



Newsletter

Stray or Six Dinner Sid?

There is a wonderful children's book about a cat who 'owns' numerous owners. He moves from house to house pretending to belong to each of the six houses. This works well for Sid until he becomes ill and visits the vet 6 times and receives 6 lots of treatment!

Cats can have territory of up to 0.8 of a mile and this roaming combined with a cat's love of food can create issues. A cat that turns up in a garden meowing for food can easily be mistaken for a stray and their persistent meowing, especially during cold weather, usually results in a meal being provided. If you have a feline visitor that cries for food but is apparently healthy, it is better not to feed it. Feeding these persuasive pussies at best will result in an owned cat becoming rather rotund and at worst can prevent a cat from returning home to worried owners.

Healthy cats removed from the local area and taken to vets or cat's homes (often spaces are some miles out of area) can make it very difficult to reunite them with their local owners. Sadly, it may even result in them being put to sleep due to the number of cats looking for homes and lack of spaces in homing centres.



If you suspect that your cat is pretending to be a stray in order to extort food from local cat lovers, you can fit your cat with a 'Please do not feed me collar' and if you suspect that you are being duped into feeding a cat that belongs to someone else, you can print a paper 'please contact me if this cat is yours' collar.

You can take a cat to a vet to be scanned for a microchip but if it is not chipped and is healthy, it should be returned to the area to allow it to return home.



If you find an injured cat, your first port of call should be the RSPCA on 0300 1234999. If they feel that the cat requires veterinary attention, they will provide a log number. It is important to obtain a log number before taking a cat to a vet. This log number enables vets to provide emergency treatment.

What to do if you have an emergency

If you have an emergency with your pet out of hours (early morning, after evening or weekend closing (8 pm), you do not need to frantically Google 'emergency vets in Swindon' – we provide a 24-hour emergency service at our Edison Park Clinic and Hospital off Dorcan Way for our clients. We have a vet and nurse who are on site and ready

to advise you or to see you if necessary. Calls made on our usual daytime number 01793 528341 will go through to our emergency lines where staff can advise you. If you need to be seen, it is important that you don't arrive without having phoned first. Staff will need to be prepared for you and will need to let you in as the doors are locked out of hours.

If you are unsure as to whether your pet needs to be seen, we can help you to decide.



Did your pet struggle during the fireworks?

It might be that your previously relaxed pet became anxious this year, or that your anxious pet became more so. You may be able to work towards desensitising them ahead of next year's firework season when the New Year's celebrations are over. It is possible to desensitise them using a carefully tried and tested method of playing sound recordings in a controlled manner.

Vets Sarah Heath and Jon Bowen developed the Sounds Scary, Sounds Sociable and Sounds Soothing programmes and now offer them free of charge via the Dogs Trust. Sarah Heath and Jon Bowen are experienced in the field of pet behavioural therapy. All of the products have been scientifically researched and come with a full set of instructions, which makes them easy to use and extremely effective. The Sounds Scary range includes sounds such as fireworks, thunder, gunshot, traffic, domestic noises babies and children.

Visit the Dogs Trust to read more about **Sounds Scary:**

www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/dog-behaviour-health/sound-therapy-for-pets

Paracetamol Poisoning in Cats

Paracetamol, a simple over the counter medication, is used frequently by people managing pain, but did you know that the drug is highly toxic to cats?

Just one tablet can cause death in some cases. It is advisable never to give cats or dogs human medication as they can react very differently to you and I.

Paracetamol comes in many different forms and all can harm our pets. This includes liquid formulations designed for children, tablets and powders. Although a curious cat may nibble a paracetamol tablet if it is left in reach, sadly the majority of paracetamol poisoning cases are caused by well-meaning owners giving part or a whole tablet, or a few millilitres of a paracetamol containing suspension to their cat. It is important not to treat pets with medications intended

for humans. If your pet is in pain, please contact us so that we can investigate the cause and prescribe a suitable pet safe medication if required.

"Just one tablet can cause death in some cases. It is advisable never to give cats or dogs human medication as they can react very differently to you and I."



Veterinary Jargon Buster

Whilst we try and cut the jargon, we have to confess that sometimes, it does creep in. We hope that you feel comfortable asking us to explain if we do this. However, here is our Veterinary Jargon Buster (it might help you in the odd pub quiz!)

Suture:	Stitch	Carpus:	This the equivalent of our wrist but on the front leg of a dog or cat
Catheter:	Can be inserted into the bladder to drain urine, or can be inserted into a vein or body cavity to remain in place for a period of time in order to deliver medication, fluids or to drain (this can also be called a cannula)	Stifle:	This is the equivalent of our knee but a dog or cat's back leg
Oral:	Relates to the mouth	Hock:	This is the equivalent of the our ankle but on a dog or cat's back
Aural:	Relates to the ear	Local anaesthesia:	Part of the body is numbed but the patient remains conscious
Fracture vs Break:	The same thing	General anaesthesia:	Drugs administered to render a patient unconscious
Topical:	Something applied directly to a part of the body (e.g. a cream or lotion)	Prognosis:	The predicted outcome
Bilateral:	If there are 2, both are affected (e.g. bilateral ear infection – both ears are affected)		
Acute:	Flares up suddenly		
Chronic:	Been grumbling on for a while, may reoccur		

Look out for more Jargon Busters in our next newsletter...



I was brave at Eastcott Vets

We often give a special Eastcott 'I was brave at Eastcott Vets' ribbon to patients when they go home after inpatient procedures. We love seeing your photos of your dogs and cats sporting their ribbons at home.

If your pet has been given an 'I was brave at Eastcott Vets ribbon', we would love to see your photos or videos which can be posted on our Facebook page @ EastcottVets

Please do not tie them around necks, tie them around collars instead and beware of pets that might be tempted to eat them!

