



PAWS, CLAWS & ALL FOURS



Winter 2017

Welcome

Welcome to Clutha Vets' mid-winter newsletter. We have a variety of articles for pet owners. We try to keep it topical and relevant. If you have any suggestions about topics we could cover please contact me, Peter Heslip, at the Clutha Clinic.

The Smartest Dog in the World?

As a vet it is common for people to tell us stories about how clever their pets are. I wasn't surprised recently when a client told me she owned the smartest dog in the world, but I wasn't expecting it might be true though. The lady went daily to feed her chickens and her dog usually came along. If the dog lagged behind her and was out of sight she would hide behind a tree and when the dog walked past jump out and go Boo. After a few times the dog starting going ahead, hid behind the tree and when she came past would jump out and go Woof. Even if it's not the smartest dog in the world it has a really good sense of humour.

Changing Times

The public attitude to animals has changed markedly in the more than 30 years since I graduated. This is particularly apparent in urban areas where pets are now seen as a part of the family. Dogs have made a gradual progression from the kennel to the owner's bed.

An example of how attitudes are changing is a seafood company in Sydney that was convicted of cruelty to a lobster and fined \$1500. The SPCA in New South Wales prosecuted after a complaint, with video, showed a worker cutting the tail off a visibly struggling lobster.

Rodeos and hunting are two things that can be contentious to some. The Animal Welfare Act 1999 has been amended so that reasonable hunting activity is not regarded as cruel treatment. MPI - Ministry for Primary Industries, the body responsible for animal welfare in NZ - has encouraged groups involved with hunting to define what they regard as reasonable hunting practice. The New Zealand Pig Hunting Association recently presented a draft Code of Conduct for Pig Hunting to the Animal Behaviour and Welfare Consultative Committee.

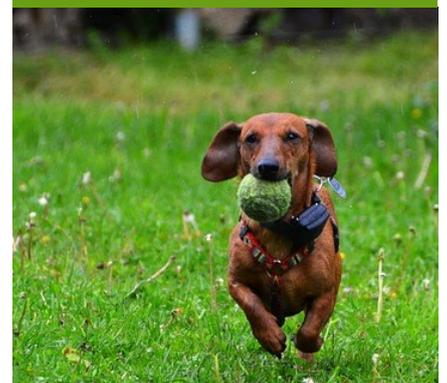
Puppy Pre-School

Clutha Vets run a Puppy Preschool at the Balclutha clinic on Monday evenings. This is for all pups aged from 8 to 16 weeks of age. The 4 week course includes socialisation, training and advice on health care.

We also run basic obedience classes at the Balclutha clinic on a Thursday evening. These classes are for dogs from 4 months of age upwards and teach them good manners, basic commands plus a few new tricks. Ring the Balclutha or Milton clinic for more details or to book your place.

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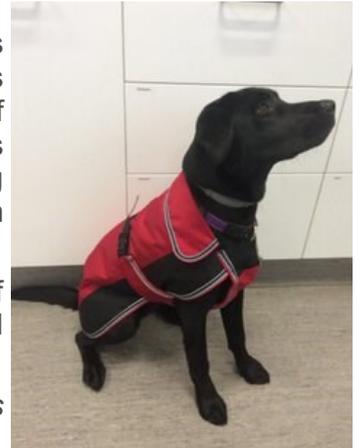
Winter Aches and Pains

Catherine Copland - Veterinarian

Cold weather often worsens the pain from arthritis in older dogs and cats. Signs are reduced activity levels, sleeping more, joint stiffness and lameness. Cats may be reluctant to jump and groom less. As well as anti-inflammatory pain relief there are many other treatments for arthritis. Food supplements, special foods for joint health, weight reduction for overweight animals, injections containing glucosamine, and acupuncture can all be beneficial. Of course wearing a warm jacket can help keep dogs with arthritis more comfortable too.

Come and see us at the Balclutha or Milton clinics if your cat or dog have stiff joints (and if they need a cosy bed or a warm jacket to help them through the cold weather we have something to suit most sizes).

Teal in a lovely warm coat courtesy of Clutha Vets



Feeding time

Catherine Copland - Veterinarian

COMING SOON

Clutha Vets will be stocking Black Hawk cat and dog food from July. Black Hawk pet food is made in Australia and contains real meat, real veggies, no fillers and no nasties. The original recipe was developed by a passionate breeder that applied “real food” thinking to their dogs’ diet. All the ingredients are nutritional and beneficial to your dog or cat. There will even be a working dog food available too, hopefully by the end of September. Check out the Black Hawk website (blackhawkpetcare.com) for more information.



TOPFLITE RANGE

Clutha Vets stocks a full range of Top Flight foods for pet and aviary birds, wild birds, rabbits and guinea pigs. We also have a good range of outdoor bird feeders too so the wild birds can be kept well fed during the cold weather. We also stock bird cages, toys and accessories for your pet birds and we have a range of equipment and ornaments for your fish tank too.

