



Companion Animal Newsletter - MARCH 2019

PET THEFT AWARENESS WEEK



With the ever increasing theft of dogs, horses, farm stock and missing cats, PET THEFT AWARENESS WEEK aims to help pet owners be more vigilant about the security of their animals.

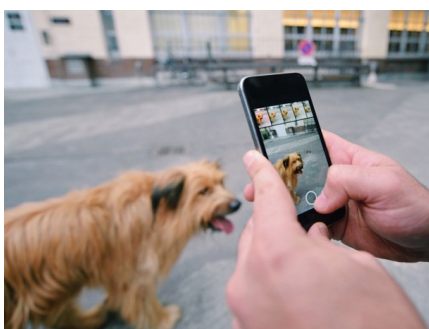
March 14th kicks off the week with **Dog Theft Awareness Day** and is continued with 19th March **Stolen Horse Day** and March 21st **Missing Cat Day**. These days are organised to raise awareness of the growing trend of pet theft in the UK and to help people take actions which could stop it happening to them. A pet is part of the family and losing them is heart breaking—let's not make it easy for thieves!

THEFT PREVENTION TIPS

- Don't leave your dog outside a shop or supermarket, even if you are just quickly popping in for a few items, this makes your dog an easy target.
- Don't let your dog out of sight during exercise especially if walking in a new place, if your dog goes off the lead on well-known walks, make sure your dog's recall is always perfect and keep them in your sights.
- Don't leave a dog unattended in a vehicle or where they could be taken. If you wouldn't leave your wallet or baby there, don't leave your dog.
- Make sure your garden, house and outside kennels are secure. Check gates, lighting and think about CCTV. If you have workmen who have access to your house don't leave your dog home alone with them, however nice they seem.
- Be careful who can see your pet's photos on social media.
- Change your routine regularly, on walks be vigilant when it comes to strangers watching you or your dog or anyone acting suspiciously.
- Use your dog community; one of the things we love about dog ownership is the other dog owning people we meet on our regular walks, use that community to protect each other from dog theft. Get chatting with fellow dog walkers about the risks of dog theft and look out for each other, let your dog friends know and all agree that you will stay alert to any strangers seen near or with each others dogs.
- Identify your pet, make sure your dog is microchipped and that the information is up to date. Make sure your dog wears a quality ID tag, making sure the information is clear and readable.



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY



ALWAYS HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN YOUR MOBILE PHONE:




- A clear photo of your pet, showing any distinguishing markings
- Your pet's microchip number
- Local Animal Warden's phone number
- Your vet's phone number
- Your dog's microchip database phone number—check your contact details are correct and up to date and flag as missing.
- Make sure your details cannot be changed without your permission.

WHY VACCINATE MY PET ?

To be honest we are very lucky to be able to vaccinate our pets. Before vaccines every year tragically thousands of pets were killed by infectious diseases that now are rarely seen in vaccinated animals. These days thanks to vaccination, although infectious diseases are still seen throughout the UK, they are much less prevalent. With the rare exception, we would recommend that **ALL dogs, cats and rabbits** are in a vaccination programme against preventable contagious diseases. It is important to remember most vaccines protect against diseases that are potentially **killers**, for example an unvaccinated child who contracts mumps is likely to be unwell but recover, an unvaccinated dog that contracts Parvovirus is likely to die!

VACCINATION HAS SAVED, AND CONTINUES TO SAVE, THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF OUR PETS.

WHAT CAN WE VACCINATE AGAINST?

