's the sound and sight of your cat ejecting a fur ball! Read on to find out what causes them, and how they might be prevented.

Despite the name, fur balls (or hair balls) are usually cylindrical, slimy clumps of fur that typically resemble the colour of the cat that coughed them up. While most cats experience an occasional fur ball, frequent ones are not normal and the cause should be investigated.

### CAUSES OF FUR BALLS

Cats that have long hair and shed a lot, and those who groom themselves excessively can ingest large volumes of hair. While cats are capable of excreting a little, it's not uncommon for some of it to remain in their stomach and eventually be vomited up.

Excessive hair ingestion is not the only cause – poor-quality food and a moisture-deficient diet may also be to blame.

There may be more serious issues that can make your cat prone to hair balls, such as gastroenteritis, intestinal valve problems and cancer. If your cat is lethargic with a low appetite, and is frequently vomiting or dry-retching, they should be examined by a veterinarian immediately.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT FUR BALLS

Firstly, see your vet to find out the cause of fur balls and advice on managing them. While you can't always prevent them, there are certainly things you can do to reduce how often they occur.

You may be able to combat the problem by brushing and combing your cat regularly. Changing their diet could also help.

Your vet may recommend a specific gastrointestinal food that supports a healthy skin and coat, while addressing the fur problem. They may also advise on appropriate sources of fibre to aid your cat's digestive system; or supplements to help improve their skin and fur condition.

If you're concerned about any issues your cat is experiencing with fur balls, speak to one of our staff. It's important to rule out any potentially serious conditions.



# WORD SEARCH

ALLERGY  
BACTERIA  
BLINDNESS  
BLOOD  
CATS  
COLITIS  
CONSTIPATION  
DISEASE  
DUCK  
FAD  
FAECES  
FIBRE  
FLEAS  
FURBALLS  
GINGIVITIS  
GLAND  
GROOM  
HAIR  
INFLAMMATION  
LETHARGIC  
MEMBRANE  
ORAL  
PANCREAS  
PERIODONTITIS  
SLIMY  
SYSTEMIC  
TARRY  
TARTAR  
VETERINARIAN  
VOMITING

M W J N X E M Z Y C L T A R R Y L O M S N Q A B  
V Z G D N D L G S C O N S T I P A T I O N T F K  
X J U N R I Z E W K D W K C U D F U O B H R N V  
N E P A J Y H Z T I I P H M E M B R A N E B A Y  
J T C L D I L A B H D O O L B O L E D D M N N U  
A A X G A Q U P I G A I G H M E E R B J U P O D  
E R W F H I B H G R D R Z V O M I T I N G T S S  
T T S V V N A S W H L A G X Y X M U E K D G E F  
Y A E P Y O C L V G I N G I V I T I S R R B E E  
R R Q I N I T I X A M D A F C R G Y Q Y B R P W  
L P J J P T E M F R E H M F N V S D G B V I G Q  
A S Z S Z A R Y Z K N A I R A N I R E T E V F E  
J V E L I M I B T O J A X D I S E A S E O T J B  
K P Z L W M A T F S E O Y V I L N Q K G M D D A  
I U Q A Q A Z W M W C G E N L T O G F H R F Z K  
L N J B X L U P N K T N P A N C R E A S W O T D  
S E P R Y F R F F F K F Z B R S U T Q C U G O P  
Y Z J U G N H I A L V Y Q S H Y I U S O X P B M  
S M C F X I T E I P E R I O D O N T I T I S Y J  
T Q N Q R K C V N P P A H H S Z J Z I W A D F V  
E C Q N F E U U U C V Y S O S W O Z O L C A N A  
M C F H S U X Q I M V D M E K D E R O A O E Z T  
I Q R U L M R F B L I N D N E S S P A E F C A C  
C D E S T P M Z N L B X C C A T S H P L J U N F

## Taking care of your pet's teeth could save their life!

When was the last time you looked in your pet's mouth? Failure to consider their oral health may have consequences. Even though bad breath and tartar-covered teeth may not seem like a big deal, they can lead to serious health conditions.

