



Companion Animal Newsletter - AUGUST 2020

VACCINATING YOUR RABBIT



Vaccinating your rabbits is an essential action in keeping your rabbit healthy and protected against several fatal diseases. In previous years we have vaccinated our rabbits against Myxomatosis and Rabbit Haemorrhagic disease (RHD).

However, in recent years a new variant of the RHD virus has emerged in the UK, named RHD-2. The original vaccine is unfortunately not fully effective against the strain so additional vaccines have been developed.

HOW IS RHD-2 DIFFERENT FROM RHD-1?

The two viral infections are related. RHD-1 has been present in the UK for many years. It is sadly fatal in 100% of rabbits affected by the disease. RHD-1 has a very rapid progression rate and rabbits often die without showing any clinical symptoms. RHD-2 is a new disease to the UK and progression, unlike the RHD-1, is slower. It is fatal in 25-50% of affected rabbits.

SYMPTOMS:

As stated above RHD-1 does not show any clinical signs other than sudden death. However, symptoms can include unusual bleeding and seizures. The disease progresses extremely quickly and is usually fatal.

RHD-2 HOWEVER PROGRESSES AT A MUCH SLOWER RATE. Clinical signs can be vague and include unusual bleeding as well as weight loss, stopping eating and high temperatures. Symptoms will then progress to jaundice (yellowing of the skin and mucus membranes) and seizures, can be seen. The mortality rate is between 25-50% but cases can be left with long term liver damage.

HOW CAN MY RABBIT CATCH THE DISEASE?

The disease is spread by a virus which can survive for a long time in the environment. The virus can survive freezing temperatures up to 50°C. It is spread by contact with infected rabbit's bodily fluids and faeces, as well as on clothing, bedding and other equipment.

DO I STILL NEED TO GET MY RABBIT VACCINATED WITH THEIR USUAL VACCINES?

Yes. The vaccine for RHD-2 does not protect your rabbit against Myxomatosis. Myxomatosis is a very commonly seen and is usually fatal. Sadly, we see many cases of Myxomatosis in pet rabbits every year, many of which could be avoided by being vaccinated.

CAN BOTH VACCINES BE GIVEN TOGETHER?

No. There is a minimum period of 2 weeks between each vaccine.

If you would like more information about the vaccination protocol please do not hesitate to contact us on 01729 823538.

RABBIT AWARENESS WEEK GOES DIGITAL

Rabbit Awareness Week is taking place this year but this time it's going completely digital!
And there's more... to make it even bigger and better they've decided to extend RAW 2020 to run for 2 weeks!

THE RAW 2020 DATES

10TH AUGUST—23RD AUGUST

Stay tuned for more information and how you can get involved!

Please follow the Rabbit Awareness Week page for future updates relating to this year's campaign.

We'd also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for your continued support of Rabbit Awareness Week.



PLANNING AHEAD



Whilst most dogs are happy in kennels, it's always nice to be able to take your four legged friend away with you on holiday and many places now cater for our pets as well as people! In new surroundings, it's important to keep an eye on your pet at all times and make sure that you are prepared for all eventualities. Here are a few things to consider:

RESEARCH WHERE TO STAY: It's important to research areas and accommodation before you book to make sure that they are dog friendly. Also check if there are restrictions on where your dog can go, how many dogs can stay, and if there are additional charges for your pet.

PLAN AN ITINERARY: Be sure that there are plenty of dog friendly things to do whilst you are away. Many establishments do not allow your dog to be left in the accommodation alone, so do some research and look for places that do allow dogs, such as eateries and attractions.

VISIT THE VET BEFOREHAND: Take your dog to the vets for a health check before the holiday. This will enable you to ensure they are up to date with their vaccinations, as well as worm and flea treatment. If your dog is on long term medication, make sure that you have enough supplies to last whilst you are away. Depending on your dog's age, it's also important to check they are healthy and safe to travel.

