



AUTUMN 2018

After a long, hot and dry Summer Autumn is here. Hoping for good Autumn rains on the horizon.

Check out our cheeky take on the ball-tampering saga to help promote desexing on our facebook videos!

Raw Chicken linked to Neurological

Many owners of dogs, particularly smaller breeds, like to feed their pets raw chicken necks. Dogs love the taste, and many owners believe they are beneficial for their teeth.

However, a recent study from Melbourne University links consumption of raw chicken meat with acute polyradiculoneuritis (APN), a serious paralysing condition. The University estimates about 300 dogs in Victoria are affected with APN each year through eating raw chicken. APN has been around for a long time, but until recently the cause of the debilitating condition has been a mystery. It is now believed that the bacteria *Campylobacter*, often found in raw chicken, triggers the dog's immune system, causing it to attack its own nerve roots.

APN is the canine equivalent to Guillain-Barre syndrome in humans. It results in an ascending paralysis, starting with weakness of the hind limbs which then progresses to involve the front legs, neck and head. Affected dogs may eventually recover, but it often takes six months or more of intensive nursing care, and the condition can be fatal if the chest muscles governing breathing become affected.

Raw or incompletely cooked chicken is frequently contaminated with bacteria and is a common source of gastrointestinal infections (i.e. "food poisoning") in both pets and humans. And if dog owners need yet another reason to stay away from raw chicken necks this is one (dogs that we treat for constipation have often been fed chicken necks in the preceding days, and chicken necks can get stuck in the esophagus or intestines).

Raw Chicken and Paralysis	1
Cat Enclosures	2
Newsletter Subscription	
Vaginal Prolapse in Cattle	3
Anthrax and Sudden Death	4

Chicken meat can be safely fed to dogs as long as it is thoroughly cooked and the bones removed.

For dental care, prescription dental diets, dog chews, teeth brushing and regular scale and polishes at the veterinary hospital are far safer options.

Linda Bradbury
Veterinarian



Feeding of raw chicken to dogs is not recommended



Raw chicken necks have been linked to *Campylobacter* bacteria associated paralysis in dogs. They also pose a risk of esophageal or intestinal obstruction or perforation and can contribute to constipation.

Cat Enclosures and Cat Netting

A cat enclosure is a great way to allow your cat the freedom to go outside without the associated risks. When cats are outdoors they can be run over by cars, attacked by other cats or dogs and also can attack native wildlife. They may also wander into neighbouring yards which some people dislike. In our area it is a requirement by law to keep your pets on your own property at all times. In an enclosure they are free to still run around and climb, which is important exercise and



behaviour for most cats. The enclosure is usually attached to the house and can be accessed via a cat door. Many people have made very creative enclosures that involve multiple areas connected by tunnels and incorporating natural elements like trees. There are several companies making the netting that is usually used for the enclosures or free standing enclosures like large rabbit hutches are also available. The freestanding enclosures include hiding spaces, ramps, scratching posts and other features that enrich the environment of the cat. Using the netting you can enclose already existing areas where your cat likes to play outside. The netting is UV stable and should last for 10 years or more exposed to the outside world. Netting is black in colour and blends in reasonably well in the backyard much like the nets around a trampoline. It can be bought in certain sizes or shapes or just on a roll that allows you to get creative with a design of your own choosing. Some well enclosed backyards may allow netting applied on an angle to the top of the fence to keep cats in without having netting overhead.

If you are looking for more information or ideas the CatMax Enclosures facebook page is a good place to start. Additionally www.catnets.com.au is another supplier of cat netting.

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!

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

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Vaginal Prolapse in Cattle

Vaginal Prolapse in cattle

Dr Kirri Solly-Slade. DVM

Autumn calving is well and truly upon us and with this comes possible complications including the occurrence of vaginal or uterine prolapse. Prior to calving vaginal prolapse is a risk and is outlined in this article. After calving, uterine prolapse is a possibility and this will be outlined in next month's article.

Vaginal prolapse is when the vagina is everted and pushed outside of the vulva, in some cases the cervix is also prolapsed along with the vagina. It will appear as a mass of pink tissue extending from the vulva and can range in size from a grapefruit to the size of a basketball.

Vaginal prolapse usually occurs in mature cows, within the last two months of gestation or in the weeks or days prior to calving. Several factors lead to the occurrence of vaginal prolapse in cattle. The presence of high levels of the reproductive hormones estrogen and relaxin at the end of gestation lead to the softening of the muscles and tissues throughout the body particularly within the pelvic canal. The relaxation from these hormones combined with an increase in pressure in the abdomen either from a particularly large gravid uterus, a calf positioned with its feet in the vaginal canal, an overly bloated forestomach or an excessive amount of fat leads to the vagina being pushed out from its normal position. It is because of these risk factors that over-conditioned, obese, mature cows are most commonly affected by vaginal prolapse. There is also a genetic component and for this reason you should cull any cows that have a vaginal prolapse and avoid using bulls that came from a line with a history of the problem.

Straining due to the irritation felt at the beginning of a prolapse or when faeces is passed can cause the prolapse to worsen and for more tissue to be everted. For this reason a prolapse can progress from a small baseball sized amount of tissue that only is extruded for short periods of time to a large prolapsed which if left untreated can become swollen and impede the normal flow of both blood and urine in the region. For this reason a veterinarian should be contacted as early as possible to perform an epidural, reduce and stabilise a vaginal prolapse before major complications occur.



Classic presentation of an early vaginal prolapse in a cow. Pink basketball like protrusion from the vulva.

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Anthrax and Sudden Death

Anthrax- An important cause of sudden death in cattle and sheep.

Dr. Kirri Solly-Slade

Anthrax is the name given to a highly infectious disease caused by a bacterial organism named *Bacillus anthracis*. The bacterial spores can survive in the environment for decades and can accumulate in soil or animal products such as wool or fertilisers (blood and bone). Anthrax can affect a wide range of animals including people however it is most important in Victoria because of outbreaks in cattle and sheep particularly along the ‘anthrax belt’ that spans NSW and Victoria. The most recent outbreak was over 5 different sheep properties around the Swan Hill region in March 2017. Usually outbreaks occur in the warmer months but this is not always the case.

In cattle anthrax causes sudden death due to a quickly developing and completely overwhelming septicaemia* Death usually occurs suddenly with little or no clinical signs noticed prior to this. In cases where clinical signs are noted animals are usually deceased within 72 hours before which animals exhibit a fever and are lethargic, lying down and not eating. Widespread blood clotting deficiencies occur so animals may be found with evidence of bleeding from the eyes, nose, mouth, or anus.

If an animal dies suddenly without an obvious cause it is important to rule out anthrax. The animal should not be moved from its location until testing has occurred as this may lead to the spread of infectious spores. Your veterinarian will probably be able to access funding from the government in order to assist with investigations of this kind. Preliminary results can be processed on farm with a quick 15 minute test procedure. If anthrax is suspected take care to wear protective clothing when handling carcasses as humans can be infected with the pathogen.

* Septicaemia is the presence of high levels of bacteria circulating within the blood stream

Note: If you suspect an animal may have died from anthrax, immediately contact your private veterinarian, local Agriculture Victoria Animal Health and Welfare (AHW) staff or call the Agriculture Victoria Customer Call Centre on 136 186. You can also check out the Agriculture Victoria website for more information on government subsidies, outbreaks and more.

