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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

SUMMER 2020/21

FREE!

In this edition we talk about...



**DOG SAFE
 SUMMER TIPS**



**DENTAL CARE
 FOR CATS**



**TRAINING
 YOUR DOG**



**HOW HEAVY IS
 TOO HEAVY?**

Questions to ask your vet

Have you ever made a mental note of a list of questions to ask your veterinarian, only to forget what they are as soon as you arrive?

Whether it's your pet's crazy antics or a busy clinic, it's easy to forget the important things you've been meaning to bring up. However, these are some common questions that can be worth asking during your pet's consultation.

HOW IS MY PET'S WEIGHT?

A little treat or snack from time to time is a delight for any pet, but how do you know if it's affecting their weight?

Most vets will weigh pets at their check-up appointment. Find out what the normal, healthy weight range is for your pet, and whether there are any changes you can make to ensure they remain within it.

According to studies involving pets across Australia, nearly half of dogs and a third of cats in Australia are now classed as obese or overweight. Obesity can lead to medical concerns like skin problems, liver and heart disease, back problems, and osteoarthritis.

HOW DO I LOOK AFTER THEIR TEETH AND GUMS?

Every animal is different, but cats and dogs are not much different from us in terms of dental health. They can develop periodontal disease if you don't maintain

their teeth and gums. Pets can hide their pain, but you can notice signs of poor oral hygiene such as rotting teeth, a loss of appetite, and smelly breath.

Your vet will look for signs of any problems at their check-up and can advise on what you need to do next, if anything.

WHAT SHOULD I FEED MY PET?

It can be easy to get overwhelmed by the pet food offerings on the market. There are so many options to choose from! Given that every breed is different, check with your vet about the best food choices for their unique makeup.

What works for your pet may not work for someone else's, and vice-versa. Your pet's dietary needs can also change as they age. So, it's worth asking this question at various points throughout their life.

I'VE NOTICED SOME UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR – IS THIS NORMAL?

If your pet has started to display some odd behaviour, don't assume it's a new personality trait or quirkiness. Any new behaviour could be a sign of an underlying issue that might need addressing. Mention any changes to your vet and see if they have any recommendations.

If you have any pressing questions about your pet at your next vet appointment, then don't be afraid to ask them. You may even like to write them down so that you don't forget!



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

Are you on top of your cat's dental health?

While we're busy focusing on plenty of pats, cuddles, toys, and food, it's easy to miss dental problems.

Every day, your feline friends use their teeth for eating, grooming, hunting, biting, and more. It goes without saying that such a heavily-used feature can be at risk of problems from any age.

HALITOSIS

A common complaint from cat owners is bad breath. Halitosis can signify a range of problems, such as an infected mass or periodontal disease. It can also be a side effect of serious conditions like kidney disease or diabetes.

PERIODONTAL DISEASE

Out of all health issues, periodontal disease is the number one medical condition diagnosed in cats. This condition starts as tartar and plaque build-up that spreads below the gum line and causes inflammation and infection. It can then lead to tooth loss.

TOOTH RESORPTION

While periodontal disease is common, it's not the only oral health concern that cats

"Cats have baby teeth which are replaced with adult teeth during the first six months of life"

face. Tooth resorption affects up to three-quarters of cats over the age of five.

This condition occurs when, for unknown reasons, the cat's body begins breaking down the dentin in their teeth. It can occur in one tooth or more, and requires extraction to alleviate pain and discomfort.

STOMATITIS

Stomatitis is a common oral health condition, but that doesn't make it any less comfortable for your four-legged friend! This condition causes ulceration or inflammation of gum, cheek, and tongue tissue lining.

However, Dr Dyson also found that the results of the studies are influenced by many variable factors. These include: saddle suitability and fit, rider height, skill and posture, and load and weight distribution. The horse's strength, age, breed, fitness, and injury history can all play a part, as can terrain, duration, and intensity of work.

This means that no reliable formula has yet been determined in establishing an optimum weight ratio between riders and horses; however the pilot study may pave the way for more in-depth understanding of the factors and what issues could be worth exploring further.

It's widely recognised that inappropriate rider size has health implications for horses, but by taking into consideration all the factors involved, the rider can ensure that the horses' welfare remains paramount.

Too heavy for horses

Horses don't come with load limits, so how are you supposed to know if you're too heavy to ride them? The answer is not as straightforward as you might think.

