



# Spring is here!

**One very important issue is Flea Treatments and the risks involved when treating your feline friend with the wrong product.**

## Tackling fleas on cats

The most common flea found on cats and dogs is the cat flea (*Ctenocephalides felis*). Occasionally, rabbit and hedgehog fleas may be found on cats. Using modern treatments it is now possible to control feline fleas effectively

### What is Permethrin?

Permethrin is one of a group of insecticidal compounds called Pyrethroids. These have widespread use in pet flea treatments, ant-killers, and other products for control of pest insects. Although Pyrethroids are considered to have a low mammalian toxicity, cats are the exception. Pyrethroids are toxic to cats because of metabolic deficiencies found only in felines. These products are intended for the treatment of fleas and ticks in dogs only. They contain **Permethrin, a substance that is safe for dogs but causes a toxic reaction in cats** when present in spot-on products, due to its concentration. **Cats treated with even small amounts of spot-on products containing Permethrin, can develop nervous signs such as depression, drooling, tremors, seizures, vomiting and staggering, and may die.** Toxic effects can also occur from cats coming into **close physical contact** with dogs in the same house **(through sharing beds or grooming)** that have been appropriately treated with Permethrin. **These products are available in pet shops and many supermarkets, and have been mistakenly or unwittingly used on cats, frequently causing severe illness and even death.** Cats poisoned with Permethrin may need 2-3 days of intensive veterinary treatment to aid recovery.



### Reported Cases

A total of **286 cases** were reported to the VPIS (Veterinary Poisons Information Service) over the last few years, where such **canine spot-on Permethrin preparations have been used on cats**. Of these cases, **97 per cent** of the cats had signs of **poisoning**, **88 per cent** had **twitching or convulsions** and **10.5 per cent** of the cats **died or were euthanased**. Although these data are startling, the VPIS feels that they are an under-representation of the scale of the problem.

Below are just some of the Dog Flea treatments which contain Permethrin...

**Bob Martin Dog Spot On, Bob Martin Flea and Tick Spot On, Bob Martin Permethrin Dog Spot On, Advantix Spot On Solution for Dogs, Armitage Pet Care Flea & Tick Drops, Armitage Pet Care Flea & Tick Drops for Dogs, Canac Dog Flea & Tick Drops, Canovel Flea Drops, Johnson's Flea & Tick Drops for Puppies & Small Dogs, Johnson's Insecticidal Flea & Tick Drops, Wilko Dog Flea Drops**

### What to do

If you have applied any of the products listed above to your cat, it is important to wash off the product from the cat with water and a mild detergent and seek immediate treatment from your veterinary surgeon. Take the product package with you and show it to the veterinarian

**If you are unsure about any flea product or suspect Permethrin poisoning, please contact the surgery.**



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#### VERWOOD

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#### SWANAGE

87 Ulwell Road

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# Wimborne & Verwood News

## DOG DAYS



A common question we are asked by dog owners is "What is the life expectancy of this breed?"

Life expectancy is the median age at which the pets pass on to pastures new, so half of the dogs will live longer and half will not make that age. Generally old age comes on quickly in the giant breeds whilst smaller dogs and crossbreeds may live well into their teens. The old

adage that "a human year is worth seven dog years" might hold for the average Labrador, but the maths goes a bit crazy when it makes your 21 year-old mongrel 147 doggie-years old!

With this in mind Duncan Reavell decided to interrogate our database to compare various breeds, and see which stayed young and beautiful for eternity like James Dean and which outlived Methuselah.

The results were quite interesting...

"Taking the entire dog population, the life expectancy is 11yrs 2mths. Labradors and Springer Spaniels lived for 11yrs 8mths and Retrievers for 11y 10mths, above the species average. German Shepherds were not so fortunate, their stars burning out on average after 9yrs 7mths. Boxers bounced their way over the rainbow after just 8yrs 10mths. Little Yorkies & Jack Russells made it past 12 years, with an extra 3 and 6 months respectively.



"The longest lived breed on average was the Shetland Sheepdog (Sheltie), which kept clinging on tenaciously for 13 lucky years. However, even this great age is surpassed by the 13yrs 1mth average age of the common crossbreed, demonstrating once again the value of hybrid vigour.

"The shortest lived breed on our database was the bulldog. Much has been said about the problems of this breed with breathing, skin disease, eye problems, heart problems, and arthritis. This classic British icon only made it to a fleeting 5yrs 10mths. It is my sincere hope that with improved health care in the future, medical and surgical advances, and working with responsible breeders, we will be able to give the breed a longer happier life."