**Good oral health is just as important for your pet as it is for your family**

A number of studies have determined that periodontitis (serious gum disease) and other oral infections may be contributing factors for systemic diseases – which means those that affect the whole body. These can include diseases of the kidney, liver, lung, and heart.

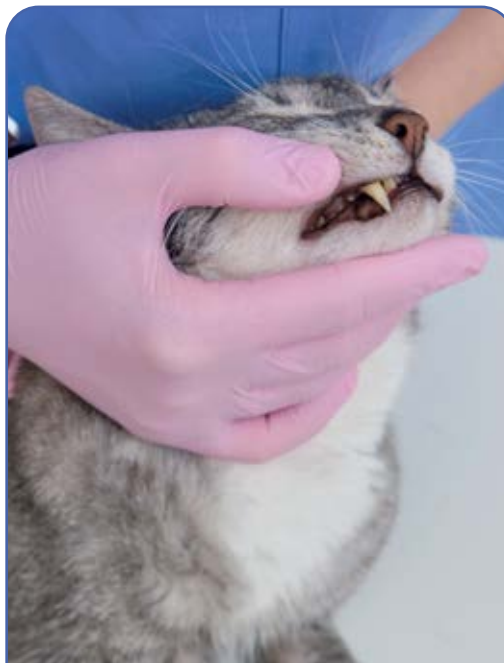
### HOW DISEASE STARTS FROM TEETH

Plaque that isn't removed from your pet's teeth hardens around the gum line and teeth, causing discolouration and irritated gums. That irritation can turn into inflammation, and a condition called gingivitis. You may notice signs of gingivitis if your pet's gums are red rather than pink, and their breath smells.

The longer the tartar is left there, the worse the condition may get. Eventually, the

gums may start to pull away from the teeth and provide an opportunity for bacteria to get in. At this stage, your pet may be at risk of periodontal disease that results in infections, abscesses, bone loss, and loose teeth.

As the gums break down, bacteria can be absorbed into your pet's bloodstream, putting major organs at risk of infection – unfortunately their immune system may not be strong enough to fight it.



Researchers are beginning to form a connection between some oral bacteria strains and the onset of heart disease. Some of these strains can promote blood clot formation leading to heart damage, while others can cause thickening of the artery walls.

**Bad breath isn't normal!**

**Fortunately, the journey from poor oral health to systemic disease is not a fast one – you can do many things to reduce the risk of more serious problems.**

### KEEPING YOUR PET'S TEETH HEALTHY

It's advisable to get your pet a thorough oral examination and clean. Vets can rectify any existing issues and alert you to any potential issues before they get worse.

Preventative measures are essential. Ask us about vet-quality food, dental chews, and recreational bones that promote healthy teeth and gums. We can also advise you on brushing your pet's teeth; and how to check for problems, such as loose teeth and inflammation.

Regular veterinary oral check-ups for your pet helps safeguard their overall health

# Look out for signs of cherry eye

All dogs have three eyelids: the upper and lower lids and a third eyelid called a nictitating membrane. If you notice a red bump or protrusion in the corner of the eye involving this eyelid, a vet visit may be essential to prevent complications.

## WHAT DOES THE THIRD EYELID DO?

The third eyelid consists of a thin, opaque tissue that sits in the corner of each eye, below the lower lid. It's vital for keeping the cornea clean and protected, and helping fight infection. Also, it contains a lacrimal gland that helps produce tears.

## WHAT IS CHERRY EYE?

The lacrimal gland is usually invisible and held in place, but if a prolapse occurs, you may notice it showing as red, irritated tissue in the corner of one or both of your dog's eyes.

It's commonly described as cherry eye, but your vet may also refer to it as a prolapsed lacrimal gland. It's important to maintain this gland's function for your dog's eye to self-lubricate. The exposed gland can become

quite inflamed and irritated and can lead to your pet rubbing their eyes and causing secondary infections.