To date, no scientific studies have been conducted in real-life conditions to establish ideal rider size to horse ratios. However research is ongoing into finding out what evidence-based guidelines could be applied to the equine industry.

Dr Sue Dyson, a world-renowned expert in equine orthopaedics, led the landmark pilot study in 2018, addressing the effects of rider weight on equine performance. The results showed that a high rider-to-horse weight ratio can cause temporary lameness, with possible long-term outcomes of chronic back pain and permanent lameness.



Look out for reddened, inflamed mouths, a loss of appetite, and discomfort at having their mouth touched. The best response to stomatitis is surgical cleaning and removal of the affected teeth and tissue.

FRACTURES

A fractured tooth can result in painful root exposure – not to mention facial swelling, infection, and abscesses. A trip to the vet is necessary for extraction or root canals.

Has it been some time since your cat has had a check-up? Make a booking with your local vet clinic today, and stay on top of your feline friend's oral health.

Don't use your car as a kennel

As the mercury rises across Australia, pet owners are being reminded not to leave their dogs in vehicles. The Australian Veterinary Association advises how dangerous this is.

The temperature inside stationary vehicles can quickly exceed outside temperatures – even with the windows opened a little – with devastating results.

Hyperthermia, which is the elevation of a dog's core body temperature, is a serious welfare issue. While your four-legged friend might be giving you those puppy eyes for a ride to the mall, putting their health first is paramount.

WHAT DOES HYPERTHERMIA DO?

Signs of hyperthermia and other heat-related illnesses include excessive panting, breathing problems, lethargy, collapse, and even unconsciousness. It can result in brain damage and death.

Unlike humans, dogs cannot sweat to cool off – as the heat increases, bodily functions start to break down. The dog's heart starts to fail – causing its blood pressure to drop, kidney failure, lack of oxygen in the brain, and internal bleeding. Its body goes into shock. At this point, even if you can save the dog's life, it's likely to have suffered brain damage.

If you see a dog in distress in a car on a hot day, phone the police, who will advise you what to do. Early intervention is crucial.



CROSSWORD CORNER

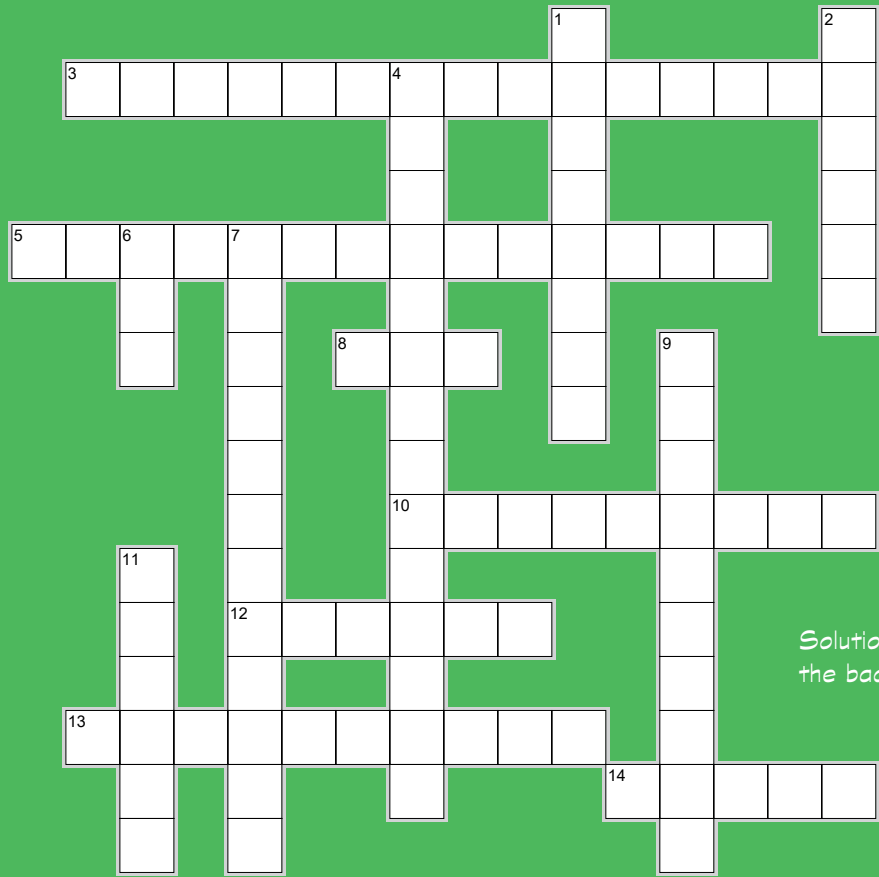
Answers can be found in this edition of Your Vet

