



WINTER 2016

The first snows have fallen across the high country and thankfully late Autumn rains have finally arrived to help the farmers.

Helping Pets with Stress

Many pets seem to take everything in their stride, but unfortunately some of our cats and dogs are worriers. Changes in their situation or environment can create temporary stress that can see your cat or dog quite upset. Examples of these changes include moving house, renovations, having relatives come to stay or even loved family members heading away on holiday or back to school or university in other towns. Different animals have different responses to these stresses. Some show obvious signs like moping around and looking sad, where others show more subtle signs like reduced appetite or abnormal behaviours. Cats in particular show their stress by behavioural change, usually involving inappropriate urination. These responses to stress can be frustrating for the pet owner and obviously upsetting for the pet. Unfortunately some pets feel stress everyday even unrelated to changes in their lives.

Over the last few years some new products have been developed that help to keep stressed pets more calm. They are centred around pheromones, which are chemical scents imperceptible to humans that have an effect on the more primitive parts of the brain.

For dogs the pheromone used is the one produced around the mother's teats when they are feeding pups. This helps to keep the puppies calm and make them feel safe. Even in adult dogs this scent still has the same effect on their brain and can bring calmness and a feeling of safety in stressful times. Collars, similar to flea collars, have been developed that release this pheromone slowly over a month to help reduce stress. Using one of these when you move house or know a disruptive time is approaching can help a worried dog deal better with the change.



Feliway Diffuser for Cats



Adaptil (DAP) collars for dogs

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For cats the pheromone utilised is that produced by the glands in the cat's lip. You have probably seen cats rubbing their face on objects around their territory, and what they are doing is marking out their borders. The scent helps make them feel safe in this territory. This pheromone is available in a spray that can be used in cat carry cages before transport or on examination tables at the veterinary clinic to help make cats feel safer. It is also available in a slow release diffuser much like air freshener units that plug into a power point. These diffusers release the scent slowly over a month to help keep cats feeling calmer in their own home.

If your pet is prone to stress with changes at home or they seem stressed a lot of the time it is worth talking to your veterinarian about strategies and products that can help them manage this stress better.

Client Referrals

A recommendation to a friend or family member to come and see us is the best possible form of advertising for our business. We love to welcome new clients that have been referred by our existing clients as it reinforces for us that we are doing a great job helping people and their pets. As a result we have created a new scheme to reward our loyal customers for suggesting their friends and family come in for a visit, and rewarding new clients for choosing us.

“Client Referral” cards are available at Warby St Vet Hospital reception that you can give to someone you know that has moved to the area or acquired a new pet. When the new client comes in and presents the card they are entitled to a 15% discount off their first visit. In addition the existing client will be posted out a letter entitling them to 15% off their next visit as well. All you have to do is write your name on the back of the card and pass it on to someone who is in need of a new veterinary clinic. It’s just a small thanks from us to you for supporting us.

Referral cards will also be available for the Wangaratta Equine Hospital soon.



NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST

We produce a 4 page newsletter every season to keep our clients informed about the goings on at Warby St Veterinary Hospital and the Wangaratta Equine Hospital. We send the newsletter out with our statements each time it is printed, but also deliver it electronically by email. If you would like to receive the newsletter in your email inbox you can either email me your address at tim@warbyvet.com.au or fill out the slip below and return it to Warby St Vet Hospital or Wangaratta Equine Hospital in person or by snail mail.

YES! I'D LIKE TO RECEIVE THE QUARTERLY WARBY ST VET HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL!

NAME:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

“KING VALLEY RUN”

A service for routine work provided most **TUESDAYS** charging travel fees from:

Glenrowan, Greta, Moyhu or Milawa.

“BEECHWORTH AND MYRTLEFORD RUN”

For routine work most **THURSDAYS** travel fees from:

Markwood, Everton, Beechworth, Myrtleford

Ionophore Toxicity in Dogs/Horses from calf milk powders

Dr. Kirri Solly-Slade DVM

Many great farmers will often have various feed and milk additives that they use to promote optimum growth and production within the herd. However what you may not be aware of is the possible toxic effects of these additives in animals other than cattle. Cattle are ruminants (with four stomachs) and therefore the way they digest many things is completely different to monogastric (or single stomached) animals such as horses and dogs.

An example of two feed ingredients that are digested differently in monogastric animals are MONENSIN (trade name rumensin®) and LASALOCID (a common additive in calf milk replacers such as profeLAC®). Whilst these products are incredibly useful additives for cattle they can cause devastating and life threatening toxicity in dogs and horses. Monensin is used as an anti-bloat agent (often as intra-ruminal boluses) and a growth promotant in cattle.

