



Newsletter

Beware of cats seeking warmth

We hear stories of cats becoming injured or killed when they seek warmth from the cooling engines of cars during cold weather and advise checking beneath vehicles before setting off in colder weather.

In addition to this potential hazard, we have recently become aware of an issue with cats and kittens being attracted to warm tumble driers and the comfort of a pile of soft clothing. Whilst this may be a rare occurrence, we would advise checking tumble dryers before use as we are aware of two local deaths and have seen national reports of deaths and injuries.



Rolo's Story

Young children have a propensity to put things up their noses that they shouldn't, like Lego. Young dogs are inclined to swallow things that they shouldn't like balls, bones, stones and socks.

Rolo, a mischievous young Yorkshire Terrier got himself into trouble recently causing his owner a good deal of worry. Rolo's owner very sensibly brought him to our Bath Road branch surgery as he had been vomiting and had refused food, which was very unlike him.

Vet, Cat, assessed him and found that his abdomen was very painful. She asked his owner to take him to the main hospital for pain relief and further investigation.

Vet, Alina, met Rolo at Edison Park and took over his care. She administered strong pain relief and x-rayed his abdomen under sedation.

She found that Rolo had managed to eat a bone that seemed to be occupying virtually the full length of his stomach.

After discussion with his owner, Rolo was given an anaesthetic so that David, one of our Specialist vets and Alina could retrieve the bone endoscopically.

This meant that a camera was passed down into Rolo's stomach along with some small forceps to grasp the bone which was then removed via the oesophagus (food pipe), thereby avoiding major abdominal surgery.

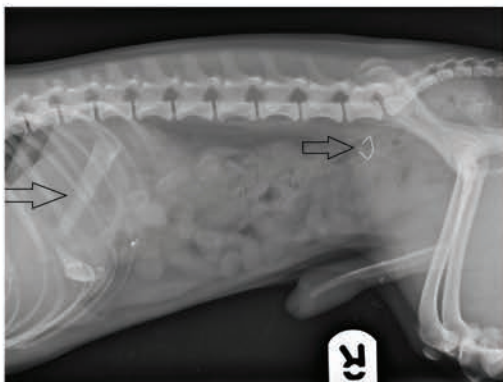
Had the bone not been retrieved, there was a risk of it puncturing the stomach with very serious consequences. Thankfully Rolo recovered well from his anaesthetic and was happily tucking into some chicken later the same evening.

He returned home to his very relieved owners the following day and has managed to stay out of trouble since... touch wood!

What are the symptoms of a blockage?

- Vomiting (especially after eating)
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain
- Depression
- Weakness
- Bloating
- Diarrhoea

If you have a dog that is inclined to eat things that they shouldn't, these symptoms should be taken seriously and an early trip to visit a vet is advisable.



X-ray showing the bone and also a staple that Rolo had also swallowed



The bone after removal



Rolo recovering



Microchipping - are your details up to date?

In April 2016, it became law for all dog over the age of 12 weeks to be microchipped. Whilst this law did not apply to cats, it is strongly recommended.

Microchipping enables pets to be reunited with their owners should they become lost. A simple scan with a microchip reader will show the microchip number which is linked to owner contact details.

The success or failure of this system greatly relies on owners keeping their contact details updated with the microchipping companies.

Since 2016, approximately 1/3 of all found dogs and cats brought to us have had out of date contact details. For some, this has meant a delay in them being reunited with their owners. For others, it has meant that no owner was contactable and the dog or cat had to be rehomed.

Despite the new law, there have been a number of dogs that have had no microchip at all. Owners are responsible for keeping a dog or cat's microchip information up to date, for example, if you move house or change your phone number. This is not something that we can do.

To update microchip details:

- Find out where your pet's microchip is registered and contact them to change your details. For security reasons, you may not be able to make changes by telephone. Proof of ownership helps to prevent stolen dogs being re-registered
- If you don't know which database your pet is registered on, you can ask a vet, dog warden, or rescue centre to scan your pet for their microchip number

Your pet should be registered on one of the following Government approved databases: AnimalTracker, Chipworks, Identibase, MicroChip Central, MicroDog ID, National Veterinary Data Service, Pet Identity UK, Petlog, PetScanner, ProtectedPet, Smartchip and UK PETtrac. You might be charged a fee for updating your pet's microchip information.

