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## Companion Animal Newsletter - JUNE 2020

### Repeat Medication Checks

In line with government guidelines during the Covid-19 situation we are supporting our clients and their pets with a social distancing companion animal veterinary service for urgent cases including consultations for the relief of pain and the treatment and prevention of disease.

We believe that your pet's health monitoring in a Repeat Medication Check plays an essential role in maintaining their welfare. The majority of these appointments can be undertaken by a remote consultation to allow us to practice social distancing during these unprecedented times.

We ask you to send us videos or photographs of your pet, and a urine sample, dependent upon the condition being treated. Urine collection kits can be dispensed for you at the surgery—Uripet for dogs, Katkor and sample pot for cats. Please keep and sterilise the urine collector (yellow part of the Uripet) or Katkor for use next time, then a sterile sample pot can be dispensed.

The vet can take a surprising amount of information for diagnosis from the images you send in; looking at gait, stiffness, reluctance to move/jump/sit, as well as facial expression and pain indicators. With the video being taken in your pet's home environment, the vet is more likely to see their natural behaviour as well. The urine analysis allows the vet to assess kidney function and also looks for other underlying health issues.

Once the vet has reviewed all information, they can then hold a telephone consultation with you to discuss your pet's general wellbeing and behaviour and check any issues which may have arisen in their diagnosis. All in all, this type of appointment works very well for both your pet and for social distancing!

We will be placing information letters in with your pet's medication to let you know when an appointment is due before your next prescription collection and also, if appropriate, when you ring to make an appointment for a repeat medication check.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation and patience at this time. These measures will allow us to continue to provide veterinary services for your animals whilst protecting both you, our clients and our staff.



# POISONOUS PLANTS IN CATS AND DOGS

Whilst plants can give a sense of wellbeing around the home, not to mention the numerous health benefits, many plants are poisonous to dogs and cats.

According to the Royal Horticultural Society, there are at least 130 common house and garden plants that are known to cause harm to pets (and humans) after being touched or eaten.

Our pets love to explore, and it is hard to keep plants out of their reach, but if your pet should brush up against certain poisonous plants or accidentally ingest them, it can result in a toxic reaction.

## What parts of the plants are poisonous?

If a plant is poisonous, assume all parts of the plants are poisonous – though some parts of the plants may have higher concentration of the toxic principle than others. Many toxic plants are irritants, they cause inflammation of the skin, mouth, stomach. The toxic principle in other plants may only affect an organ, such as the heart or kidneys.



## Which plants are poisonous to dogs?

Common plants such as daffodil bulbs, tulips and hyacinths are poisonous to dogs. If your dog likes to dig, especially during the daffodil planting season, upturned bulbs may be accidentally ingested, causing many side effects including vomiting and diarrhoea.

## Which plants are poisonous to cats?

Most cats are fussy and are careful about what they eat. Poisoning in cats is generally rare. Young, inquisitive cats or kittens are most at risk of eating harmful plants, particularly household ones. Examples of plants which can cause issues include poinsettia, tulips, daffodils, amaryllis and mistletoe. Lilies are extremely poisonous to cats, particularly if ingested, consuming a small amount can cause severe poisoning. Although our cats may seem disinterested in eating them, there is always a risk that they will come into close contact with the pollen on their fur, before unintentionally grooming the pollen or plant matter from their fur.

## What are the symptoms of plant poisoning?

Since many plants are irritants, different plants show different symptoms. The main area of irritation will be skin and stomach. If the skin has been affected, you may notice an irritation or inflammation, such as redness, swelling, itchiness to the skin or mouth. Some plants can cause stomach irritation so there may be vomiting, excessive salivation and diarrhoea. More severe symptoms include breathing difficulties, confusion, incoordination, excessive drinking and urination, and in extreme cases, death.

## Treatment

If you suspect your pet has eaten a poisonous plant seek veterinary attention **immediately**. Do not wait for symptoms to start. Depending on what the animal has ingested, the time lapsed and amount will depend on whether or not your pet requires immediate emergency treatment.

In some cases we will induce vomiting, but this isn't always necessary. Some cases may require supportive therapy such as activated charcoal alongside intravenous fluid therapy which will support the body.

If you have seen your pet eating or in contact with a poisonous plant, remove the plant, extract all the plant material from their mouth and throat, hair and skin, ideally use disposable gloves so your are not putting yourself in danger, to avoid any further ingestion.



When contacting the surgery we will ask several questions. These include:

- When was the plant ingested? Time frame is very important, as if the plant is already in the animal's bloodstream, making the animal vomit will have no effect.
- What plant was eaten? If you think your pet has eaten a plant, take a picture as well as a sample of the plant and bring it with you to the surgery. If