***Congratulations to Lisa Rhodes, who is our latest newly qualified Veterinary Nurse – well done, Lisa***

***Just so that you know what the staff dogs get up to in their spare time!***

***George is far too lazy to exercise so Esme gives him a push...***



### **Please take care with extendable leads!**

Extendable leads can be very useful, but please take care when you are walking your dog by a road. One of our nurses witnessed a very near-miss, where an owner, busy chatting away, was oblivious to her dog running into the road, being narrowly avoided by three cars before the owner reacted!

Extendable leads are great in the right place – but it's much safer to change to a short lead for walking by a road.

## **ORAL CARE MONTH – MARCH 2010**

4 out of 5 dogs aged 3 years and over have gum disease – this makes it the most common disease in adult dogs. It starts when bacteria stick to the surface of your dog's teeth and form a sticky off white substance, called dental plaque. If this plaque isn't removed, it can harden into tartar within days.



It's not easy to spot signs of gum disease but the following could be warning signs

**Changes in Behaviour:** if his mouth hurts, your dog may find things such as chewing and playing with toys more difficult. He may also be reluctant to let you look at his mouth

**Bad Breath:** this is almost always a sign of underlying gum disease

**Bleeding Gums:** when plaque bacteria attack the gums, the tissue will become inflamed and may bleed

**Book a free dental check for your dog during Oral Care Month**

## Lungworm Awareness



The lungworm *Angiostrongylus vasorum* (also known as French Heartworm) is a parasite that infects dogs. The adult of this particular lungworm lives in the heart and major blood vessels supplying the lungs, where it can cause a host of problems. Left untreated, the infection can often be fatal.

The lungworm parasite is carried by slugs and snails. The problem arises when dogs purposefully or accidentally eat these common garden pests when rummaging through undergrowth, eating grass, drinking from puddles or outdoor water bowls, or pick them up from their toys. Research in other parts of the world has demonstrated that, under certain conditions, lungworm larvae infective to dogs, can be released in slime from aquatic snails.

**Foxes can also become infected with the lungworm, and have been implicated in the spread of the parasite across the country.**

There are two main problems caused by dogs becoming infected with lungworm:

- Infection with lungworm can cause serious health problems in dogs, and is often fatal if not diagnosed and treated.
- Dogs infected with lungworm spread the parasite into the environment, as the larvae of the parasite are expelled in the dog's faeces. This increases the chances of other dogs becoming infected.

**Dogs of all ages and breeds can become infected with lungworm. However, younger dogs seem to be more prone to picking up the parasite. Dogs known to eat slugs and snails should also be considered high risk.**

Lungworm infections can result in a number of different signs which may easily be confused with other illnesses. If your dog is displaying any of the signs below, consult your veterinary surgeon immediately.

- Coughing
- Tiring easily
- Excessive bleeding from even minor wounds/cuts
- Nose bleeds
- Anaemia (Paleness around the eyes and gums)
- Weight Loss
- Poor Appetite
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Depression
- Tiring Easily
- Seizures (Fits)



**It is important to recognise that lungworm is not treated by the conventional use of worming tablets when given every three months, or even every month.**

**Please ask one of our staff for details on lungworm treatment!**

# Dunbar News

## Nursing News...

With our expanding nursing team, we can now offer a wider range of nurse appointments. Some of the services we can provide include:

- Weight Watchers
- Clipping nails/grooming
- Post-operative care
- Microchipping
- Adolescent check-ups & advice
- Administering medications
- And many more...



If you wish to discuss any of these areas of your pet's care, please book an appointment with one of our nurses

## Client News



Toby, an 18 month-old Cocker Spaniel, has now completed his training and has started working as an explosives sniffer dog for Dorset Police. His owner kindly donated him to the Police when she realised that his busy active character gave him the potential for greater things than a normal domestic life...

We wish him all the best with this new adventure

## CONGRATULATIONS

to Gill on passing her first year nursing exams with a Merit. She is now working hard in her second year and hopes to qualify as a Veterinary Nurse in 2011

and to Stella on her engagement. She plans to marry in 2011, after she has qualified as a Veterinary Nurse

## Did you know?

One in five cats over seven years of age develop kidney disease.

- The clinical signs include
- Drinking more than usual
  - Passing more urine than usual
  - Sleeping more
  - Eating less than normal
  - Weight loss
  - Vomiting



If your cat shows any of these signs and is over the age of seven, we can arrange a free urine sample to assess the kidney function of your cat



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  - Bad Breath: this is almost always a sign of underlying gum disease
  - Bleeding Gums: when plaque bacteria attack the gums, the tissue will become inflamed and may bleed

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