



Veterinary Centre



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE Platinum

SPRING 2022

# NEWS

## Practice News



### GOLD STANDARD

We were delighted to receive notification from the Best of Walsall that we are once again recipients of their Gold Standard Award for continued outstanding customer

feedback online throughout 2021. We received over 180 five star reviews last year via Google, Facebook, Vet Help Direct and the Best of Walsall. Visit the testimonials page on our websites to check them out! With a growing reliance on online reviews for deciding whether to use a business or not, your feedback is more important than ever. It helps pet owners make informed decisions, lets us know what we're doing well and where we can do even better. Please keep sharing!



### YOU ARE AMAZING!

A huge thank you to everyone who donated food and pet accessories for our Give a Pet a Christmas Dinner campaign in December. We were overwhelmed by your kindness. We collected an incredible 430 tins and pouches of wet food,

over 80kg of dry food, more than 100 packets of treats and 80 toys! Not to mention bedding, feeding bowls, puppy pads, leads, collars, towels and even hand knitted blankets and a pet hamper. Donations have been split between Birmingham Dogs Home in Coven and local cat and rabbit charities to support homeless pets in shelters waiting for their forever homes. The charities are incredibly grateful for your loving support.

### NEW TEAM MEMBERS

Look out for some new faces in practice over the next couple of months! As we continue to grow, we are very excited to welcome two additional Registered Veterinary Nurses (RVNs) and an additional veterinary surgeon onto our clinical team. Rachael Turner is a highly experienced

RVN with a passion for new learning and driving standards, and joins us from Stafford Vets4Pets where she was feline nurse advocate and recently completed an International Society of Feline Medicine Advanced Certificate in Feline Behaviour. Cody Adams has worked both as an RVN in general practice and referral hospital, has a passion for pet nutrition in which she is studying for a Nursing Certificate and comes to us from her role as a branch surgery Senior RVN with St George's Veterinary Group. And vet Olga Urbanczyk also joins us from St George's in Wolverhampton, where she has worked for the past five years, her experience including surgical rotations in their fast paced main referral hospital where she has performed a wide portfolio of procedures. Our new clinicians will be a brilliant addition to our existing team. Find out more about them in our summer newsletter.



## Continually investing in your pets!

We're really excited about two new pieces of equipment we've purchased in 2022 to improve the service we offer to your pets.



Our **new portable ultrasound scanner** is a hand-held device and means that, where appropriate, we can now scan pets in consult rooms. The probe connects to an iPad for good image clarity and it's quick and easy to use during your pet's appointment. Great for FAST (Focussed Assessment with Sonography for Trauma) scanning or 'have a quick look' scanning (e.g. presence of fluid, womb

infection, bladder stones and pregnancy scans) and means your pet doesn't need to move through to a different room! If we think your pet would benefit from a further, more detailed scan, we have our ex-hospital Phillips ultrasound scanner on hand in our diagnostics suite. Scan-tastic!



Our **new HDO (High Definition Oscillometry) blood pressure monitor** is veterinary-specific, which means it's specifically calibrated and validated to measure blood pressure on pets as big as a Great Dane and as small as a rat! Oscillometric machines measure changes in the sound of blood flowing through arteries to measure blood pressure. The High Definition

machine uses a frequency 80 times higher than standard oscillometric machines and therefore is far more accurate in our small patients (compared to measuring blood pressure in humans). We still have our doppler machine (which uses a stethoscope to listen to the sound change) but the HDO machine is easier and faster, especially is anxious or stressed pets who won't stay still for very long!



### Tick alert!

Ticks love moist, mild conditions, and as Spring brings warmer weather, ticks start to become much more active. They thrive in woodland and long grass (prime dog-walking territory!) and can be found on

moorland too - normally anywhere where there are deer or livestock. Even your back garden can become a home for ticks if it's lush and shady and has visiting local wildlife. Ticks can transmit serious disease while they feed on their host - which could be your pet! Make sure your pet is protected with appropriate monthly parasite treatments to stay safe and well.

It's important to check pets for ticks regularly, and to know how to remove them safely. The simplest way is to use a tick hook, available in practice. Slip the prongs of the hook between the tick's shoulders and your pet's fur. Twist - either way - to 'unscrew' the tick's head from your pet's body. Never pull as you may leave the tick's head behind, causing infection. Watch our video of how to remove a tick on our 387 Vets Facebook page!

## Repeat medication orders

Just a reminder to please allow 48 hours between ordering and collecting repeat medications and flea and worming treatments. If you're able to give us a ring before you come down, we can make sure your meds are ready, and it's really helpful if we can take payment over the phone then too. This saves you waiting on arrival, and helps us to keep numbers in practice down.



