



Gatehouse Veterinary Centre NEWS

Speedy tests

We have recently updated our lab equipment and now have an extensive range of top of the range machines in our Lavister hospital. This means we can carry out certain blood tests and have results back the same day! Usually we send all of our blood tests to an external laboratory, but having these machines will provide a fantastic service for you and your pets.

Having this equipment will also allow our fully qualified nurses to offer blood tests in some of our clinics to give you that peace of mind.

Xmas Fun

This December we will have two raffles running for a Xmas hamper! One for dogs, and one for cats. These will be full of treats, toys and discounts for your furry friend!

We would also like to make our Christmas tree more personal this year, and would love to hang our own handmade baubles on the tree, featuring our patients! Send a photo of your pet to reception@thegatehousevets.com or

post it on our Facebook page with a little story about them. We will then turn it into a bauble and hang them on our tree!



Avoiding Christmas calamities!

The festive season is an exciting time, with plenty of lovely food, chocolate galore, presents, visitors, not to mention all the decorations and the tree! So here are some tips to keep your pets out of trouble over this fun time.

Festive food alert! With so much extra food in the house it is essential to keep it well away from pets. **Rich foods** can lead to upset tummies, but be especially aware of **raisins** in puddings, pies and cakes, since they can be very toxic to the kidneys. **Chocolate** is another festive favourite, but as little as 50g of plain chocolate can be fatal in small dogs. Turkey meat is fine but if your pets get hold of **turkey bones**, there is the potential for dangerous gut blockages. Also, don't forget about the **presents** under the tree! Dogs, with their sensitive noses will be able to tell exactly which gifts are edible and the wrappings and ribbons won't do their tummies any good either!

Visitor alert! Christmas is a time for families and our homes are often full of visitors celebrating the festive cheer. Many pets will revel in this extra attention but some will find it extremely stressful. If your animals are more shy than sociable, make sure they have a safe space they can retreat to undisturbed.



Winter walks: when going for an after lunch walk, take care of your dog's paws. Snow and ice can ball up between the toes, especially on furry feet, and road grit can cause nasty sores if it is not washed off once you are home. Also slim fine coated breeds such as whippets find it hard to conserve heat and will benefit from a dog coat in cold weather.

Pinch an inch! With many pets spending more time indoors during the winter months – they are getting less exercise and need correspondingly less food. Keep an eye out for any weight gain since excess weight can cause a range of health problems including heart disease and diabetes.

If you would like any further information on any of the topics mentioned in this article, please speak to a member of our team. Have fun with your pets and stay safe over the festive season!



Dastardly Decorations!

Make sure the decorations and the tree are either well out of reach or securely fastened down. Cats especially, find the twinkly lights, tinsel and baubles irresistible and will love to bat them about or, worse, chew on them. Which not only could ruin your lovely decorations but could cause them harm if they are accidentally swallowed or broken.

Toxic plant alert!

When cats are not going out as much they also like to amuse themselves by chewing house plants. Beware of **lilies** which are toxic to cats. All parts of the plant, including the pollen, are toxic, causing kidney failure.



E-Cigarette awareness

These are a new hazard for dogs that chew everything. The high concentration of nicotine poses a very serious risk to chewing pets.

Cat with wool, rabbit, dog in snow: Jane Burton

Pet Corner



In our quarterly newsletter we are going to have a short piece about one of the staff members pets. This time it's Riley, Jill, our Practice Managers dog. Riley came to live with Jill and her family on the 15th June 2015 after retiring from the police force! Riley used to be a search

and attack dog for North Wales Police and unfortunately had to retire after four years due to a hind leg injury which caused permanent damage. Jill already has a German Shephard called Roxy, and thought Riley would fit in well. So he did!

"He was not allowed to make a noise when on the job, which was something we did not realise" explained Jill. "He kept squeaking, I thought he was hurt or something wrong but it turns out he was happy and excited. Something he still does today when he forgets to bark!"

"He is now a big gentle giant, and people who knew him do not recognise the change in him. Roxy and Riley are like an old married couple. Where one goes, the other one follows. One day Roxy had been naughty and was sent to bed in the kitchen which is behind a baby gate. Riley sat right next to the gate to keep her company and would not leave her. It's so hard to believe he was a police dog. At night after his walk, he gets his chew, climbs up on the sofa for a cuddle and curls up besides me. We are smitten!"