CHECK YOUR PETS DETAILS ARE UP TO DATE: Make sure that your pet is microchipped before you travel. This will help return your pet quickly should they get lost. If they are microchipped, contact the microchip provider and inform them of your trip and details of where you are staying, then should your pet get lost they have details of your holiday accommodation. Also take your pet's insurance documents and make sure they are up to date should anything happen whilst you are away. Make sure your pet is wearing a collar with an identity tag which has mobile numbers you can be contacted on whilst on your holiday.

PACK THE ESSENTIALS: Make sure you take everything with you that your dog will need. Plan ahead to ensure you don't forget anything. If your accommodation is dog friendly, they may have the basics such as water and food bowls but be sure to check before you go. Don't forget to take medication (if required), poo bags, a spare collar and lead, toys, food and treats, bed, grooming essentials, and a tick remover hook.

ROUTINE: Whilst you are on holiday be sure to keep the same routine as you would at home. For example, walking and food routines, as this will help your dog to settle and reduce any stress they may have.

WALK YOUR DOG WHEN YOU ARRIVE: When you reach your holiday destination, take your dog for a walk. This will help to familiarise them with the area and surroundings, as well as releasing any excess energy after being in the car during the journey.

CONSIDER THEIR SAFETY: It's important that whilst you are on holiday you keep an eye on your dog and ensure they remain safe at all times. Be aware of any doors and windows that they could escape from and be sure to walk them on a lead around any areas that are unfamiliar. Don't leave your dog alone in your holiday home or in the car whilst on days out (never leave your dog in the car on a warm day, even if it is overcast—dogs die in hot cars!). Also, be sure to supervise your dog at the beach, some beaches have designated dog walking areas or times you can walk your dog.

TRAVELLING: When travelling in the car to your holiday destination, make sure that your dog is secure. If it's a long journey it's important to take 'pit stops' to let your dog stretch their legs and go to the toilet. Make sure they also have access to fresh water during the journey. Use of a calming spray such as **Pet Remedy** can help reduce anxiety on the journey.

PLAN FOR AN EMERGENCY: Make sure you know where the nearest veterinary practice is in case of an emergency and that you know how to get there. Keep a note of their contact number, just in case you need to get in touch urgently.

If you are worried about your pet before going on holiday, consult with your vet who is in the best position to monitor your pet's health and ensure they are receiving the best care.

HOLIDAY CHECK LIST:

- Lead and collar with ID tag with your contact details
- Pet food and bowls
- Dog bed and towels (to dry wet or muddy paws)
- Favourite toys and treats
- Poo bags and tick remover hook
- Required medication
- Pet insurance details
- Nearest vet details



THE HISTORY OF THE BORDER COLLIE

POPULARITY #13

Situated in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales amongst the rolling hills, fells and farm land we see one or two Border Collies. So we thought it would be interesting to learn a little more about the breed.

The origin of the Border Collie is said to be Northumberland, the border between England and Scotland. Known for their herding ability, intelligence, agility and loyalty the breed was quickly recognised for these attributes and eagerness to help shepherds. In 1900 the breed was given their name by James Reid, the Secretary of the International Sheep Dog Society, who registered these dogs as Border Collies so they could be differentiated from other collie breeds already registered on his list.

Border Collies were first recognised by the Kennel Club as being a pedigree breed in 1977 when the first breed standard was established. This was then amended a year later in 1978 and has remained in place pretty much as it was first written right up until today. There are in fact two independent registries for Border Collies with the International Sheep Dog Society being the one that promotes the working Border Collie and the Kennel Club which promotes good breeding practices to standardise a dog's appearance.

The father of all border collies is 'Old Hemp', who lived from 1893 to 1901. Old Hemp began herding sheep at 6 weeks of age. He demonstrated not only a natural talent for the work, but also a unique style, herding sheep much more quietly and less aggressively than other sheepdogs, yet without any loss of effectiveness. His ability and temperament inspired the creation and codification of the Border Collie breed.