Xylitol Poisoning in Dogs

Peter Heslip - Veterinarian

Xylitol is one of those common things that you have been exposed to but never really knew about. Xylitol is commonly used as an artificial sweetener in chewing gum, sweets, some foods, oral rinses, toothpaste and as a binder in some human medications.

It is commonly used because it has a low toxicity for humans and the only toxicity it causes is a mild gastrointestinal upset. It is safe in most other species too, but in dogs it is a potent stimulator of insulin release. This means that 30 minutes after ingestion a dog may collapse due to severe hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar). Additionally it can cause severe liver failure or blood clotting disorders. Affected dogs can easily die of xylitol poisoning.

The take home message is to be very careful feeding your pet any human treats. Two other common, safe foods for humans that can cause severe problems in dogs are chocolate (contains the stimulant Theobromine) and raisins or grapes (cause severe renal failure).



Training Tips with Tracy

Tracy Cullen – Vet Nurse



Is your dog jumping up on you all the time? This is a normal behaviour that dogs will do to gain your attention. Some tips to help teach your dog to stop jumping up are ...

1. Ignore him when jumping up on you. Do not make any eye contact, fold your arms so you are completely ignoring him.
2. Do not push him away from you when he jumps up on you as this is still giving him attention.
3. Ask him to sit as this gives him an alternative action to do.
4. Only pat him if he sits down, not when jumping up on you.
5. Everyone coming into contact with your dog must also ignore him jumping up. Consistency is the key!
6. Reward the good behaviour and ignore the bad. Your dog will soon work out it's better to sit to get your attention rather than jump up, if everyone is doing the same training.



In-house Blood Testing

Peter Heslip - Veterinarian

We have recently improved our in-house laboratory facilities in Balclutha with two new blood analysers. The Procyte DX machine allows us to do Complete Blood Counts (CBC) which looks at the cells in the blood. It tells us if there is anaemia, dehydration and increased or decreased white cells. Previously CBCs had to go to the lab at Invermay, often resulting in a 24 hour delay. Once the machine is warmed up we get the results of the CBC within two minutes, meaning the results can be available while the owner is still at the clinic.

The second machine is called the Catalyst One and replaces a previous machine we had for doing biochemistry. The Catalyst One measures enzymes, proteins, sugar and electrolytes in the blood. It is particularly useful when we are trying to determine the organs involved in a disease process. Results are available from this machine within eight minutes.

It is great to get our tests much faster than previously. Early diagnosis gives us the best chance of successful treatment. Because many diseases change rapidly, after a delay of 24 hours, yesterday's blood test may not be very useful at all.



Word Find Fun

How many NZ birds can you find in the word find?

n	s	k	a	k	a	p	o	m	i	j	v	h	o
a	r	p	w	e	f	m	d	a	k	i	w	e	u
l	w	h	u	a	g	o	p	e	n	g	u	i	n
b	e	l	l	b	i	r	d	b	a	p	t	i	u
a	k	c	z	j	k	e	r	e	r	u	x	e	a
t	a	w	p	a	w	p	q	k	o	k	a	k	o
r	a	t	u	i	a	o	v	w	g	e	d	w	r
o	i	k	r	n	x	r	m	t	a	k	a	h	e
s	l	i	s	c	e	k	e	k	q	o	a	s	t
s	d	w	n	u	y	f	a	n	t	a	i	l	u
k	n	i	w	r	e	n	z	f	a	l	c	o	n

tui
waxeye
kiwi
fantail
kea
bellbird
albatross
morepork
kakapo
pukeko
kereru
weka
kokako
takahe
penguin
NZ falcon
wren

Horse Stocks

Annie Jackson - Veterinarian

Here at Clutha Vets we have a new area behind the clinic that we are now able to use for some procedures for horses. This is a nice quiet area where the horses are not disturbed with all the comings and goings of the clinic.

Using stocks to treat or examine a horse is common in veterinary practices, and we have set up these stocks so we are able to offer an improved service for our equine clients. Stocks allow a horse to feel secure and often will settle them down if they are feeling unsure when vets are working on them. This also allows a vet to work on them in a safe manner and hopefully miss a kick or two!

Our stocks allow us to safely undertake simple procedures as well as take xrays and perform reproductive exams - scanning for pregnancy testing for example. The stocks work really well for dentals as we use the hanging halter to hold their heads up (helps save shoulders!) and this way it is able to be done in a very safe manner for all concerned (see photos).

We also have a tie up area for waiting horse friends, as we all know generally with horses they feel more settled with their friends close by.

You are welcome to call in and have a look anytime, just pop into the clinic and one of us can take you through.



Our pets



Evie loves to snuggle up in front of the TV in winter

Contact Us

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