SUMMER 2011

YourVet

FREE! Please take one

CITY.BEACH Veterinarians

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Our Vets

Dr Neville Robertson
BVSc(Syd), MVS(Murd)
Dr Alan Wade
BSc, BVMS(Murd)

Our Nurses

We have a group of talented, versatile and fully trained nurses. Our nurses love animals and are passionate about animal care. They run the puppy classes, weight clinics and help us keep your pet health and happy during their stay with us. Our nurses can help you with all of your pet's needs.

Our Hours

Monday to Friday	7.30am to 7pm
Saturday	8.30am to 4 pm
Sunday	Closed

Consultations are by appointment.
We are closed on Public Holidays.

After Hours

For urgent attention after hours including Public Holidays please call Perth Vet Emergency (PVE) on 9204 0400. This is a dedicated local emergency centre and they are located at 305 Selby Street North, Osborne Park. Alternatively call Murdoch Pet Emergency Centre (MPEC) on 1300 652 494.

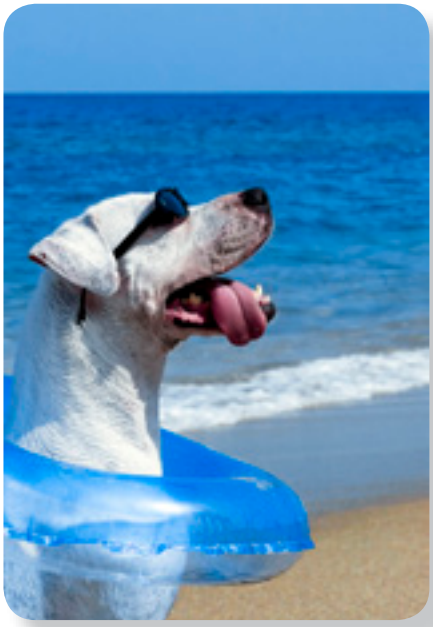
Our Webpage

City Beach Veterinarians has a new web page! Visit the site for information about your pets health, us and many other interesting items. Let us know what you think. Our web address is www.citybeachvet.com.au

Heatstroke in pets

Heatstroke in animals is a killer and can happen frighteningly fast.

Unlike humans, dogs don't cool off by sweating through their skin. The only way they can lower their body temperature is to pant, and to sweat a little through their paws. To pant effectively, they rely on the air around them being cooler than their own temperature; this will allow the heat in their moist breath to dissipate and be removed into the environment. They also rely on the environment being a little dry. High humidity makes it harder for them to cool off.



Dogs suffer heatstroke when their internal body temperature gets much too high (an example is when severe seizures occur or the pet over exercises); when the external temperature is too high and the dog cannot seek shade; and when there is no access to water and shade on a very hot day.

Here are a few guidelines to keep your pet cool as temperatures rise:

- **Vehicles**: Don't leave your pet in the car. Parked vehicles become like ovens and it takes only a few minutes for an animal to die of heatstroke.
- **Shade:** Make sure there are plenty of all-day shade areas for your animal at home. Keep in mind that a shaded spot in the morning might become baking hot at midday.
- **Don't walk:** Avoid walking your dogs during the hottest part of the day. Your dogs may overheat and burn their paws on hot surfaces.
- **Groom:** Brush loose hair from your pets regularly, especially those with extra thick coats such as Labradors and Huskies. Consider clipping them at the beginning of summer.
- **Water:** If you have birds, place a shallow bowl of cool water on the cage floor big enough for them to bathe in. If their cage is outside during the day, make sure it is in a spot that is shaded all day.
- **Ice:** 'Pocket' pets such as guinea pigs are extremely sensitive to heat, and can die just lying in their cages on a hot day. It is therefore a good idea to place a refreezable ice block over one section of their cage. The cool air will sink down and lower the temperature of the cage. Alternatively, providing them with a frozen water bottle to lie against on hot days, can make a big difference to their core body temperature.

The symptoms of heatstroke range from panting and salivating through to vomiting, diarrhoea, seizures and coma. If you suspect your pet is suffering from heatstroke, spray the animal with cold water and seek veterinary assistance as soon as possible.

READERS! Enter our competition and **WIN!** Details above

- The fight against fleas
- A bone of contention
- Poisonous plants

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The Fight Against Fleas

Fleas can be a bother all year long, but over summer, the problem can dramatically escalate. The warmth of summer enables fleas to complete their reproductive cycle at a faster rate, often resulting in a population explosion. Let's find out more about these pesky parasites.