SPECIES	DISEASE	SIGNIFICANCE	RISK
DOGS 	Parvovirus	Severe disease, often fatal.	Widespread Pockets.
	Distemper	Severe disease, potentially fatal.	Despite disappearing for a while, recent UK outbreak reported in unvaccinated dog.
	Infectious Hepatitis	Severe disease, potentially fatal.	Fairly uncommon in UK, but still exists.
	Leptospirosis	Can be fatal in dogs. May also be transmitted to humans and cause Weil's disease.	Exposure to infection is relatively common. Humans can catch this too.
	Kennel Cough	Extremely unpleasant, rarely life threatening (except in old or very young).	Widespread and common in dogs, this occurs where dogs mix frequently. e.g. walks, boarding kennels, shows.
	Rabies	Required to travel abroad.	No cases in UK.
CATS 	Viral Cat 'Flu	Extremely unpleasant & Highly infectious. Possibly fatal in young kittens, many infected cats become carriers.	Widespread.
	Bacterial Cat 'Flu	Possibly fatal in young kittens, highly infectious. Cross infection between cats & dogs.	Widespread caused by <i>Bordetella bronchiseptica</i> (Bb).
	Feline Leukaemia	Severe disease, potentially fatal.	Widespread, relatively common.
	Panleucopenia	Severe disease, potentially fatal.	Fairly uncommon in the UK.
	Chlamydophila Infection	Extremely unpleasant conjunctivitis, rarely life threatening.	Widespread, caused by <i>chlamydophila felis</i> .
RABBITS 	Myxomatosis	Usually fatal.	Widespread and commonly seen in the UK.
	Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease (RHD)	Fatal.	Widespread in the UK.

Data ref: MSD Animal Health, Pet Vaccination: The Facts

A vaccination programme is tailored by the vet to your pet's individual lifestyle. Most vaccinations are administered initially as a primary course to build the initial immunity in the animal, then the animal will need to be topped up at regular intervals, as the protection drops. Boosters are necessary to maintain protection. All licensed pet vaccines have undergone rigorous safety trials. As with any medical product, whether animal or human, an adverse reaction is possible, but seriously adverse

reactions are EXCEPTIONALLY RARE. Vaccinations protect your pet from deadly diseases, the benefits of this far outweigh the extremely small risk of a vaccine reaction.



LEPTOSPIROSIS

Recently we have had a flurry of calls from owners worried about Leptospirosis, so lets just take a few extra minutes to look at this one disease further. Living in such a beautiful rural part of the UK, each time we walk our dogs they are potentially at risk of contracting the disease.

WHAT IS THE DISEASE?

Leptospirosis is a widespread bacterial disease. It affects not only dogs, but also many other species and significantly wild rodents. It is also a 'zoonotic' disease which means it can also infect us! In humans just like in our dogs the infection is very serious and potentially life threatening.

The disease is transmitted by contact with the urine of infected animals. Either direct contact or from contamination lurking in an environment soiled by their urine. A very common example would be slow moving water which has been contaminated with infected rat urine. Realistically any dog exercised outdoors is at risk. So, not only do we need to protect our dogs for their own health, it is also very important to prevent your dog from becoming infected and shedding the bacteria in its urine to also minimise risk to human health.

HOW DO I PROTECT MY DOG?

Vaccination is by far the best way to protect your dog. After an initial primary course of two injections 4 weeks apart, the vaccine provides immunity for one year then needs to be boosted annually.

Vaccinations also help prevent shedding of the bacteria into the hosts urine. This means as well as providing immunity for your pet, you are also helping to protect your whole family (two and four-legged) from potential exposure to Leptospirosis.

Data ref:MSD Animal Health:Leptospirosis and your Dog



LAMBING TIME AND THE COUNTRYSIDE CODE

The Countryside Code advises you to keep your dog on a lead when walking in rural areas. This is equally as important for you and your pet's safety as well as the welfare of the livestock and wildlife. Unfortunately in recent years there has been an increase in incidents of sheep worrying, several of which have been local. We have outlined some of the major factors to consider when you are enjoying the countryside with your canine family members.

KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEAD WHILST WALKING THROUGH SHEEP FIELDS AND AVOID WALKING IN FIELDS WITH NEWLY LAMBED SHEEP

Most sheep are herded by trained working sheep dogs so will naturally run away when they see a dog. All dogs have the instinct to run after another moving animal, in our pet dogs this will usually be in a playful way. The excitement in this play mode is heightened when the animal keeps running, the mouthing play that most dogs show at this point can cause considerable damage in sheep. Chasing behaviour is great fun for your dog and highly addictive. When repeated, this behaviour will always turn into either herding or hunting instincts depending on the make up of the dog.

RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS WILL CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

- Heavily pregnant sheep stressed by being moved too fast or too far will abort their lambs
- Ewes with young lambs that are moved by a dog can lose contact with their lambs. If they are not reunited within hours the lamb will not feed, get cold and can die
- Most dogs if not under control will chase sheep. Straying dogs, even the most gentle family pet, can develop the hunting instinct when chasing sheep and playful chasing can quickly turn into worrying.

DOG MESS, BAG IT AND BIN IT

Dog faeces from healthy dogs can spread disease to people, wildlife and livestock as well as between other dogs. There are 3 main diseases that dogs, with no symptoms, can pass to other animals in their faeces causing paralysis and death. Bag your dog faeces and take it home with you or dispose of it in a bin provided—not a hedgerow!

NATALIE'S CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT

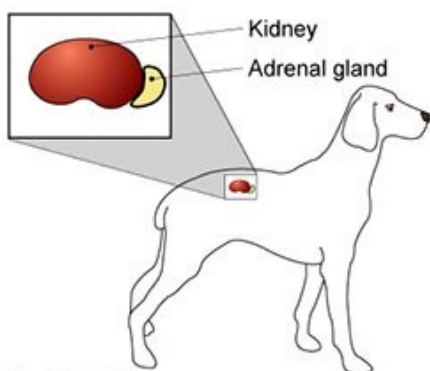
Being a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) never brings a dull moment and no day is the same. Since qualifying in 2017 I have always aspired to broaden my knowledge in a subject I found most interesting.

Whilst training, Emergency and Critical Care (ECC) was the subject I most enjoyed due to the complexity and interesting conditions it can present. In October of 2018, I began an Emergency and Critical Care Certificate, which Dalehead are very kindly supporting me through. This course is delivered by emergency specialists Vets Now and is an intense 18-month distance learning course which educates me and expands my knowledge regarding the many different types of emergency presentations that can occur in companion animals. The material given describes the way they work and best ways to triage and care for patients alongside veterinary surgeons. I am currently on my third unit and have successfully passed units one and two with top marks!

At Dalehead Veterinary Group we run our own twenty-four hour, seven days a week out of hours service which we pride ourselves on. I feel personally that this is where you learn the most about emergency situations. More commonly RVNs will be called out for caesarean sections which is lovely in itself, bringing little lives into the world, however some emergencies can present with complex complaints and can require intensive treatment while tests are being carried out.



Recently we have diagnosed a couple of patients with a very rare condition called Addison's disease or Hypoadrenocorticism. This disease is seldom diagnosed as its presenting signs are often associated with another diagnosis. It affects the adrenal gland in the dog and the levels of two steroids the body normally produces are low and can cause an "Addisonian crisis" if not controlled. This is when we usually see this condition as an emergency, when patients can present in shock and require immediate intravenous fluid therapy.



Patients with this condition are often less than 7 years old and will present with vague symptoms of lethargy, weakness, inappetence, drinking more or urinating more and sometimes vomiting or diarrhoea, also some breeds are predisposed to the condition.

The initial screening test for this condition is a blood test which measures electrolyte and cortisol levels, and we are lucky enough to be able to run this in our in-house laboratory. Once the condition has been diagnosed, treatment and monitoring requires regular vet checks and in-house electrolyte blood tests.

The ECC course helps me recognise and develop the care given to the individual patients alongside the vets especially with conditions such as Addison's disease and I am hoping that the rest of course is as interesting as it has been so far!



24 HOUR DEDICATED SMALL ANIMAL OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY COVER



PROVIDED BY OUR OWN VETS AND NURSES
PHONE CALLS ANSWERED BY OUR OWN STAFF
LOCATED AT THE SETTLE SURGERY



Check out our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk for more information about caring for your pet, special offers, vet and staff profiles and much more!