Remember, there are fines of up to £500 for dogs found without up to date microchip details.

Cats and microchips

Cats are not subject to the microchip regulations that apply to dogs. However, cats are far more likely to wander and become lost or to be taken in by well-meaning people fearing that they are strays. In Swindon in one week alone, 12 cats were reported missing and a near equal number found. Sadly, those lost never seem to tally with those found!

We strongly encourage cat owners to get cats microchipped and of course, to keep their details up to date. There have been reports of cats being reunited with their owners after a year or more because they have been microchipped.

Travelling to the surgery with cats

Most cats feel very vulnerable when removed from their normal territory and therefore find travelling quite stressful. Travelling to a new environment can be made a more pleasant experience if they are familiar and comfortable with their carrier. Try to encourage your cat to use the carrier by keeping it out in your house.

Use the carrier as an additional sleeping area and encourage a positive experience using treats and affection. This can be particularly helpful with cats that vanish at the very sight of the carrier. If this is not possible, getting the carrier out a few days before and encouraging gentle positive interaction may help.

Always wash the carrier bedding after a trip to the vets as it will carry many new smells that your cat may not feel are positive. The use of Feliway (feline calming pheromone) or Pet Remedy (calming essential oils) sprayed onto the carrier, or the use of a Feliway or Pet Remedy diffuser in the area the carrier is kept, may encourage your cat to relax and accept the carrier as part of their territory.



For more information on how to travel with your cat, visit our website Pet Library pages www.eastcottvets.co.uk/library

Building work in progress

Those of you that have visited our Edison Park Clinic and Hospital recently will have noticed that building work is underway. Our new extension will include changes to: Theatres, Wards, Consulting,

Examination and Procedure Rooms, Intensive Care, Recovery, X-Ray, Ultrasound & Dentistry. Plus: MRI Unit Provision & Improved Staff Facilities. We hope that the extension will be ready by Summer 2019



Four Nurses gain additional qualifications

It takes a minimum of two years of hard study, work within a veterinary setting and examinations to become a Qualified Registered Veterinary Nurse. A Veterinary Nurse is not a title that someone can adopt that 'works at a vets', it is a qualification.

Many of our nurses continue to study in order to gain additional knowledge, skills and to improve the levels of care that they can provide to their patients. We would like to congratulate Rebecca, Hannah and Leanne who have each passed their Vets Now ECC certificate (emergency and critical care) and Laura who passed her Dermatology Merit Award. This increased knowledge helps to raise standards throughout the team.

Nursing Matters

You may have noticed the new 'Nursing Matters' noticeboard at Edison Park. The Nursing Team, led by Lucia, will be covering a range of topics on this board providing information and advice to owners. If you have a topic that you would like to suggest, please email rachel@eastcottvets.co.uk.

The noticeboard will also give you an insight into what Veterinary Nurses do.

#what
nurses
do

Sound therapy for pets

If your pet struggled during this year's fireworks or has a fear of sounds such as gunshot, thunder or traffic noise, there is something that you can do to try and help. Sound desensitisation programmes use recorded soundtracks of the noises that a pet may find disturbing.

Used carefully alongside the at-home training programme, it can help a pet to become so familiar and comfortable with the sounds that they 'tune them out'. There is also a programme to help dogs and cats who may be expecting the 'pitter patter of tiny feet' in the house or child visitors. 'Sounds Soothing' uses tracks of babies crying and children at play.

Visit our website [Pet Library](#) for more information and to download the training booklet and soundtracks.

Pet Passports in the event of a 'No Deal' Brexit

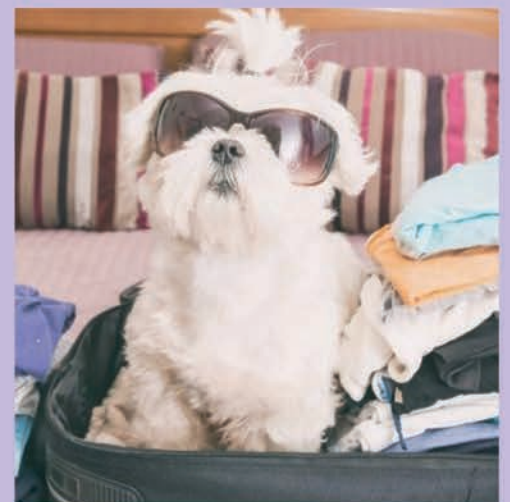
In the event of a No Deal Brexit, there are likely to be changes made to the current Pet Passports Scheme for UK pet owners. Our existing Pet Passport scheme which allows UK owners to take their animals to an Official Veterinarian (OV) three weeks before a trip to be microchipped and vaccinated against rabies, would no longer be valid.

