

# Maribyrnong Veterinary Clinic

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## “MARIBYRNONG VET TAILS” - SUMMER 2009

### A Merry Holiday!

The holiday season is fast approaching, so here are some tips for pet owners that are planning a trip away.

- If you plan on boarding your pets at a boarding facility, try to book as early as possible as positions fill up very quickly during holiday periods.

- Make sure that your pets are fully vaccinated. Boarding facilities require that dogs be vaccinated with at least a C5 and that cats have at least an F3 (some may also require vaccination against feline aids). The facility will require proof of vaccination, so don't forget to take your vaccination certificate.

- Make sure you leave some form of contact with anyone who will be caring for your pet. A mobile number is great if you will be contactable, but if not, the number of a trusted friend or relative, as well as the vet clinic's number is a good idea.

- If your pet is on regular medication or a special diet, make sure you have enough.

- There are lots of pet-friendly destinations, so you might want to think about taking your pets on holiday with you. The internet is a great resource for finding pet-friendly accommodation.



- If you travel with your pets, make sure dogs are properly harnessed and cats are secure in carriers. Plan regular stops for toilet and refreshment breaks. Also, make sure you know where the closest vet clinics are to your destination.

- Paralysis tick is prevalent in many parts of Australia, so it's a good idea to have a chat to one of our vets about your destination and whether tick prevention is advised for your pets.

**Happy holidaying!**

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## Summer sunning with our slithering friends

As the weather heats up, our pets and us are not the only ones that like to get out and about in the sun. Unfortunately our slippery scaly friends are thinking the same thing! Snake bites can be extremely serious and it is very important that we try to minimise the risk of our pets being bitten, and also be on the lookout for any signs that our pets may have been bitten.

To minimise the risk of snake+ bites around the house, try to remove any areas that snakes might inhabit (eg, old tires, loose scrub, corrugated iron laying flat on the ground etc). Keeping the grass in your yard short can also be helpful. When you are out walking your dog, avoid long grass and areas such as scrub and bushland.

Different snakes can produce different toxins. These can include neurotoxins that attack the nervous system, toxins which affect the clotting ability of blood, and toxins that attack other cells in the body (such as muscle tissue).

When a pet is bitten by a snake commonly the bite wound is not found. For this reason you should be on the lookout for any of the following possible symptoms:

- incoordination
- lethargy
- weakness
- paralysis



- trouble breathing
- cyanosis (blue or pale tongue and gums)
- excess salivating
- pink urine
- fitting
- dilated pupils
- vomiting

If you see any of these symptoms and suspect a snake bite, call us at the clinic immediately, prevent unnecessary movement, and transport your pet to the clinic as fast as possible.

NEVER attempt to capture the snake! This usually just leads to more bites. A look at the snake can potentially identify it, but it's not worth putting yourself at risk for. A combined antivenom can often be administered without identification of the snake species.

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### No dogs allowed!

A man goes into an ice cream shop with his dog. He goes up to the counter and asks for a cone. The shop keeper says "You can't bring that dog in here!" The guy says "This is my seeing-eye dog". "Oh..." the shop keeper says, "I'm sorry, here, have a free cone." The man takes it and sits at a table near the door.

Another guy walks into the shop with a Chihuahua. The first guy sees him, stops him and says "You can't bring that dog in here unless you tell him it's a seeing-eye dog". The second man thanks the first man and continues to the counter.

The shop keeper says "Hey, you can't bring that dog in here!" The second man replies "This is my seeing-eye dog". The shop keeper says, "No, I don't think so. They do not have Chihuahuas as seeing-eye dogs".

The man pauses for a half-second and replies "What??! They gave me a Chihuahua??!"

