



Find us on
facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/bridgevets>

Consultations by Appointment

Mon-Fri: 8am-6.30pm
Saturday: 8.30am-1.00pm

Tel: 01603 783920

24 Hour Emergency Service
After Hours call: 01603 867330
www.bridgevet.co.uk
bridgevets@bridgevet.co.uk

Booster alert!

Kennel Cough – is your dog vaccinated?



As dogs go out and about more, so the risk of Kennel Cough rises. This very infectious cough is most commonly

caused by a bacterium – *Bordetella* – and a mixture of viruses. Affected pets typically show signs of a very harsh, hacking cough which usually develops over 24 hours and can often last for weeks.

Only intra-nasal Kennel Cough vaccine drops will give your dog protection against *Bordetella* and we strongly recommend that dogs are vaccinated as kennel cough isn't just found in kennels.

Don't forget rabbits!



Did you know that mosquitoes and biting flies can spread the deadly Myxomatosis virus from the wild rabbit population

(where it is endemic) to pet rabbits in your back garden?

However the good news is that we can vaccinate rabbits against **Myxomatosis** and **Viral Haemorrhagic Disease (VHD)** – including the new strain **VHD2** – all of which are deadly for rabbits.

Rabbit photo: Warren Photographic

Summer itches – could it be parasites?

At last, summer is here! However, the warmer weather is not only enjoyed by us and our pets, it is also the time when parasites that cause skin irritations flourish as well!



Fleas are living in abundance on wild animals as well as domesticated ones at this time of year. Therefore, cats that hunt are particularly vulnerable to catching more than they bargained for! Dogs can also easily pick them up from simply being out and about.



Symptoms of flea infestations are different for cats and dogs. In dogs problems are generally easier to spot as they tend to start to scratch excessively. Cats will lick and groom themselves more, sometimes so much that they cause bald patches. However, they often remove any signs of fleas from their coats, so the cause of the problem isn't always obvious.



Many animals aren't particularly sensitive to flea bites, so just because they aren't showing any signs of a problem, it does not mean your pets aren't infected! At this time of year, without protection, it is reasonable to assume that most pets will be carrying a few extra passengers!



Harvest Mites will also cause itching issues in the summer and are picked up in woodland and grassland where they swarm onto passing pets. They are tiny, bright orange, and tend to congregate between the toes or on the ear flaps. They are very irritating, causing itchy crusting lesions, but can be difficult to spot as they are so small.

We are here to help, so please do get in touch if your pets are suffering with summer skin problems. We can check for signs of fleas and other parasites and recommend the best form of parasite prevention for your pets.

Permethrins beware! Finally, many supermarket bought spot-on flea products for dogs contain permethrins. These are generally safe for dogs, but should NEVER be applied to **cats** as they are VERY TOXIC!



Flea infestations in cats often lead to over grooming and bald patches, commonly with crusting



The bright orange mites often cluster together and are commonly found between the toes

...or could it be an allergy?



Skin allergies are reasonably common in dogs, especially at this time of year. Pollens from plants, grasses and trees irritate the skin. The most common places for sore spots to develop are where pollens land – typically the feet, stomach, armpits, groin and ears.

The skin in these areas will become pink and the dog will start to excessively lick, scratch or chew at them, causing more damage which often triggers bacterial infections, making the problem even worse.

The initial treatment for this condition is medication to reduce the itching, combat any infections introduced by scratching or licking, and also to reduce the exposure to allergens if possible. Longer term treatments may include attempting to identify the underlying cause of the allergy and then creating a 'vaccine' to gradually desensitise the pet to the allergy and this can prove helpful in many dogs. Please contact us today if you are worried about your pet's skin.



Allergic irritation and foot chewing in a dog.



Things are hotting up!

Woo hoo – the summer is here! But when the heat turns up, the dangers to pets increase too. To keep your dog, cat and other furry friends safe, make sure you are prepared. To help you we've put together some top summer survival tips:

Summer walks: When walking your dogs, do try to avoid the hottest times of the day. Heat stroke is a real risk for many breeds but particularly those with shorter noses or who are overweight. However, this doesn't mean they can't enjoy the great weather – just make use of the light evenings and go out when it is cooler.



UV Alert! Just like us, sunburn can cause problems for our pets. Cats are natural sun bathers, but cats with white noses and ear tips are particularly vulnerable to sun burn and subsequent skin cancer.

This risk can be reduced by keeping them out of the sun, or by applying sunblock to these areas during the summer months.



Ear tip of a cat showing early (reddened) cancerous changes. If your pet is showing signs of skin changes, please call us at once.

