



Auckland Veterinary Services Ltd

Welcome to issue number forty two of Auckland Veterinary Services Newsletter.

This issue we have advice on what to do if you lose a pet, some insider information about laboratory tests, we let you know how you can win a pamper pack and there is an article on the that age old problem of abscesses from cat fights. Make sure you visit our website at www.aucklandvetservices.co.nz for even more information about caring for your pets.

We hope you enjoy this issue. We would love to hear of any topic ideas you may have, just let us know!
The Team at Auckland Veterinary Services



**Buy Iams Cat Food For Your Chance To
WIN A Pamper Pack For Your Cat
PLUS \$100 Skin Care Voucher For YOU**

Cat Abscesses

A lot of cat owners are familiar with abscesses and frequent the vet often to get their cat treated. The good news is that abscesses from cat fights are less likely in winter as most cats want to be warm and snug at home.

Abscesses are accumulations of pus that usually form as a result of puncture wounds inflicted during cat fights (real fights or mock fights). Animal teeth and claws easily puncture skin and introduce bacteria under the skin. The skin heals quickly and the bacteria becomes trapped, which creates infectious pockets of pus that are referred to as abscesses.

There can be other causes of abscesses such as foreign bodies like grass seeds, splinters etc.

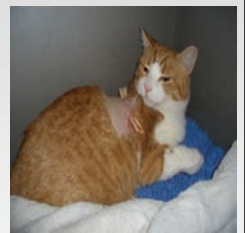
Treatment of the abscess will depend on the location, size and stage of the abscess. The key to getting an abscess to heal is drainage.

Small, uncomplicated abscesses may respond to medical treatment (usually pain relief and antibiotics), while larger and more extensive abscesses may require surgical treatment. Proper surgical management of abscesses often requires the placement of a drain or latex tube (under general anaesthetic) to provide an escape route for the pus as well as antibiotics and pain relief.

Signs that your cat may have an abscess:

- * There is a sudden loss of appetite.
- * They become less active and/or may sit 'hunched over' for long periods of time.
- * May be reluctant to move or play.
- * Reluctance for you to touch him or her, being in obvious pain when you do touch them.
- * You may notice a lump or hot inflamed area
- * Combined with other symptoms above your cat may begin to limp.

You may not always notice an abscess as the cat's fur can hide it, so if you have concerns about your cat please call us on 818 5697.



Be Aware of Chemical Burns

Don't think it could never happen to your pet. Most people whose pets suffer this kind of accident never thought that it could either. While there are many products that can cause chemical burns to you and your pets, in our experience the most common cause of these types of injuries, is becoming products used to remove moss and mould from the exterior of houses. Whether it be a product you use yourself or those used by professionals please make sure you are aware of the precautions you need to take. Even products that say they are safe to use around pets can cause problems when the substance is in the concentrated form or while the diluted form is still wet.

The problem occurs when your pet comes in contact with an area that has been treated; this could be a cat on a roof or a dog sitting on the deck/pavement. The animal gets the chemical on their fur which can cause problems but they can also lick it off, causing damage to their mouth tongue and throat. Cats in particular will walk over a chemically treated area then lick their paws to remove it, transferring the chemical to the mouth and throat.

Symptoms: Excessive salivation, pain and redness around the mouth, ulcers may be visible in the mouth and on the tongue, loss of appetite, lethargy, painful skin lesions (usually isolated to the feet and pads). These symptoms may take a few days to appear after the exposure.

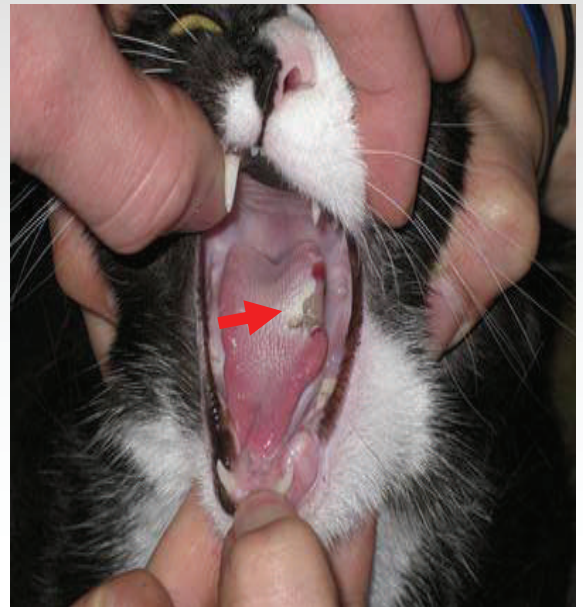
Treatment: Wash the affected area with large amounts of clean tepid water; this will help remove, or at least dilute, any remaining chemical. Take your pet to a vet clinic.

Treatment and its success vary depending on the severity of the burns. It is not uncommon for there to be areas of dead skin that eventually fall off. Surgery to remove the dead skin and/or long-term bandaging of the affected areas may be required.