Seeing a nurse today, may keep the vet at bay!

Our fully qualified nurses Kelly, Nancy and Marian have lots of skills and qualifications, and love to bond with our patients and clients. Marian is qualified in canine behaviour and Kelly is currently studying a feline nursing diploma. We offer an extensive range of nurse clinics in our Rossett surgery and feline nurse clinics in Borrás on a Wednesday morning. These are often free of charge or at a lower cost than a vet consultation. These include:

Weight clinics

If you are concerned about your pet being underweight or overweight, or would just like to know if they are ideal, a nurse can carry out a weight check and discuss diet and exercise regimes.

Behaviour clinics

If there is any aspect of your pets behaviour that is concerning you, don't worry! Kelly can offer feline advice and Marian can offer canine advice.

Kidney clinics

If your pet has recently been diagnosed with kidney problems, our nurses will carry out routine checks including blood pressure, and will take blood samples to monitor your pets health.

Hyperthyroid clinics

As with the kidney clinics, a nurse will monitor your pets health, take a monitoring blood sample and check your pets blood pressure.

Senior clinics

If your pet is over seven years old, pop them in for senior check. The nurses will ask a few questions and assess your pet to see if there is anything extra we can do for them to ensure they live a long and happy life!

Stress clinics

Christmas time is a busy time! Some pets don't like the disruption so pop in for a nurse clinic to see how we can help.

Our nurses can also clip your pets claws, empty anal glands, give second and third vaccinations, take blood pressure, provide flea and worm treatment, give general health checks and provide lots of advice and information you may need. Ask our lovely receptionists to book you a nurse appointment today!



KEEP CALM
I'M A
VET NURSE

Winter aches and pains



The balmy summer months are sadly just a distant memory and as the colder weather kicks in, older pets often noticeably slow down and stiffen up. Just as in ourselves, the low temperatures can really affect their joints. Those pets already on medication for arthritis may need an increased dose, and we commonly diagnose the disease during this time of year.

Arthritis (also termed degenerative joint disease) is a condition in which the joints, which should be smooth moving and well lubricated become rough, cracked and swollen. In the early stages your pet may just seem a bit stiff after resting but still able to exercise freely once they have got moving, but as it progresses the signs become more obvious. They may really slow up on walks, struggle with stairs or start to limp. However, remember that our pets are brave! Very rarely do they cry out in pain, even if you have a good feel at their sore joints.

Arthritis is most common in older pets, largely due to "wear and tear", but it can strike the youngsters too. For them, rather than simply an ageing change it is generally triggered by conformational issues – essentially malformed joints such as hip dysplasia, which puts a joint under unnatural strain and triggers the painful changes. Cats can also suffer from arthritis, with surveys estimating between 60-90% of elderly cats being affected.

To help your pets with sore joints, especially in the winter, make sure they always sleep on a deep, soft bed and keep the ambient temperatures warm – you could even consider a pet safe heat pad or hot water bottle. Make sure they get out and about every day to keep their joints moving, and don't let them put on any extra winter weight! Obesity will really put their limbs under strain. Finally, make sure you keep up with their pain relieving medications and supplements, if they are on them, and if you are concerned that they may be struggling, please come and talk to us!

Pop in to see a nurse to discuss if you think your pet is stiff or slowing down. There are many things we can do to support them.

X-rays and arthritis

Radiography is commonly used to investigate joint problems.



X-ray of a **normal hip joint** – note the perfectly formed "ball and socket" joint of the hip joint.



Arthritic hip joint in a dog with hip dysplasia. Note the very shallow ball and socket joint and the secondary new bone around the joint (arrowed in yellow)



Don't forget!

Although it's getting colder, parasites are still a problem all year round! If you are on our Pet Health Club, don't forget to pick up your pets parasite treatment.

Don't forget we also offer 25% discount on Royal Canin and Hills diets and 10% off other brands.

The Pet Health Club also gives you 10% off all pet shop sales! Treat your pet to a new toy or a fancy Red Dingo collar and lead this Christmas!

Pet Health
Club



Not on the Pet Health Club and wanting to get these great discounts? Ask any member of staff for more information, or visit our website: www.thegatehousevets.com