The life cycle of the flea comprises four stages:

- **Eggs:** Flea eggs are pearly white and about ½ mm (too small to see without magnification). Fleas lay their eggs either on your pet (where they may drop off) or deposit their eggs in the immediate surroundings (such as carpeting). The eggs hatch into larvae in one to ten days, depending on the temperature. The female may lay several hundred eggs during the course of her life.
- **Larva:** Flea larvae are slender and approximately 2-5mm in length. They survive by ingesting dried blood, adult flea faeces and other organic matter. Moisture is essential for their survival at this stage, so they avoid direct sunlight. After five to eleven days, the mature larvae pupate by producing a silk-like cocoon in which the pupa resides.
- **Pupa**: Inside the cocoon, pupae are resistant to insecticides applied to their environment. Pupae can lie dormant for months, but in warm, humid conditions, pupae hatch into adult fleas in about five to ten days.
- **Adult:** When the adult flea emerges, it immediately seeks a host, as it must ingest a blood meal within a few days in order to survive. Following its first meal, the female flea starts to produce eggs within 36 to 48 hours. Egg production can continue for as long as 100 days.

It takes approximately three weeks for a flea egg to develop into an adult flea. However, the speed of the flea life cycle will depend on the temperature and the presence of a food source (your pet's blood!)

Fleas affect our pets in many different ways. Some animals can carry a large flea burden with no ill effects. Others may be allergic to the saliva from a flea bite and respond to just a single flea with excessive itching and discomfort. Pets suffering from fleas often have associated hair loss and secondary dermatitis.

Flea control

Treating for fleas involves more than just getting rid of the fleas on the animal. The fleas on the animal only make up about 5% of the total flea life cycle population, the remaining 95% being in the environment. Therefore, treating your pets and their living areas thoroughly and at the same time is vital, otherwise some fleas may survive and re-infect your pet.

In the past, topical insecticide sprays, dips and powders were popular forms of treatment. However, the effect was only temporary. Some stages of the flea's life can last for months and larvae are protected inside their cocoon against insecticides. To have excellent flea control, use an integrated program which gets rid of environmental life cycle stages as well as using products on the pet which kill and sterilise fleas.

It is best to consult your veterinarian as to the best flea control and prevention for your pet. The choice of flea control should depend on your pet's lifestyle and potential for exposure.

10 Flea Fighting Tips

The best medicine is prevention, so follow this holistic approach to keep fleas at bay:

1. Check daily with a flea comb. (Fleas caught in the comb can be disposed of by dunking the comb in a bowl of warm, soapy water.)
2. Look for any telltale shiny black specs that turn reddish-brown on a damp white sheet of paper, indicating flea droppings of ingested blood.
3. Vacuum all areas in the house thoroughly. (The vibrations will also encourage life-cycle stages to emerge.)
4. Steam clean, where possible.
5. Use cotton sheets to cover areas where your pet likes to sleep, such as sofas, carpets and floor surfaces with deep crevices where the larvae can hide and mature.
6. Wash your pet's bedding every week, in at least a 60°C cycle.
7. Air your pet's bed in the sun regularly.
8. If your house is already infested with fleas, use aerosols and foggers, following manufacturer's instructions carefully.
9. Clean your backyard, sweeping up all dead leaves and debris, where fleas may hide and flourish.
10. Choose your pet's friends carefully. Don't allow animals with fleas onto your property.

A Bone of Contention

Most pet owners are probably aware of the "great bone debate" – should we or shouldn't we feed our pets bones. It is very difficult to come to a conclusion without considering the pros and cons of a diet containing bones.

The case for bones:

1. Bones provide stimulation and environmental enrichment. Many suburban dogs are left alone for long hours so a bone to gnaw on, bury and dig up can help fill in this lonely time. Keeping a pet busy gnawing a bone may help prevent other undesirable behaviours such as barking and chewing furniture.
2. Bones can help keep teeth clean through their excellent abrasive action.
3. Some believe that bones provide a more natural form of nutrition for dogs and cats.

The case against bones:

1. Although bones do help keep teeth clean and free from plaque, constant gnawing can cause significant wear and may even fracture teeth.
2. The inside of large bones contains marrow, which has a high fat content. A diet high in fat can predispose pets to obesity and serious medical conditions such as pancreatitis.
3. Small fragments of bone can compact as they pass through the intestines and form a "boney brick" of faeces that is difficult and painful to pass.
4. Bones can become wedged across the roof of the mouth or around the teeth. Large bone fragments and spiky bones (such as kangaroo tails and T-bones) can also get lodged in the digestive tract. Avoid cooked bones as they are softer and therefore larger chunks of bone can be broken off and consumed.
5. Bones are a common source of conflict in multiple dog households. Many a friendly doggy relationship has been shattered over a bone war.
6. Many dogs like to bury their bone. This can be a nuisance for the more green-fingered dog owner. Digging the bone back up can be an even bigger problem as not only is there a hole in the garden to contend with but also a smelly rotting bone. Bones in this state can cause diarrhoea and smelly breath.