Often your pet will refuse to eat due to painful ulcers in the mouth or pain from skin lesions.

Prevention:

1. Carefully check instructions and warnings on chemicals like mould and mildew removers.
2. Ensure your pet (and neighbours pets where possible) cannot access the area while the chemical is active.
3. If using professional help, ask them for any special instructions regarding household pets.
4. Where possible, choose a less toxic, pet friendly product.



This ulcer (from a chemical burn) is relatively small, often the whole mouth is affected.

Our Local Bird Rescue

We have a passionate group of supporters based in Green Bay who generously give up their time to rescue; rehabilitate and release orphaned sick and injured birds.

The bird rescue centre accepts and cares for all New Zealand birds and wildlife whether they are native, non-native or pet.

Check out their website to learn more about what they do.
www.birdrescue.org.nz



Toby's Talk

Hi, I hope you are all well and looking after yourselves this winter.

I have a love hate relationship with winter, it's cold but you get to snuggle up nice and warm in bed.



Don't forget to take care of your pets when it is cold especially those who suffer from arthritis. A lot of extra TLC is needed in the colder months, if you need some advice just ask our nurses, they have great tips on what you can do for your elderly pets.

I know we covered flea stuff in the last newsletter but it is important to keep treating all year round so I just wanted to mention that again.

I look forward to seeing you all soon, if I'm not in reception I'll be in my warm bed or trying to steal Pepsi's food in the cattery.

xxoo Toby

Laboratory Testing

It is now common place in veterinary medicine for pets to have laboratory tests to help diagnose their medical problems.

The most common laboratory testing is of blood and urine. They are useful in a number of circumstances

- To rule in or out disease processes
- To establish a normal or healthy baseline level for disease monitoring
- To help determine the success, or otherwise, of a treatment
- To measure pregnancy or ovulation processes

Blood Samples

In cats and small dogs we normally collect blood samples from your pet's jugular vein which is located in their neck. For medium size and larger dogs we collect the blood sample from the cephalic vein in the front leg. We may need to shave the area to gain greater visibility of the blood vessels and to ensure that the procedure is as sterile as possible. Collection of blood samples is relatively pain free (your pet will feel as much discomfort as you do when you have blood collected). Blood tests are used to look at various compounds and components carried within the blood. The results give indications of how well organs are functioning and whether infection is present.

Urine Samples

The most diagnostic urine samples are collected by cystocentesis. This is a procedure where we pass a fine needle through the abdominal wall directly into the bladder and this results in a more sterile sample. Most animals tolerate this procedure very well without any need for sedation. In male dogs urine can also be collected by passing a catheter up the penis into the bladder. The third way to obtain a urine sample is by collecting some midstream urine that your pet passes normally. A midstream sample collection is not considered sterile as urine can be contaminated as it is being passed. Urine tests are normally used, in conjunction with blood tests, to check on how well the kidneys are functioning and whether there are any other non-structural abnormalities in the entire urinary tract.

Tissue Samples

For easily accessible areas, like a lot of skin lumps, a fine needle can be passed into the lump and a sample of cells is collected into the needle. This process is called fine needle aspiration or biopsy. Most animals allow fine needle aspiration without sedation. Cytology is used to try and identify the type of tissue making up the lump. This information allows us to decide whether the lump needs to be removed urgently or not. If the lump requires removal, cytology helps us decide how much healthy tissue around the lump needs to be removed to try and ensure that the lump does not recur.

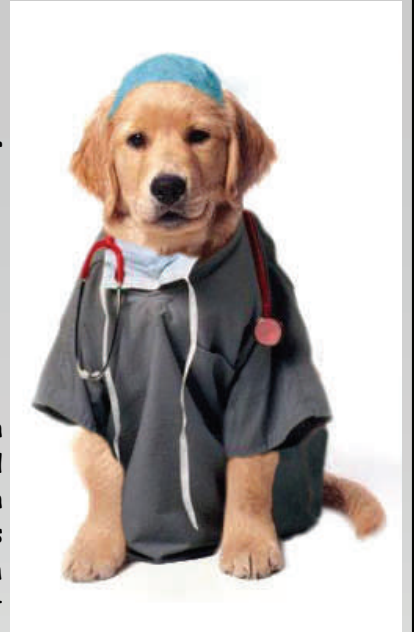
For less accessible areas, or tissues that do not produce good fine needle biopsy samples a tissue biopsy will be required. This is where we actually surgically remove a sample, or the whole area of concern. The sample is then preserved in formalin and sent to the laboratory. Surgical biopsy normally requires a full general anaesthetic.



Results Samples we have taken from your pet are sent to the laboratory as soon as possible. For urine and blood samples collected in the morning we will normally have the results back within 24 hours. Please note that for tests such as tissue histology or urine cultures it can take several weeks for us to get the full results. We will inform you at the time of your pet's sample collection how long it is likely to take before we receive results from the laboratory.