ACROSS

3. Relating to the muscles and the skeleton
5. Short, broad or flat-faced head
8. Feline
10. Smelly breath
12. Relating to horses
13. Inflammation of gum, cheek, and tongue tissue lining.
14. Short legged breed of dog

DOWN

1. Tiredness, lack of energy, listlessness
2. A sticky, yellow film that forms on teeth.
4. A degenerative joint disease
6. Australian Veterinary Association
7. Unusually high body temperature
9. The process or action by which something is reabsorbed
11. Layer of material underneath the enamel of the tooth



Solution is on the back page

Keeping your dog safe this swimming season

There's no better way to cool off this summer than with a swim, but what are you doing to keep your dog safe in the water?

You would manage hazards while your children are swimming, and it's crucial to do the same for water-loving dogs. Whether you're going to the beach, a dip in the pool, or a boat trip, consider the following safety measures.

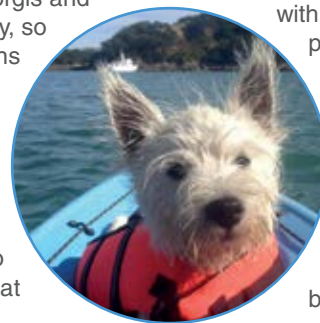
DIPS IN THE POOL

Pool supervision is also necessary. Many dogs love plunging into a swimming pool to cool off and play. Make sure you're actively watching them, and ensure they have a way to exit the pool.

Brachycephalic or flat-faced breeds can often struggle to swim due to their facial structure. Short-legged breeds such as Corgis and Dachshunds may also tire quickly, so ensure you pay attention to signs they are tiring.

TRIPS TO THE BEACH

Beach trips can be fun for the whole family, including your dog. Aside from checking the beach is dog-friendly, you also need to pay attention to any warnings that are in place.



For example, take care if you decide to allow your dog to take a dip during the months when stingers and jellyfish are out in full force. It's equally as important to be aware of any strong rips. If you're not sure where to swim safely, talk to a lifeguard.

Don't forget about the sun too. If the sand feels too hot for you to walk on barefoot, then it's also too hot for your furry friend. Consider visiting at a cooler time of the day and pack plenty of fresh water, along with a source of shade.

BOAT TRIPS

If your dog is comfortable around boats, then boating trips probably include them. However, even if they're confident on the boat, don't forget to put safety measures in place. Put an animal life jacket on them, and secure them to the boat with a harness. It's also crucial to provide access to shade and fresh drinking water.

Summer is a time for family fun, which inevitably includes your pets. Remember to consider not only your family's safety in the water but that of your dog.

Dog-safe travelling

If taking your pet on a long car ride is unavoidable, there are things you can do to travel safely.

How your pet travels in your vehicle can make all the difference to their comfort and wellbeing. A well-ventilated crate with enough room to sit, stand, turn, and lie down in is essential. Otherwise, dogs should be kept in the back seat in a harness connected to a seatbelt buckle.

Ensure you have all the essentials for your dog; such as water, food, a leash, medication, and something familiar from home – like a blanket or toy.

Stuck in traffic? Turn on the air conditioning to regulate the car's temperature.

Remember that when you get out of the car to take your dog with you – never leave them alone in a car.

MAKING ALTERNATIVE HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

Summer is usually when families spend lots of time at parks, beaches, and lakes. Is your pet going to be welcome everywhere, or is there a chance they may end up being left in your vehicle?

Think ahead and consider booking your furry friends into boarding kennels before setting off. They get to make new friends, and you get the peace of mind knowing that they are well taken care of in your absence.

Dogs are, of course, man's best friend; so if you're getting ready for the holidays, don't forget to factor in your pet's health. Ask us about keeping your pets safe over summer.

Time to tackle training

A well-behaved dog doesn't happen by accident – it takes training, consistency, and perseverance. Could it be time to start training with your four-legged friend?

Aside from providing mental stimulation, training is something that can benefit your dog throughout their lifetime. The earlier you begin, the sooner you can correct unwanted behaviours and establish desirable ones.