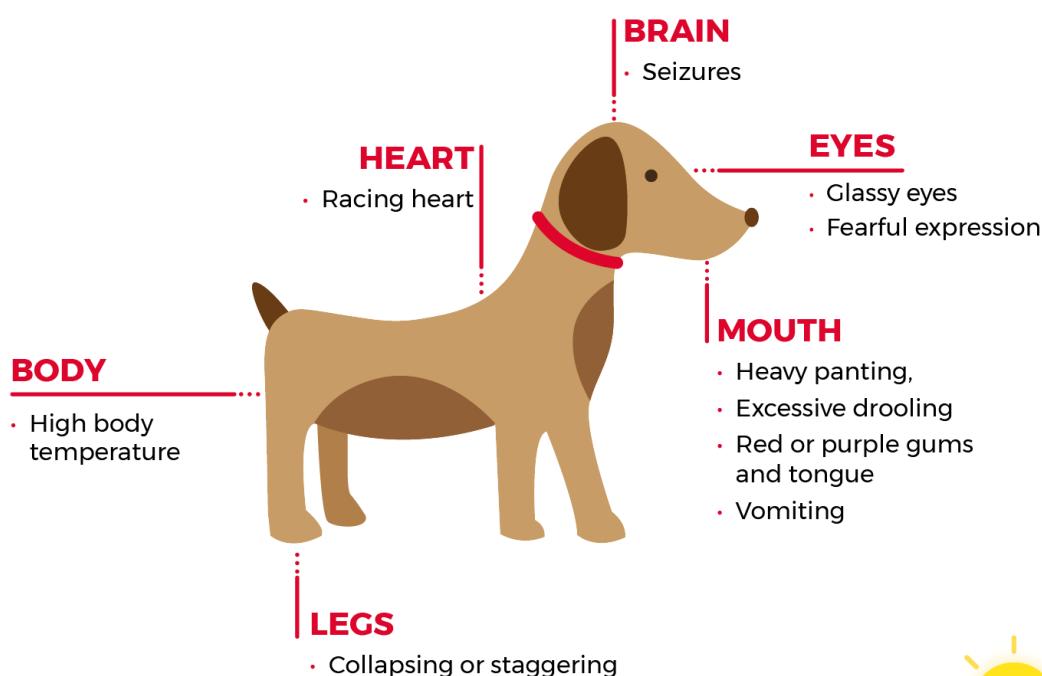
the plant has the name or stick on it, again bring this information with you as it may conclude what treatment needs to be given.

- How much of the plant was ingested? This is often unknown, but a rough estimate is an advantage.
- What symptoms is the animal showing? This could range from vomiting, to their pet having collapsed.

We are always here to help so if in doubt—call!

# HEAT STROKE

## Know The Signs



### How to keep your dog cool on hot days

- Restrict exercise
- Never leave in car, hot room or sun trap
- Ensure drinking water and a cool, shaded spot is always available
- Walk early in the morning or later in the evening
- Spray with cool water

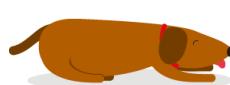
### Steps to take if you're worried your dog has heat stroke

- Move somewhere cool
- Offer small amounts of tepid water
- Using wet towels, douse with cool (but never, ever cold) water
- Place in the breeze of a fan
- Contact your vet



2°C

This small increase in a dog's body temperature is all it takes for heat stroke to kick in



38.5°C

Dog's normal body temperature



43°C

At this body temperature a dog's organs begin to fail

50%

Average survival rate of dogs diagnosed with heat stroke



60

Amount of days it can take for dogs to acclimatise to temperature changes



15

Minutes it can take for a dog to die of heat stroke



6°C

Average temperature white cars are cooler than black cars after being left in the sun for an hour

# PARASITE OF THE MONTH!

## FLEAS!!!

A recent study found the prevalence of fleas in UK cats and dogs was moderately high and that at least 1 in 10 fleas carry the zoonotic pathogen Bartonella spp (Bartonella are bacteria that live primarily inside the lining of the blood vessels. They can infect humans, mammals and a wide range of wild animals). This highlights the importance of regular flea prevention.

### Flea Fact File

- 1 in 4 cats were found to have fleas.
- 14.4% of dogs had fleas.
- 95% of the flea lifecycle happens off the pet, in the surrounding environment and home.
- Fleas can survive and reproduce for up to four months, producing over 2,000 eggs in this time.
- Fleas can feed on pet's blood for up to 3 hours a day.

### DID YOU KNOW?

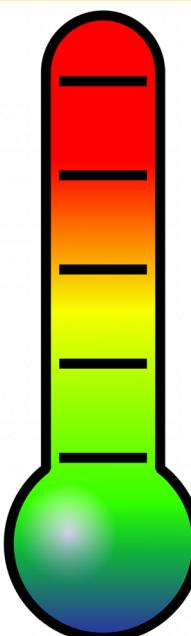
- A recent survey about fleas found 14% carried at least one pathogen and 11.3% carried Bartonella spp. Recommending routine flea preventatives helps protect against flea allergic dermatitis and can help prevent pathogen transmission.
- *Ctenocephalides felis felis* is the most common species of flea, more than 90% of fleas found on cats and dogs in the UK were cat fleas.
- Flea allergy dermatitis (FAD) is the most common allergic skin disease in dogs and cats.

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### PET OWNERS INSIGHTS

Some may not find the topic of fleas very interesting, but it is the parasite we as pet owners are most concerned about...

- In a recent survey pet owners indicated that the parasite they were most concerned about was fleas.
- 73% reported they had treated their pet in the last 12 months.
- 85% have spent up to £100 eradicating a flea infestation from their home.
- 40% of UK dog owners are likely to increase flea treatment for their dog during COVID-19 lockdown.



#### HOT, HOT, HOT!!! Flea Control

*Bartonella henselae* can persist in the environment in flea faeces for up to 9 days which makes both animal and household control vital to reduce the risk of transmission!

#### So Not Hot

Transmission of *Bartonella henselae* to humans is via cat scratches and bite.

#### Ice Cold

Flea-borne Bartonella can be fatal in immunocompromised people.

## WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words relating to a flea infestation?

Biting

Household

Itching

Pets

Bartonella

Mycoplasma

Rickettsia

Tapeworm



Check out our website [www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk](http://www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk) for more information about caring for your pet, special offers, vet and staff profiles and much more!

