

Maribyrnong Veterinary Clinic

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“MARIBYRNONG VET TAILS” - AUTUMN 2008

Caution: Bumps Ahead!

It's always a little surprising when you are giving your pet a nice rub and notice a lump. Whilst the cause of lumps can vary greatly, and not all lumps are cancerous, it's always a good idea to have lumps checked by your Vet as soon as possible.

An example of a non-cancerous lump is a localised allergic response such as those seen with insect bites. In many cases these lumps will resolve without treatment, or with the help of either an anti-histamine or anti-inflammatory injection.

Cancerous lumps can be classified as either benign or malignant. Malignant cancers are capable of invading adjacent

tissues, and may be capable of spreading to distant tissues (eg. liver or lungs). Although benign tumours do not exhibit these invasive properties, it is extremely difficult to determine whether a tumour is benign or malignant without either performing a biopsy or surgically removing the lump and having the sample sent to a pathologist for testing.

The important thing to remember is to take your pet down to the vet to have it checked out. It may be something that is totally harmless, but there is always the possibility of it being something more threatening. Better to be safe than sorry!

Wandering Dew

Wandering Dew is a plant that causes many pet owner's a headache. It's a trailing succulent plant that roots readily and forms like a blanket on the ground. Unfortunately, many dogs and cats have skin allergies to the plant.



Contact with Wandering Dew can cause redness and itching at the point of contact, predominantly on the feet and the less hairy areas on the underneath of their bodies like the armpits and groin.

If you suspect that you have Wandering Dew in an area your pet has access to, it's probably a good idea to remove it.

How do vaccines work?

Regular vaccinations are recommended for many pets (dogs, cats, rabbits, and even ferrets!) They generally receive a course of vaccinations when young, followed by regular boosters. The vaccines help to protect against a variety of disease, but how?



Vaccines are designed to make the body think that it has been infected with a disease. In response, the body will create antibodies to fight the threat. Whilst the actual vaccine contains no virus capable of producing the disease, the antibodies created by the body will be able to respond to the real threat if the animal is infected with the actual disease.

The cells responsible for remembering how to fight the disease do not last forever. For this reason, we recommend regular "booster" vaccinations to remind your pet's immune system how to respond. How often the booster shots are required is currently being studied, but at this point in time our recommendations are to give an initial course of 2-3 vaccines to puppies and kittens, followed by annual boosters each year.

Dinner Time!!!

A common question we get asked in the clinic is "What is the difference between cheaper brands of pet food, and premium pet food bought from a vet clinic?". The following is a list of some of the ways the products can differ:

Balanced Diet

Well formulated pet foods have all the essential nutrients in the correct proportions for each stage of your pet's life. This ensures that your pet is getting everything it needs in their diet to keep them in their best condition. While many supermarket foods provide all these nutrients, not all do. All pet food sold from a vet clinic is guaranteed to be complete and balanced.

Stool Reduction

Premium pet food contain less undigestible material. With more digestible ingredients in the pet food, your pet will produce less stools as almost everything in their food is digested and used by their body.

Value for money

Premium quality pet food has more of the good stuff packed in a single kibble compared to supermarket brands. This means that you will feed your pet less

food daily while still giving them just as much protein and nutrients. This actually means that in the long run, you are going to save more money feeding your pet premium food!

Oral Care

Some premium pet food incorporates natural vegetable fibres in the kibbles to help clean the animal's teeth.

The fibres allow the teeth to sink into the kibbles, cleaning them as the animal eats. Also, a large number of the premium foods also contain chemicals agents similar to those found in human toothpaste to help prevent tartar buildup. Both techniques can greatly reduce plaque and tartar formation.

Strict Recipes

Many cats and dogs have extremely sensitive stomachs. Small changes in their diet can cause tummy upsets resulting in vomiting and diarrhoea. To avoid this, premium pet foods stick to a very strict recipe. This means that each bag of food is almost identical in contents, therefore minimising any changes in the pet's diet. Unfortunately, many cheaper brands do not have a strict recipe, and the ingredients can vary from one batch of food to the next.



Easy as 123

No matter what age, size or lifestyle your pet has, there is a premium pet food suitable to them. Each food comes with instructions on the packaging to make feeding you pet nice and easy.

If you would like to learn more about what premium food might be most suited to your pet, please call us at the clinic or pop in to have a chat. And remember, anytime you are planning on changing pet food, slowly increase the new food, and decrease the old food over a period of about a week to minimise the risk of tummy upsets.



Many cats tend to prefer running water for its freshness, so a nice way to entice you kitty into drinking more water is to provide them with a pet water fountain.

Drinking more water is beneficial for your cats health. Water intake is especially important for cats with urinary problems, and kidney disease.

For further information on any topic covered in this newsletter, please contact the clinic on (03) 9318 3349
Opening hours: Mon – Fri 8:00am – 7:00pm, Sat 9:00am – 5:00pm, Sun 10:00am – 4:00pm
