

BOWRAL VETERINARY HOSPITAL

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2008

TO ALL OUR WONDERFUL CLIENTS AND PETS THE STAFF OF BOWRAL VETERINARY HOSPITAL WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A SAFE AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

The hospital will be closed Christmas Day but is open Boxing Day and New Years Day from 10-11am.

The on call veterinarian can be contacted at all other times for emergencies by phoning the hospital.

We look forward to seeing you in the New Year

Merry Christmas!!!

Hospital Hours

8.30 – 5.30

Mon – Fri

8.30 – 12noon

Saturday

Consultations

8.30-5.30

Mon – Fri

9.00-12 noon

Saturday

10.00-11.00 am

Sunday

Phone 48611 444

FUN IN THE SUN

It is so nice in this warm, hopefully soon, weather to be out and about. The increased exercise is great for us and our pets. However, the outdoors can present a few problems as well. With rapid spring growth and warm weather **grass seeds** are in abundance. Regularly search your pet's coat for seeds and remove them before they get to penetrate the skin. Grass seeds can get into the ears, nose or in the skin between the toes. Try to avoid running dogs thru long grass when it is seeding and you may choose to clip the coats of long haired pets.

The other problem to avoid in long grass in summer is **snakes**. We tend to see cases of snake bite poisoning on those very hot days. Avoid walking or particularly letting your dog or cat roam free in areas that are inhabited by snakes. Around here creek beds are common haunts for copperheads and all snakes like long grass and woodpiles.

Tidy up the backyard to remove potential areas for snakes to hide, eg woodpiles, building materials, rubbish etc.

A favourite food source for snakes is rats and mice so ensure you keep their numbers down. Compost, other food scraps and seed can attract rodents so keep these areas clean.

Snake bites can be rapidly

fatal. If you suspect your pet may have been bitten phone the hospital and keep him under close observation. Rapid breathing, unsteady gait and collapse are some of the signs of envenomation. Occasionally an inability to clot the blood may be evident. Most pets treated early in the course of poisoning have a good recovery.

It is shaping up to be a bad summer for **ticks** as well.

Already we have treated a number of cases of tick paralysis. While the Ixodes Holocyclus tick is not common in this area we have had cases of poisoning from Robertson, Fitzroy Falls and Kangaloon. Pets in Wildes Meadow and Bundanoon are also at risk and obviously any pets traveling to the coast and some areas of Sydney.

What can you do to protect your pet from Tick paralysis ?

Search your pet every day for ticks. Looking and feeling for the tick is usually the best and while they are more commonly found about the head and neck check all over.

Be aware of the first signs of poisoning – weakness or wobbly legs, change in the voice or breathing pattern and sometimes regurgitation. A lot of owners remember in hindsight that the pet had been more quiet than usual for about 12-24 hours.

Use a good tick prevention product. Spot on products like Frontline and Advantix are simple as are collars and Proban tablets.

HOLIDAYING WITH YOUR PETS

We have put together a few tips to help you plan your pet's holiday

Vaccination – Ensure all vaccinations are up to date. If it greater than six months since the last Canine Cough vaccination ideally booster it before you go. Vaccination will help protect your pet while boarding but also if mixing with other pets while holidaying.

Accommodation – Be sure to enquire before leaving that your accommodation accepts pets and what facilities they provide. The NRMA and a few publications in bookstores provide information on pet friendly accommodation

If you leave your pet behind remember to book the boarding kennel early if you are planning to vacation in the school holidays. Places fill quickly. There are a number of very good boarding facilities in the Southern highlands.

Friends or family may be able to care for your pets while you are away. Remember this is a big responsibility. Ensure they are able to contact you and are provided with contact details for your vet should your cat or dog need veterinary care. Many clients advise us in advance of the care of their pet during their absence incase the unforeseen occurs. There are a few people in the area that can be employed to care for your pet in your own home Reception will be able to help with any enquires regarding these options.

Heartworm Prevention before you travel

While not a common problem in this area if you take your dog on holidays outside the Southern Highlands ensure they are on a heartworm preventative. Heartworm is a worm that lives in the larger vessels of the heart and lungs and can be fatal if left untreated. It is transmitted from the blood of an infected dog to your dog when bitten by a mosquito. The disease is often well advanced by the time clinical signs occur. Therefore prevention is important and there are a number of options available.

Proheart SR12 is a yearly injection.

Heartguard chews are a tasty monthly treat.

Spot on preparations such as Revolution and Advocate are applied to the back of the neck on a monthly basis and protect against heartworm disease, some of the intestinal worms, sarcoptic mange and fleas.

Sentinal is a flavoured tablet given once a month and also treats all worms and stops fleas breeding.

Finally don't forget to stock up on any **medications**, including **tick prevention** that your pet may need while you are away.

FELINE AIDS IS YOUR CAT AT RISK ?

Feline Aids is caused by the Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV). It is spread from saliva to blood during cat fights. Therefore if your cat is outdoors it may be at risk of contracting FIV. Young male cats are particularly at risk.

It is possible to test for FIV and you can vaccinate against feline aids. Because it is spread by fighting it is important to test for FIV in any stray or rehomed cat when its background is unknown. Many stray cats have had to fight their way out of a spot of trouble with the neighbouring cats. Your cat is no risk what so ever to people. The virus cannot spread to different species.

While a positive diagnosis is upsetting it does not mean your puss will necessarily have a shorter life. We have a couple of quite aged – 15yr old – AIDS cats that come to the clinic. Some cats do become quite ill at a younger age but many live good lives. Like humans it is their susceptibility to common diseases and a difficulty with the immune system fighting these conditions that makes them sick. Some do develop tumours. However, often it is dental disease and weight loss that first presents. Treating these conditions as you would any other cat will allow the cat to resume good health. It is only in the later stages when their T-cells are depleted that they are difficult to treat. For some cats this is a long time down the track.

If your cat is diagnosed with FIV it is important to always keep them in tip top health with a very good diet, good dental hygiene and being vigilant of early signs of illness.

It is also important to make sure other cats are safe from contracting the virus accidentally. AIDS cats should not be allowed to wander outside unsupervised.

All cats in contact should be vaccinated incase they have a scrap. This vaccine can be added to the yearly regime once the first course is completed.

FIV unfortunately does exist in the Southern Highlands however, if your cat is indoors or supervised when out, you should not be overly concerned.

A SPECIAL THANKYOU TO THE VERY GENEROUS CLIENTS, THEIR DOGS AND ALL THE STAFF FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE BREAST CANCER BREAKFAST HELD IN OCTOBER. IT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS.

SEE YOU ALL IN THE NEW YEAR