Summer shade: Guinea pigs and rabbits need an area of shade so that they do not overheat – guinea pigs in particular are unable to regulate their body temperature and both they and rabbits are vulnerable to sunburn.



Flystrike is a very serious problem at this time of year. Rabbit rear ends often become damp and this moist area attracts flies, which lay their eggs there. These eggs hatch out into maggots which can cause life threatening infections. Rabbit rear ends should be inspected daily for fly eggs and maggots, and soiled bedding should be cleaned out daily. Call us immediately if you are worried.



Bee and wasp stings are another seasonal problem. Some pets are allergic to their stings and may need prompt veterinary attention.

So – do enjoy the summer and remember to check your pets' coats for pesky **grass seeds** which can get trapped and cause problems. And finally – **NEVER leave pets in cars. Even on dull days, they can heat up and become ovens.**

Dental disease is a silent process that may cause many other illnesses, including kidney, heart, and blood infections. It is a silent process because most pets will still eat and hide any pain or discomfort they may feel. When pets don't receive the dental care they need to keep their teeth clean and their gums healthy, their mouths can harbour bad bacteria.

How does your pets mouth look?

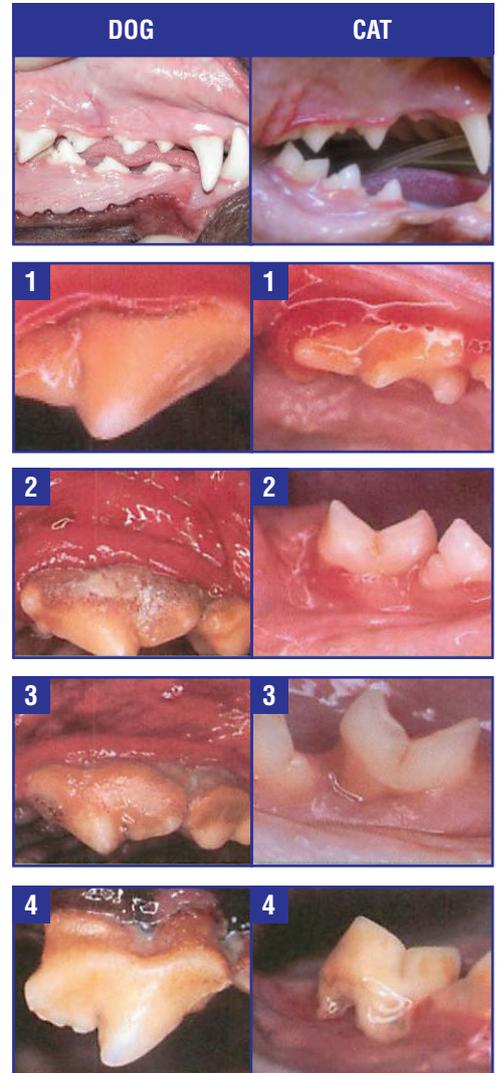
TOP: This is a healthy mouth with normal bacterial flora, sound gums, and minimal plaque build-up.

STAGE 1: gingivitis You can see the inflammation caused on the gum tissue from the bacterial build-up in the beginning stages of dental disease. The health of the mouth is starting to decline.

Stage 2: early periodontitis The entire gum is inflamed and swollen, the mouth is painful and there will be some bad breath. Dental care at this point can prevent irreversible damage.

Stage 3: moderate periodontitis The gum is red and bleeding due to infection and tartar, the gums are receding and the mouth is sore with persistent bad breath. Tooth loss is probable.

Stage 4: severe periodontitis This mouth is full of pus, bacteria, and disease. The teeth are falling out and the gums are severely inflamed and infected. Bacteria may be spreading throughout the body which can damage the kidneys, liver and heart. Tooth loss is inevitable.



It is not just dogs and cats who suffer from dental problems, rabbits, guinea pigs and other rodents do too. These pets can suffer from a condition called malocclusion where their teeth do not meet properly thus they do not grind down effectively – leading to sharp painful spurs causing pain, weight loss inappetence and worse...

To help prevent your pets teeth from deteriorating and to keep them with a healthy smile, we offer a range of dental health products and services including dental check-ups, advice, toothbrushes and chews, for help and advice give the team at Bridge Vets a call.

Sign up to our Pet Healthcare Plans and receive 10% discount on dental procedures.

Our Pet Healthcare Plans cover routine vaccinations for dogs, cats and rabbits, year round flea and worming treatments for dogs and cats, along with many other benefits including discounts on dental procedures – all for a small fixed monthly price – speak to a member of the team for more details, or call us on **01603 783920**.