The RSPCA recommends a rewards-based training method which allows you to reward your dog for positive acts but ignore any bad ones. This style of training reinforces the bond between trainer and dog, while also showing that good behaviour results in a treat!

IGNORING BAD BEHAVIOUR

When our pets do something wrong, it's natural to growl at them. However, no matter the tone, you're still offering attention for something you don't want them to do. If you ignore the behaviour, your dog will begin to learn that they get nothing out of the situation.

You can apply rewards-based training in many scenarios. For example, if your dog jumps up on you, you can ignore them until they get down, and then offer a reward. It won't be long until they associate good behaviour with a reward.



TRAINING CLASSES

It's crucial to start early with your puppy. The critical socialisation period is between 3-17 weeks. During this time, they learn how to communicate with other dogs, and master social cues.

Consider signing your puppy up for puppy school. They get to interact with other dogs while learning vital obedience skills – like sit and stay.

You might not think that you can teach old dogs new tricks, but training classes can also be valuable for older dogs.

THE BENEFITS OF DOG TRAINING

Dog training can require a lot of effort and consistency, but it can all be worth it.

You can enter into social situations with confidence, knowing that you have control over your dog. It can also promote a stronger relationship between you and your dog. You're not as stressed about trying to manage their behaviour, and they're more responsive to you.

Finally, a well-trained dog under supervision is safer as you can call them back from unsafe situations, such as running onto the road.

Daily training may seem like a lot of hard work and energy in the beginning, but it's worth the effort. Enjoy a comfortable life with your pet, and benefit from many years of a relaxed, happy, and responsive dog.



WELCOME, WE ARE EXPANDING!

This summer we are expanding our team! We would like to welcome our three newest members at Moorong Veterinary Clinic: Carina Snowden, Natalie Hock and Lisa Cody.

Carina and Natalie will be joining our veterinary team, and Lisa will be joining our nursing team. We are very lucky to have these lovely ladies working alongside us. If you are coming into the clinic in the near future please look out for our newest members and give them a warm welcome!

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 technology 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 and have approved the continuing supply of the medications being requested.

CRUCIATE LIGAMENT DAMAGE

Cruciate ligament damage and disease is a common reason for a sore hind limb in dogs. Once accurately diagnosed, these can usually be surgically managed. Moorong Vets have had excellent success with a procedure which until recently has been the domain of specialist surgeons. We can increase the ongoing quality of life and functionality for dogs after these usually debilitating injuries.

WHY DOES MY DOG KEEP GETTING EAR INFECTIONS IN SPRING AND SUMMER?

It starts as a bad smell, then an occasional scratch, then head shaking and ear scratching like crazy. Oh no, Fido has another ear infection! Why?

External ear infections in dogs happen when the skin lining the ear canal becomes inflamed. This inflammation can have lots of causes such as excessive moisture, allergic dermatitis, poor conformation reducing airflow or encouraging collection of debris, parasites or foreign bodies.

If your dog is prone to itchy skin in spring and summer, that red and itchy skin is also down the ear canals. Just add moisture from a refreshing swim and conditions are perfect for bacteria and yeast to multiply.

Imagine if you wore your sneakers 24/7 – including in the shower – how red, smelly, infected and yucky your feet would be! The sore stinky ears we see in the clinic are the secondary infection resulting from inflammation down the ear canal.

So what can we do about it? Unless we stop the inflammation we cannot stop the ear infections.

- If your dog has allergic, itchy skin then controlling the symptoms will greatly reduce the number of ear infections your dog gets. Controlling itchy skin at home involves diet, bathing, and skin management, but sometimes this isn't enough and prescription medications from the vet are needed for the duration of the itchy season.
- Using a drying ear drop product after water play or swimming reduces moisture in the ears.
- Get any grass seeds removed from ears by your vet as soon as they occur – they will not float out if you flood the ear with oil!
- Ear mites and other parasites are easily treated.
- If the ear canal shape is a big part of the problem surgery can often provide a lifelong improvement. Unless all the causes are identified and treated for the long term, the ear infections will return.

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 |

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS: 3. MUSCULOSKELETAL 5. BRACHYCEPHALIC 8. CAT
 10. HALITOSIS 12. EQUINE 13. STOMATITIS 14. CORGI
 DOWN: 1. LETHARGY 2. PLAQUE 4. OSTEOARTHRITIS 6. AVA
 7. HYPERTHERMIA 9. RESORPTION 11. DENTIN

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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