387 Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Staffordshire WS6 6DP  
Tel: 01922 411755 • [www.387vets.com](http://www.387vets.com) • [www.wmcatclinic.co.uk](http://www.wmcatclinic.co.uk)

# Bringing your cat to the vets

Cats are independent, they like to be in control of their surroundings and are sensitive to new smells, so a visit to the vets can be stressful for our feline friends. With an increase in the number of cats coming to see us at The West Midlands Cat Clinic, we thought it would be helpful to share recommendations made by the cat charity International Cat Care for minimising feline stress on visits to the vets, from home to the consult room and back again!

## THE JOURNEY

- Use a robust carrier that's easy to clean
- Top opening carriers mean cats can gently be lifted in and out
- Familiar smells in the carrier will help your cat feel less stressed:
  - Use the carrier at home and encourage your cat to sleep (and even be fed) in the carrier
  - Line with familiar-smelling bedding
  - Gently rub a cloth around your cat's face to pick up their scent, and then rub the cloth over the inside of the carrier
  - Synthetic pheromone sprays can also help your cat feel calmer
  - Bring spare bedding that smells of home in case your cat soils the carrier
- Secure the carrier in the car so it can't move (with a seat belt or in the footwell)
- Put towels or padding underneath the carrier to further minimise movement in transit
- Pop a blanket or towel over the carrier on the journey to help your cat feel calmer
- Be reassuring and avoid loud noises

## FROM CAR TO CLINIC

- Take your time
- Hold the carrier carefully and avoid swinging it or banging it against any objects

## IN THE WAITING ROOM

- Place cat carriers on the cat table next to your sofa – cats feel safer raised off the ground
- Ask us for a cover for your carrier. New environments can be scary and blocking out the outside world can help cats feel less anxious as they are cocooned in their own safe space.

## IN THE CONSULT ROOM

Our team are cat trained and cat-centric and we treat all our feline visitors with patience, love and respect. Your cat will have time to acclimatise and explore before gentle examination, and there are treats and cuddles too!

**Feel free to ask us for more advice on feline stress management when you are next in!**



## Spring into action!

Spring is here at last with longer days, longer walks and warmer weather! With this in mind, here are a few seasonal tips to keep your pet safe:

**Stick to balls!** We want people to enjoy their walks but would advise picking the items they throw for their dogs with care. Sticks get a bad press and for very good reason. Sticks have a great ability to cause painful penetrating injuries, plus they are breakable, leaving foreign material behind as well as causing truly awful wounds. A safer option is using a ball instead – being mindful of getting the right size ball for your dog. It needs to be large enough that your dog isn't at risk of it getting stuck in his throat. And make sure it's not furry, as this can trap grit and wear down your dog's teeth.



This is a typical stick injury where the stick has become lodged in the dog's throat.

**Easter toxin alert!** Easter will soon be upon us and although the sweet treats available for humans are lovely, they can be hazardous for our pets. Dogs are very susceptible to **chocolate** toxicity. The stronger the chocolate, the more dangerous it can be, and as little as 50g of plain chocolate can prove fatal in small dogs. **Sultanas and raisins** found in hot cross buns and other seasonal delights should also be avoided as they can cause kidney failure in dogs. And beware of any cakes baked with the artificial sweetener **xylitol** as this is highly toxic to our canine companions.



Whilst on the subject of toxins, be very careful of **permethrins**. Many canine spot-on flea products bought from supermarkets and pet shops contain permethrins. While these are safe for dogs, they should *never* be applied to cats, since they are extremely poisonous to cats.

Follow advice given via the Poisons Guide on our website if you're worried your pet has eaten something they shouldn't or if in any doubt, give us a call.



## Lump alert: is your pet affected?



One of the benefits of regularly grooming your pets is that you can not only keep any eye out for lumps and bumps, but also a variety of parasites (including ticks and fleas). Plus – during the summer months, you may also find the grass awns of the meadow grasses which can cause problems if they become embedded.

If you do find what looks like a skin lump, it's important to get in touch so we can assess it. Lumps and bumps can come in a variety of shapes and sizes and there are numerous underlying causes including: allergic reactions (such as insect bites), abscesses, hernias (common in younger pets), and tumours.

Tumours are understandably the most worrying and are either *benign* – which tend to be slow growing and remain in one place, or *malignant* – which can be fast growing, invade the surrounding tissue and have the potential to spread to other parts of the body.

As with many things – speed is of the essence when dealing with lumps. Most lumps are much better dealt with when small rather than waiting until they are larger and much harder to treat. So – if you do discover a lump or bump on your pet, we are here to help – just give us a call!



Ticks are widespread across the UK and Ireland and may be mistaken as small lumps.



Skin lump on a dog



Skin lump on a cat