## TREATMENT

As soon as you notice this in your dog, seek veterinary help promptly. If caught early enough, cherry eye may be treated with non-surgical measures such as topical compresses and eye drops to control the inflammation. These measures may help to keep the gland in place.

However, if this doesn't work, your vet may recommend surgery to place the lacrimal gland back into its normal position. The success of surgery may not be evident for several weeks until the inflammation settles and sometimes further surgery may be necessary.

Without treatment, cherry eye is a serious condition that could lead to further complications. If you notice any changes in your dog's eyes, including unusual redness, make an appointment with us as soon as possible.



## 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

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual check up       | <input type="checkbox"/> Vaccination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Follow up examination | <input type="checkbox"/> Worming     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flea/tick treatment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other       |

**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.



## ARRGGHH THE SPRINGTIME ITCHIES

Just like us, pets can get seasonal allergies which have to be managed, as unless testing and desensitisation is undertaken (a specialist procedure) they cannot be cured. Spring is the most common time for itchy allergic skin that drives pets, and us, crazy. The licking, the slobbering, the constant noise of scratching at 2am. Most dogs start itching between 1-3 years old and get worse each year. Seasonal allergies only occur when the allergen is in the environment.

Most seasonal allergies are due to grass and pollens, and can cause runny eyes and sneezing as well as itchy skin and ear infections.

### What can we do about it?

1. Always use a good quality flea treatment such as NexGuard monthly, as allergic dogs can be super allergic to fleas.
2. If you know your dog is itchy sometimes, feeding a good quality food and an omega three fatty acid such as fish oil daily, will help improve the skin barrier year round. The Hills Skin Support food can be very helpful as it contains everything needed for healthy skin.
3. Minimising contact with allergens is useful, so bath the dog weekly in a low allergy shampoo, minimise contact with grass if grass is a problem, vacuum regularly to reduce pollen on floors and dog beds, and don't open windows on high pollen days to reduce pollen in the house.

If the itching is out of control, a visit to the vet is needed. We can supply creams for mild conditions, anti-allergy injections that relieve itching for a month, or corticosteroids if absolutely necessary. We can also check to ensure that there is not a secondary infection that is adding to the itchiness.

## THE WAGGA FLEA CIRCUS

Warm spring weather means blood sucking parasites! Fleas! Fleas are reddish brown, about 4mm long and can jump 20 cm! Fleas hatch from thousands of eggs laid last autumn, once the weather warms up. Up to 90% of fleas live in the environment but they need a blood meal before they breed. They hang out in the grass and jump onto Fido or Fluffy for a quick snack. You might not see any fleas (even though your pet has fleas) because they are very small and very fast. Instead look for flea Poo, particularly around the tail base. Flea poo looks like dark specks. Place these specks on a damp white tissue and flea poo will be reddish old blood colour because that is what it is!

Fleas transmit tapeworms, so if your dog or cat has fleas, don't just kill the fleas, we need to deworm the pet as well! Also, note that flea shampoos and many flea collars are basically useless. They might stun the fleas but they certainly won't get rid of them.

Talk to our vets & nurses about flea prevention as one flea can lay 40 eggs every day. That's a huge flea circus in a very short space of time!

## WELCOME CHAYSE

Chayse grew up on a sheep farm in Bathurst, NSW. She was fortunate enough to be surrounded by pets; ranging from dogs, cats, rabbits, horses and birds, through to poddy calves, lambs, kids and joeys. She says, "I have wanted to be a vet for longer than I can remember and am so excited to finally be here doing what I love!"

Chayse's hobbies include: gardening, camping, cooking and team sports – both competitively and socially, particularly hockey, AFL and touch football. She also enjoys long-distance running and has two kelpies which accompany her everywhere she goes.

Welcome to the Moorong Vet Team Chayse!

*Our newsletter is free! Take a copy with you.*