Those wishing to travel within the EU in any post Brexit scenario after the 29th March 2019, should make contact with an OV to check the regulations at least 4 months before travel (we have a number of OVs within the practice).

Those planning to travel around 29th March/early April 2019 may experience issues and are advised to make enquiries as soon as possible as to the validity of their pet passports and as to whether a rabies vaccination and blood test is necessary.

Up to date information will be posted on our website or can be found on:

www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-after-brexit



Antifreeze awareness

Despite the availability of antifreeze that does not contain deadly ethylene glycol, we still see a number of cases of animals suffering from ethylene glycol poisoning. Many animals, particularly cats are attracted by the smell and the sweet taste of antifreeze (ethylene glycol) and the smallest amount can prove fatal.

Symptoms can start to show as quickly as 30 minutes after ingestion but it can be two or three days before signs of kidney failure are seen. Antifreeze poisoning occurs in two phases. In the first phase, the pet may be lethargic, disorientated, uncoordinated and groggy. The first few hours after ingestion is critical and immediate treatment can greatly increase the chances of survival. The second phase, which can last up to three days, is characterised by symptoms such as vomiting, mouth and stomach ulcers, kidney failure, coma and death.

To reduce the risk of poisoning, all brands of antifreeze should be handled carefully and treated as a highly poisonous substance. Ensure that antifreeze is stored well away from animals and children, ensure that spills are completely cleaned up and that leaks from car coolant systems are immediately repaired.

If you are in any way unsure as to whether your pet has ingested antifreeze it is better to be safe than sorry, seek immediate veterinary advice. We are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is always someone on hand to help.

Tennis balls – did you know?

So, we have advised against stick throwing and now we are being real killjoys by warning you about an issue with tennis balls, many a dog's favourite toy! If you have a tennis ball chewer, have you checked their teeth?

For those dogs who like to chew a tennis ball for long periods, it can result in gradual wear to their teeth. The yellow covering of a tennis ball is, by design, tough and abrasive. The addition of dirt that becomes embedded when the ball is thrown repeatedly makes it become more abrasive over time.

The sandpaper-like qualities of a tennis ball can wear the teeth when it is chewed. Damage occurs particularly to the canines and premolars. They may become flattened and worn over time with excessive wear resulting in exposed pulp and dental disease.

We don't want to ban all of your dog's favourite playthings, there are a few things that you can do to keep your dog happy and also maintain good dental health.

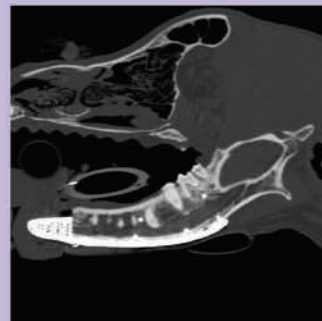
- Replace tennis balls that become worn and dirty
- Discourage chewing and for those who just can't control their chomping, wean off the tennis ball and replace with a smooth ball of a suitable size
- Check teeth regularly



Referral Team News

Dentistry Team Attract International Attention

The Eastcott Referral dentistry and oral surgery team, led by Peter Southerden, has become the first in the UK to use a cutting-edge jaw reconstruction technique in dogs, using prosthetic titanium implants created on a 3D printer.



CT scan showing the reconstruction of the jaw with a 3D printed titanium patient-specific implant.



Edward, the 11-month-old male Airedale Terrier, pictured two months after tumour removal and jaw reconstruction surgery.

Edison Park Clinic & Hospital
Edison Park, Dorcan Way, Swindon SN3 3FR

Mon to Fri 7am - 8pm Sat & Sun 8.30am - 8pm

Bath Road Clinic
59 Bath Road, Old Town, Swindon SN1 4AU
Mon - Fri 8.30am - 7pm Sat 9am - 12pm

Cricklade Road Clinic
6 Clive Parade, Cricklade Road, Swindon SN2 1AJ
Weekdays 8.30am - 10am and 4pm - 7pm