#iwasbrave



Building Work at Eastcott

If you have visited us recently, you will be aware of the ongoing building work. We hope that this has not caused you inconvenience and we thank you for bearing with us.

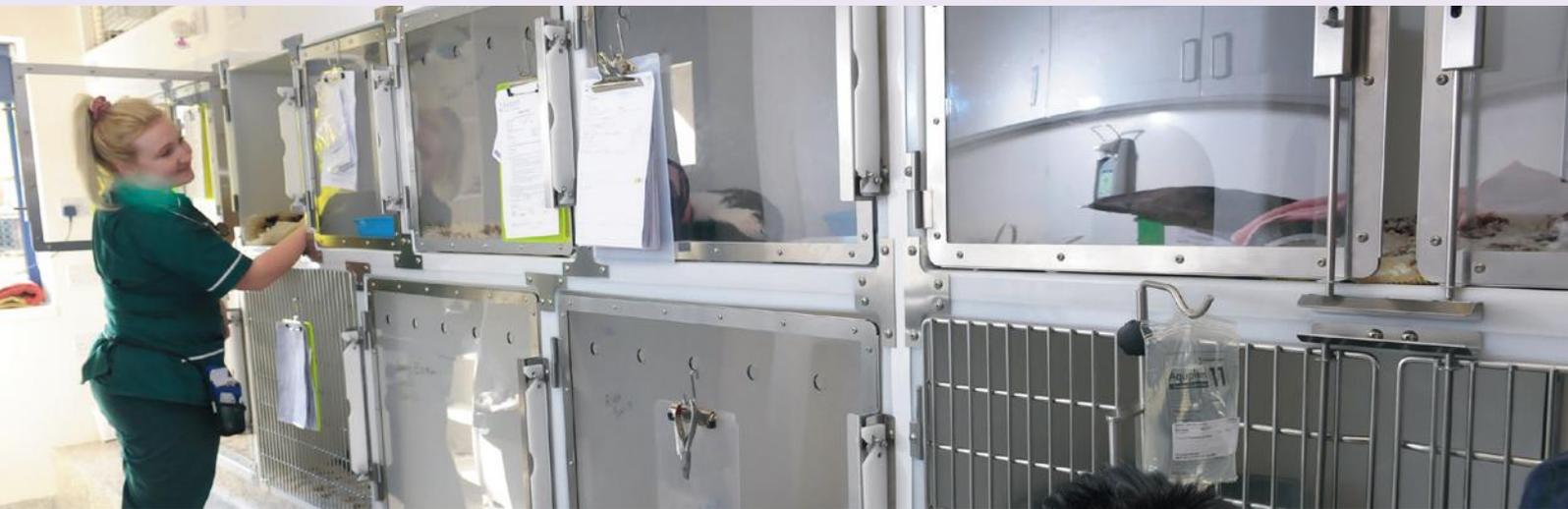
We can't wait to show off our new facilities to you in 2020 so look out for our Open Day invitation. In the meantime, here is a sneak preview of our new 5* cat ward.

We have a winner!

We are delighted to announce the winner of our Christmas Fortnum and Mason Hamper...

Mr Stephen French! (Poppy French)

Many thanks to all who donated, a grand total of £350 has been raised for Oak and Furrows!



Please ensure that your microchip details are up to date

We get very excited when we have a stray dog or cat handed in when we find out that they are microchipped.

Then our hopes are dashed when we discover that the details are out of date. If you have moved house, or changed your phone number during the time that you have owned your pet, please check that your details are up to date.



Gastric Dilatation & Volvulus (GDV) – Essential Knowledge for Dog Owners

Gastric dilatation and volvulus (GDV), colloquially referred to as 'bloat', is an acute life-threatening condition, characterised by distension and rotation of the stomach. GDV is a rapidly progressive and suspected cases should be treated as an emergency.

Early Warning Signs of GDV

In the early stages, dogs will display signs of abdominal discomfort. These may include restlessness, drooling, stretching out into the 'praying' position, bloating and unproductive retching. As the condition progresses a dog will become increasingly unwilling to stand and may display difficulty in breathing.



What is GDV and Why Does it Happen?

Dilatation occurs due to the accumulation of food and gas in the stomach. Dogs with GDV are unable to empty their stomach and it begins to dilate and expand. The increase in pressure and size of the stomach can have several severe life-threatening consequences.

Treatment

When dogs arrive at the hospital, they are usually in a state of shock and stabilisation will be initiated immediately upon arrival. This may include blood tests, intravenous fluid, pain relief, oxygen, antibiotics and x-rays.

The stomach must then be decompressed. This can be achieved either by passing a stomach tube down the oesophagus or by inserting needle through the skin directly into the stomach. This provides a vital escape route for the trapped gas inside. Once sufficiently stable, emergency surgery usually follows to de-rotate the stomach and fix it back in its normal position permanently (gastropexy). Other abdominal organs, such as the spleen and small intestine, will also need to be evaluated for damage and treated appropriately.

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Dogs at Risk of GDV

The exact cause of GDV is not fully understood, however several risk factors have been identified:

- Large or giant breed dogs
- Deep or narrow chested dogs
- Age, most commonly affected dogs are aged 7-10 years old
- Vigorous exercise undertaken after a large meal
- Ingestion of a large volume of food or water within a short space of time, especially dry food of small particle size
- Relative with history of GDV

Some of these risk factors are unavoidable, however, there are some changes that you can make to your dog's daily regime in order to minimise some of the risk factors

- Do not walk your dog within 2 hours of eating
- Consider feeding 2 small meals morning and evening rather than 1 large meal
- Feed a wet diet or soak biscuits before feeding
- Choose a diet of large kibble size

"If you think that your dog may have a GDV, time is of the essence. Call for advice straight away."