Before feeding a pet bones, always consult your veterinarian about their suitability for your pet, especially if they have had a history of gut problems. Never feed cooked bones and always separate or supervise bone feeds in a multiple dog household.

Poisonous Plants

Some cats like to nibble on pot plants – but this could be dangerous. If you see your cat eating your greenery, you should check whether the plant is toxic. For example, several types of lilies can be deadly to cats.

The many varieties of ornamental lilies (for example, the Easter Lily and Tiger Lily) are severely toxic to cats. All parts of the lily are poisonous and as little as two to three leaves can kill a cat.

Symptoms of poisoning range from seizures and foaming at the mouth to vomiting and coma. These symptoms can then progress to complete renal failure.

Early and aggressive treatment is required to prevent this catastrophic chain of events. Don't wait for symptoms to start. Take the cat immediately to your local veterinarian if you suspect it has eaten a toxic substance.

Competition for our readers!

WIN a $50 shopping voucher

1) Just answer the following question: Which article did you like best in this issue of Your Vet? .....

2) Tick the box next to your preferred voucher: ☐ K Mart Australia Ltd ☐ Coles Myer Ltd ☐ Target Australia Ltd ☐ JB Hi Fi

3) What is your email address? * .....

* By providing us with your email address, you agree to receive future marketing material.

4) Post with your name and address on the back of the envelope to:
Your Vet Voucher Competition, Unit 5/1 Almondbury Road, Mt Lawley WA 6050

Must be received by latest post marked 03/02/2011 to be in the running. The winner of the competition in Your Vet's Spring edition was Mr A. Hall of WA.

THAT'S IT! GOOD LUCK!

Who is looking after your pet this holiday?

Many of us make plans to go away on a summer holiday during the festive season. Flights and accommodation are booked months in advance, and plans are made to catch up with family and friends. But have you given thought to who will be looking after your pets when you are away on holiday?

Knowing that your pet is safe and secure, and having proper contingency plans in place will give you peace of mind and help you to relax and enjoy your holiday.

- If leaving your pet in a boarding establishment, visit the premises and make sure you feel comfortable with the setup. Book early, as most good boarding establishments are filled to capacity over summer.
- Provide the boarding establishment or carer with your holiday itinerary, your contact details, your vet's details and also your expectations should an emergency occur. For example, if your pet is bitten by a snake or involved in a road accident, is there a financial cap on treatment costs? Or would you prefer a 'spare-no-expense-approach'?
- Where possible, get the boarding establishment or carer to feed your pet its usual diet. Sudden changes to diet frequently cause gastric ulcers.
- Carers should be made familiar with your pet's routine. For example, let the carer know if you do not allow your pet to sleep on furniture in your house.

- Ensure that your pet's vaccinations are up to date.
- If your pet is on medication, make sure there are sufficient supplies for the duration of the holiday.

Now all you need to do is relax and enjoy your holiday!

Rib Ticklers

1. What do you call a very old ant?
   An antique
2. What is even smarter than a talking bird?
   A spelling bee
3. Why shouldn't you loan books to a dog?
   It will make them dog-eared
4. What do you call a cat that can jump far?
   A catapult

On behalf of all of us, we extend our very best wishes to you, your family and friends, for a safe, happy and healthy festive season!

Practice Update

Complete Health

City Beach Veterinarians is committed to making it easy for you to look after all of your pet's needs.

Our Complete Health packages provide all of your pet's routine preventive health care. You do not need to remember when your pet is due for any products as we mail them to you monthly!

Each Complete Health package includes

- Monthly Flea Control
- Heartworm Prevention
- Intestinal worming medication
- Annual vaccinations

By taking out a Complete Health package you will save 5% off the price you would normal pay for the products and services listed above.

There are **extra rewards** for being a Complete Health member. These include

- $20 discount off every primary consultation
- Unlimited free nail clipping
- Pet food discount vouchers
- Microchipping discount (transferable)
- For dogs there are 4 free hydrobaths which include blow drying.

Complete Health means peace of mind.

Puppy Preschool

Just like humans it is best to start training young! We run regular puppy classes that are great fun and informative. Your pup will learn to socialise with other pups, enjoy visiting us and you will start to learn the basics of training.

This is a great start to your pup's life and helps cement a long lasting relationship between you and your pet. Ask one of our nurses for more information.

Vet Profiles:

Dr Neville Robertson

Neville graduated from Sydney University in 1985. He moved to WA a year later to take up a position as an Intern in Veterinary Anaesthesia at Murdoch University. Nev has completed a Masters Degree in Veterinary Science at Murdoch University. Neville represents the AVA on the Vet Nurses National Industry Advisory Group.

Dr Alan Wade

Alan graduated from Murdoch University in 1988. Alan worked extensively in the United Kingdom before returning to Australia 9 years ago. He has worked in many large practices and gained significant experience dealing with complicated cases over the years.