Both monensin and lasalocid are part of a group of substances called Ionophores which affect and damage the muscles in dogs and horses. This muscle damage can lead to problems with skeletal muscle such as weakness and paralysis. Heart and respiratory muscles are also affected and therefore ingestion of toxic levels of these substances can lead to respiratory issues and cardiac arrest.

There is no specific cure for Ionophore toxicity, instead rapid intervention is needed to provide supportive care such as IV fluid therapy, induced vomiting and stomach washes. Even with medical treatment these toxicities are often fatal.

Prevention is the easiest and most effective way of managing toxin ingestion so these products should be secured in places where horses and dogs will be unable to ingest them.



Discussing the end of a pet's life with children

Euthanasia of our pets is undoubtedly the most difficult decision we make as pet owners. This process can be even more complicated when there are young children involved.

DO	DON'T
Use the words death or dying.	Use phrases such as 'put to sleep'- this can lead to sleep phobias or anxiety around sleep.
Be open and honest about what occurs: It can be difficult for a child to learn later on that you have manipulated the truth.	Imply the animal has 'gone on a trip' or 'gone to another place': this can leave children feeling abandoned or feeling that they can go looking for the pet
Encourage children to express their emotions about how they feel and be open about your own emotions.	Lie to your child about what's occurred
Ensure the children understand the death of a pet is not their fault.	
Arrange a memorial or symbolic event when the child can express their grief.	
Wherever possible talk to your child ahead of time about the euthanasia.	
Allow the child to be present at the euthanasia if they would like to be so.	

An example of how you might explain the decision to euthanase your pet:

'When animals get old or sick their bodies wear out & don't work properly anymore. This can make them unhappy or uncomfortable. We love 'fluffy' so we do not want him to be in pain. When 'Fluffy' is euthanised he will be die- this means that everything in his body will stop & won't be working anymore. This is different to when we're asleep and our body is resting but functioning normally. Euthanasia will help 'Fluffy' to die peacefully & without pain. This is a kind thing for us to do for him. It will make of us all very sad because it doesn't feel nice to have to say goodbye to someone that we love very much.'

Corneal Bullae in Horses

A corneal bulla is generally formed by an impact to the cornea, and causes severe corneal oedema. They are seen mostly in racehorses, occurring when a clod of dirt flies up and hits the horse in the eye at a gallop, but can occur in any horse if they hit their cornea on an object with enough force.

A corneal bullae is a gelatinous blob of cornea caused by oedema and inflammation. They generally have corneal ulceration (first layer of the corneal epithelium damaged), as well as severe oedema.

The healing process can be prolonged, and the eye will need protection while this is occurring. This can be achieved by a temporary tarsorrhaphy, where the eyelid has a suture placed to partially close the eyelid. This protects the eye from further trauma, dust and wind, and still allows the eye to be medicated and examined. Protection from dust and sun is also required with use of a fly/UV mask.

Pictures below show a corneal bulla on the day of injury, 2 weeks later (with tarsorrhaphy in place and some fluorescein stain to highlight the corneal defect), and then 6 weeks after the injury. The original corneal defect has been filled with blood vessels to heal the corneal stroma. This area will remodel and shrink down over several months. The eye is likely to end up with a small scar or pigment on the cornea, but vision will be good.

Dr Sarah Cavill



Freemartinism

A freemartin cow is one that is born with a specific set of abnormalities of the female reproductive tract as a result of conditions in utero. When a set of twins made up of a bull and a heifer calf share a placenta they often have a common blood supply between the two foetuses. This shared blood supply means that many cellular products from each of the calves are exchanged between the two bodies. This includes cellular components of chromosomes such as the 'X' and 'Y' chromosomes that determine an animal's sex. (A male being characterised as having an 'XY' genetic makeup and a female having an 'XX' genetic makeup.) When there is the presence of 'XY' cellular components in the heifer foetus this can lead to a multitude of developmental abnormalities effecting the heifer's reproductive system. Somewhere between 90-95% of heifers born as part of a bull/heifer twin combination result as a freemartin.

Freemartin cows have underdeveloped ovaries which sometimes resemble male gonads more than female ovaries. The majority of the rest of the reproductive tract never develops therefore the uterine tubes, uterus, cervix and most of the vagina are absent. The external genitalia are present although they are atypical. The clitoris is abnormally large and often sprouts coarse hair and the vestibule (or what remains of the vagina) extends only a short distance beyond the vulval lips. These animals will never cycle properly or show signs of being on heat. Unfortunately all these attributes mean that freemartins are sterile and impossible for use in a breeding herd. Often freemartinism is picked up during attempts to synchronise oestrus cycles, AI or during preg testing.

