

Maribyrnong Veterinary Clinic

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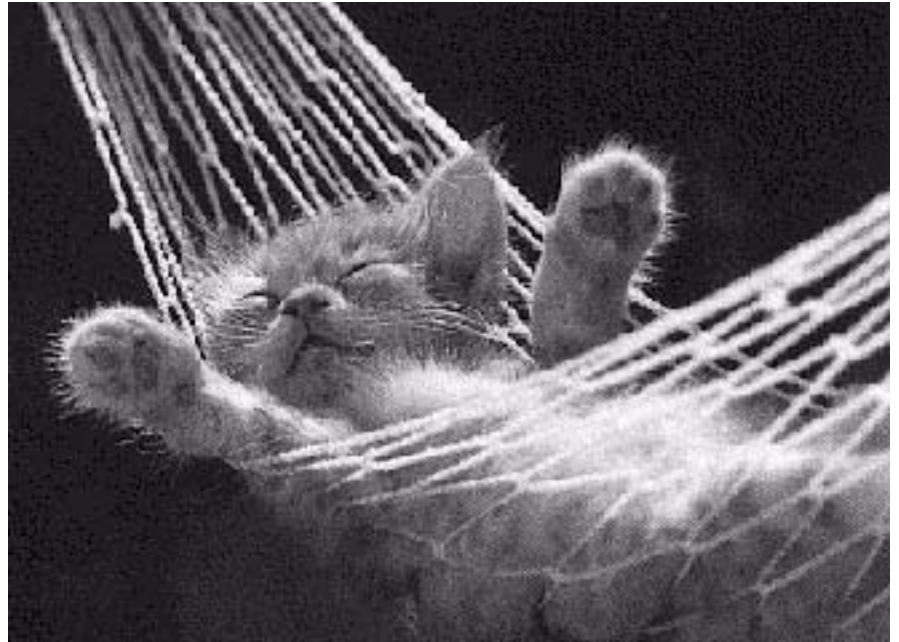
“MARIBYRNONG VET TAILS” - SUMMER 2006

Feeling Hot Hot Hot!

Summer is here with its lovely hot sunny days. It's a great time for dogs to have a romp at the beach, and for cats to bask in the warm sun. While most of summer is fun for your pets, it's unfortunately a bad time for heat stroke and other heat related issues. The good news is that there are some simple ways to keep your furry little friends comfortable and happy during the summer months.

- Make sure there is lots of fresh water available for your pet to drink. Some dogs like to play in their water in summer, so a few large buckets of water spread out around the yard might be useful.

- Water games can be fun summer play. Think about investing in a hard plastic wading pool and throw some of your pet's toys in the water. It's a nice place to have a play, or just to have a cool lie down. Also, dropping ice cubes in their water can be a fun “bobbing for cubes” game!



- Some breeds of long-haired cats and dogs can benefit from a haircut. It also makes their coats a bit more manageable if they are out collecting burrs and grass seeds in the dry summer grass. It's a good idea to check with your vet or groomer to make sure a clip will benefit your pet, as some breeds (such as collies and samoyeds) have a coat designed to keep them air-conditioned in summer, so clipping their coat will actually make them hotter!

- Even your pet's food can be prepared to keep them cool. People who feed their pets canned food can consider freezing the food and giving it to them as a “frozen log” to gnaw at. We also have great new “chiller bowls” for sale at the clinic. The bowl is designed with a water interior so that after a stay in the freezer it will keep your pet's food nice and chilled for a prolonged period of time.

Snakes Alive! ©

Not only does summer bring an increase in temperature, it also brings an increase in the occurrence of snake bites to our beloved pets. Each year around 6000 pets are treated for snake bite wounds with the majority being caused by Tiger snakes. The Werribee and Maribyrnong rivers are two areas in Melbourne's West that have been identified as "danger areas". If your pet receives a snake bite, it has a good chance of survival if it is taken straight to the vet for treatment, but there are a number of things that you can do to try to prevent a bite from occurring in the first place:

- Avoid walking your pet in areas that snakes might inhabit. This would include areas with long grass, river/creek banks etc... Keep your dog on a leash as this keeps him close and you can see and avoid potential dangers.
- Do a backyard tidy-up to minimise areas that snakes could inhabit. Mow the lawn, remove woodpiles and rubbish.
- Discourage rodents. Snakes feed on rodents, so large numbers of rodents will attract snakes. Remove any possible food source for rodents to minimise the snake's food source.

It is a good idea to check your pet once or twice daily for any signs of illness at any time of year, but during times of snake bite risk the possible signs you should look for are:

- shaking or shivering
- lethargy
- excessive drooling
- dilated pupils (sometimes it appears as if your pet has been blinded)
- red tinged urine
- vomiting / diarrhoea



If you suspect your pet may have been bitten by a snake, immobilise the animal (prevent it from moving) and take it straight to a veterinary clinic for diagnosis and treatment. Make sure you carry your pet into the clinic and do not allow it to walk, as movement will increase the rate at which the venom travels through the body.

Puppy PreSchool

If you have a puppy, don't forget that we have Puppy PreSchool classes that are run on Tuesday nights from 6:00 – 6:45pm. If you would like to come, please call the clinic to book in your furry little friend.