When we receive your pet's results back from the laboratory, the veterinarian will review the results along with your pet's history and physical examination findings. The veterinarian, or nurse, will phone you as soon as we have reviewed your pet's case. Please ensure that we have all of your contact details.

We may want to perform additional tests, once we have the initial results, but we will always gain your permission to do this first as there will be additional costs involved.



Lost and Found

Losing a Pet:

Losing a pet can be very devastating; it may be one of the most stressful times you go through in your life. The more effort you put in to finding your pet the more success you are likely to have.

Here is a checklist of the steps you can take to recover your pet.

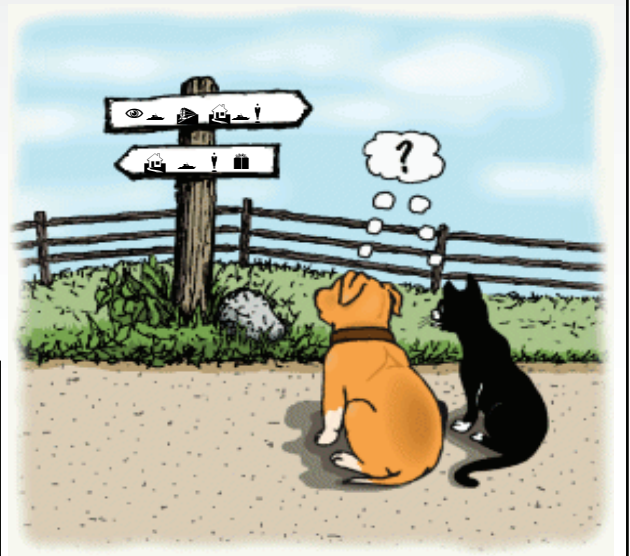
- ✓ Search your house and garden and also ask your immediate neighbours to check their properties. Your pet may be locked in a garden shed or under the house.
- ✓ Enter a lost pet notice on petsonthenet.co.nz and trademe.co.nz as soon as you can. We recommend including a picture as it increases your chances of success. Search the pets found section on both those websites, continue searching them as often as you can.
- ✓ Ring SPCA 2567300, Waitakere Animal Welfare 8367777 and any other local authorities, all local vets in your area, including after hours vets.
- ✓ Create mail box flyers (with photo, preferably in colour) and deliver these to all houses in your and surrounding streets. We suggest you repeat the mail drop regularly until you find your pet. AVS are happy to display one of your flyers on our notice board. You can either post it to 4143 Great North Road, Glen Eden or email to auckvet@auckvet.co.nz. You could also display the flyer at your local dairy or supermarket.
- ✓ Put a lost pet sign up on your fence and/or roadside, everyone driving or walking past will see your pet is missing and know where to come if they see them.
- ✓ Another option is placing an advertisement in the local paper.

Finding an Animal:

Someone will be missing their beloved pet and the best chance of reuniting them is for you to:

- ✓ Ask your neighbours if they have lost a pet. The pet may be a new one that you are not aware your neighbours have.
- ✓ Phone the local council and the SPCA so they will have a record of the animal's details if their owners report the animal as lost.
- ✓ Enter the found animal's details on petsonthenet.co.nz (it's free) and trademe.co.nz.
- ✓ Have the animal checked for the presence of a microchip. If one is present then the microchip databases can be searched and hopefully the pet's owners identified. If the pet ends up in the pound, the SPCA or at the local vet clinic they will do this.
- ✓ Place flyers around the neighbourhood saying that you have found an animal.

Just imagine that it is your pet that is missing and do what you would appreciate from others.



Get to know the AVS team.

We have a great team of staff who are dedicated to providing exceptional client service and patient care. Most of the team have been with AVS for many years so we thought you may enjoy getting to know more about them.

This issue we get to know **Kelsey** a little better. Kelsey is our helpful kennel assistant. Kelsey started working at AVS in 2010 and lives with her family in Titirangi.

What is your favourite food? - Italian and Turkish

Other than New Zealand where would you like to live?

- Anywhere in Europe

What pets do you have at home? - a fish tank, 2 rabbits, a German Shepherd named Scully and a Siberian Husky named Taylor.

What do you do in your spare time? - Surf lifesaving, dancing and reading

What do you enjoy most about your job? - Watching in on the occasional surgery and helping the nurses when they need assistance.

Who is your favourite celebrity? - Emily Deschanel (from Bones)

Monthly Winners

Each month we give away a packet of Advantage to one of our clients who return the AVS client questionnaire. We send client questionnaires to randomly selected existing clients and all new clients. The questionnaires are also available on our website for anyone to complete. Every client who returns a completed survey goes into a draw to win a pack of Advantage for their pet.

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of our newsletter.

The next issue is available in December 2011.

Look out for it then!

Our newsletter is always available on our website first!

Visit our website soon: www.aucklandvetservices.co.nz

Caroline, Bob, Georgina, Debbie, Nicole, Mark, Andrea, Danielle, Rosie, Kelsey and Toby.