THE BORDER COLLIE BREED

- Lifespan: 10 - 14 years
- Pedigree Breed? Yes - KC Recognised in the Pastoral Group
- **HEIGHT:**
Males 48 - 56 cm (*at the withers*)
Females 46 - 53 cm (*at the withers*)
- **WEIGHT:**
Males 14 - 20 kg
Females 12 - 19 kg

BREED CHARACTERISTICS

- Size Medium: (Rating 3/5)
- Exercise Needs Extremely: High (Rating 5/5)
- Easy to Train: Exceptionally (Rating 5/5)
- Amount of Shedding: High (Rating 4/5)
- Grooming Needs: Medium (Rating 3/5)
- Health of Breed: Good (Rating 4/5)
- Cost to Keep: Average (Rating 3/5)
- Intelligence: High (Rating 5/5)

NEW BEGINNINGS FOR LOUISE'S CHICKENS!

In June our receptionist Louise Thwaite went on a mission to re-home a dozen ex battery hens, giving them a fresh start in life. Since then she has kept us updated on their progress, including how many eggs they have laid, their feather regrowth and behavioural milestones.

Upon arrival Louise housed the hens in a large building where they had access to food, water and laying boxes. The hens immediately started to explore their new and free range surroundings, expressing their natural behaviour of scratching and pecking looking for grubs and feed. After a week acclimatising to their new home the hens were allowed outside, but having spent their whole lives indoors it did take them a couple of days to actually venture out!

The hens have settled in extremely well with Louise who loves looking after them and seeing their progression. They are happy healthy hens growing more feathers every day and keeping Louise in eggs for her breakfast!!



COVID-19 UPDATE

At this unprecedented time we have continued to provide an essential service to our patients and our clients, through rigorous social distancing and PPE measures, new communications methods, and structural changes to premises. One of the biggest changes for clients has been staying outside the surgery. We take their pet inside for examination and treatment and speak to the client outdoors and on their mobile.

During lockdown we were able to supply 24 hour veterinary care and essential medications, making use of video and telephone consultations, in addition to physical examinations for emergency and urgent treatment when needed.

Routine non-emergency veterinary procedures were suspended but since the easing of lockdown we have worked our way through a long waiting list and now with a few exceptions our patients' routine care such as annual health checks and vaccinations are up to date.

Dalehead Veterinary Group fully supports the changes made by the government to control the spread of the C19 virus. We look forward to a time when we can return to a more complete normal, and in the meantime both our companion animal and farm animal departments are now back to providing a full range of veterinary services by continuing to apply C19 control precautions whilst monitoring the situation.

By taking a pragmatic safety-first approach, in common with many businesses in this area, we have been confident in our biosecurity and thankfully have had no confirmed Covid cases at the practice. The financial impact on the business has been partially offset by use of the governments job retention scheme.

Although the last few months have been a worrying and difficult time for everyone, it has also shown how well our team at Dalehead Vets has pulled together to support each other and our clients, and safeguard the health of both ourselves and our animals.

Bentham Branch Surgery

Whilst Covid 19 has brought us many restrictions, it has also opened our eyes to new and positive ways of working which have many benefits for both our clients and ourselves! One of these changes has been the longer opening hours at our Bentham branch surgery, something we would like to keep up through the coming months and lengthen the opening hours on a permanent basis. With this in mind, over the coming months we will be trialling all day opening at Bentham on Wednesday and Thursday. The new opening hours from the beginning of September will be:

Monday	4.00pm – 6.30pm	
Tuesday	3.00pm – 5.30pm	
Wednesday	9.00am – 12noon	2.00pm – 5.00pm
Thursday	9.00am – 12noon	2.00pm – 5.00pm
Friday	3.30pm – 5.30pm	



MOO-VING ON!

We are sure that you will join us in wishing Anne Carr all the best as she leaves the practice to spend more time with her family. Anne has been an integral part of the farm team for nearly fifteen years, organising the daybook and farm vets (no mean feat!), giving advice as a L-SQP, ordering and maintaining the stock, organising TB tests, client meetings, and preparing literally thousands of parcels for collection. She will be very much missed by us all.

A message from Anne:

After working at Dalehead for the past fourteen and a half years I have decided it's time to look after my own flock. Dalehead has been a wonderful place to work, I have enjoyed being part of the farm team, working with the vets, looking after your cows, sheep and pets. So no more answering the phones or late nights on call. It's time to say goodbye and farewell. I shall miss you all!

