

Maribyrnong Veterinary Clinic

• 95A Rosamond Road, Maidstone • Tel (03) 9318 3349



“MARIBYRNONG VET TAILS” - WINTER 2009

The Health Benefits of Pet Ownership

Pet ownership not only provides joy and enriches our lives, but it has been found that owning a pet can positively effect our health! The unconditional love that our furry (or scaly, or hairy...) friends give us can result in lower anxiety levels, a lower heart rate, and lower blood pressure.

So next time you are feeling stressed, give your cat a hug, have a chat with your bird, watch the antics of your fish, or have a game of fetch with your dog. You never know how good you might feel

Otitis Externa (Ear Infections)

Infection of the external ear canal by bacteria or yeast, is one of the most common types of infections seen in dogs. It is called otitis externa. Some breeds, particularly those with large or hairy ears like Cocker Spaniels, Miniature Poodles or Old English Sheepdogs, seem more prone to ear infections, but they can occur in any breed.

Symptoms often include:

- Sensitive ear canals
- Head shaking
- Red and inflamed ears
- Smelly ears
- A black or yellowish discharge



There are several kinds of bacteria and at least one type of fungus which might cause an ear infection. Your veterinarian will examine the ear and often take a swab to examine under the microscope to determine what is causing the infection and what course of action to take. Often this will involve a course of oral antibiotics, but in some cases treatment may involve the need to flush and clean the ear/s under general anaesthetic.



Welcome!!!

The team at Maribyrnong Vet Clinic would like to congratulate Krystie and her husband on the safe arrival of their son,

Kyson Lucas Lovery!

Kyson was born nearly 3 weeks early on May the 2nd at 9.40am weighing 8lbs 10oz (3.925kg).

Pyometra in Dogs

What is pyometra?

In its simplest terms, pyometra is an infection in the uterus. However, most cases of pyometra are much more difficult to manage than a routine infection.

How do bacteria get into the uterus?

The cervix is the gateway to the uterus. It remains tightly closed except during oestrus. When it is open, bacteria that are normally found in the vagina can enter the uterus and cause infection.

When does it occur?

Pyometra may occur in young to middle-aged dogs; however, it is most common in older dogs that have been through numerous heat cycles.

The typical time for pyometra to occur is about 1-2 months following oestrus.

What are the clinical signs?

The clinical signs depend on whether or not the cervix is open. If it is open, pus will drain from the uterus through the vagina to the outside. It is often noted on the skin or hair under the tail or on bedding and furniture where the dog has laid. Fever, lethargy, anorexia, and depression may or may not be present.

If the cervix is closed, pus that forms is not able to drain to the outside. It collects in the uterus causing distension of the abdomen. The bacteria release toxins which are absorbed into the circulation. These dogs often become severely ill very

rapidly. They are anorectic, very listless, and very depressed. Vomiting or diarrhoea may be present. Toxins from the bacteria affect the kidney's ability to retain fluid. Increased urine production occurs, and the dog drinks an excess of water. This occurs in both open- and closed-cervix pyometra.

How is it diagnosed?

A very ill female dog that is displaying the mentioned symptoms and has not been spayed is always suspected of having pyometra. This is especially true if there is a vaginal discharge or an enlarged abdomen. Dogs with pyometra have a marked elevation of the white blood cell count and often have an elevation of globulins (a type of protein produced by the immune system) in the

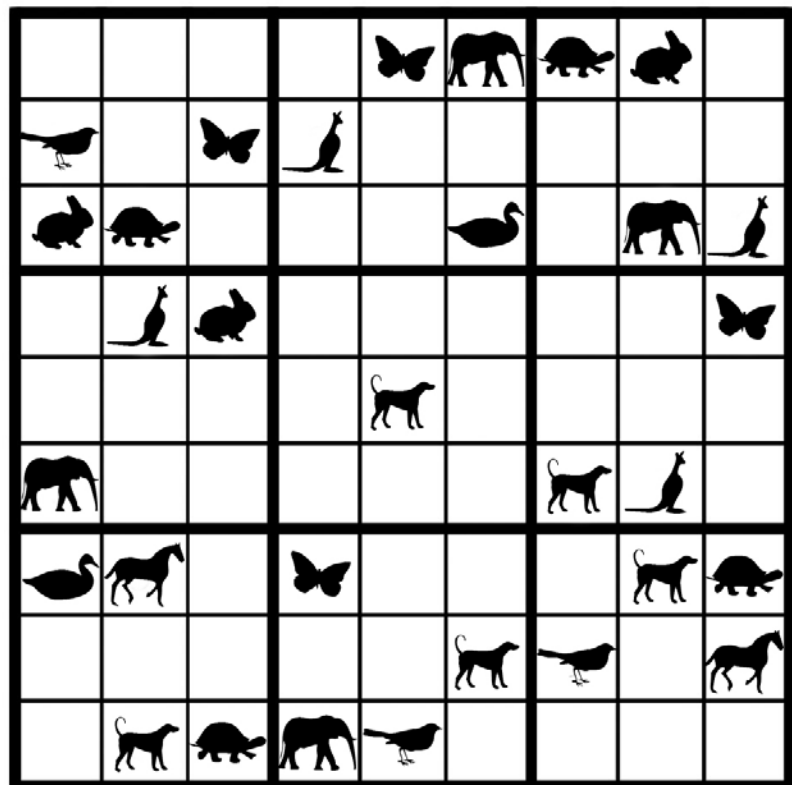
blood. The specific gravity of the urine is very low due to the toxic effects of the bacteria on the kidneys.

How is it treated?

The preferred treatment is to surgically remove the uterus and ovaries. This is called an ovariohysterectomy ("spay"). However, these dogs are quite ill so the surgery is not as routine as the same surgery in a healthy dog.

Successful treatment is often dependent on how quickly the dog is presented to the vet clinic, and how quickly surgery is performed. If you have an undesexed female dog that displays any of the symptoms mentioned, please call the clinic to make an appointment as soon as possible.

Animal Sudoku



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