

THOUGHTS

The Vets
who ❤️
your pets

Summer 2016

FOR PAWS



A summer danger... The grass seed!

Grass seeds are a common problem in the summer time and can become lodged in your dog's ear canal or between the toes. If your dog has grass seeds in the skin between the toes, you may see a red raised boil that the dog has been licking for a day or two. There's often also a small hole and sometimes the tip of the grass seed may be visible. The dog's paw may be swollen or sore if the grass seed has moved into the foot.

Once inside the dog, seeds continue to burrow inward. A seed that has crept into the dog will continue to travel throughout the body, often leaving a hollow tract behind it, until it either comes up against something it can't go through (such as bone), or until it causes an abscess which pops out through the skin.

Animals with an infected grass seed penetration will show signs typical of an infection: lethargy, loss of appetite, painful swellings or signs of drainage.



These seeds need to be removed surgically but can be very difficult to find, as they burrow deep into tissues causing intense inflammatory reaction. Ultrasound can prove very helpful in locating and assisting removal of these tricky seeds.



Help! My cat is crying all the time!

The life expectancy of pet cats is increasing, such that >10% are now over 12 years of age.

Unfortunately, accompanying this growing population of elderly cats, are many cats with age-associated behavioural changes, such as increased meowing

These cats often become more affectionate towards their owners and more demanding of their attention; the increased vocalisation is often aimed at trying to gain their owners attention. Sometimes they appear to be meowing for no apparent reason at all.

Perhaps the most common causes of increased vocalisation in elderly cats are, hyperthyroidism, high blood pressure, deafness, osteoarthritis (or other causes of chronic pain such as dental disease), brain tumours and Cognitive Dysfunction Syndrome. This is a condition whose signs are like those associated in humans with dementia. Successful management depends of making a full diagnosis of all potential causes of the cat's vocalisation then addressing these disorders in a sensible stepwise manner.

So if your cat is starting to cry more often, come and see us for a full clinical exam and discussion.



Practice News

Welcome to our Summer edition of the practice newsletter. We can't wait to start having BBQ's in the sun! However with the summer season comes summer dangers and we start seeing a lot of grass seeds annoying our furry friends. We have an article about what to look out for and ways to prevent them from causing you unnecessary vet bills!



We are now sending out all vaccination reminders either by our text system or email, so please let us know if any of your details change so we can keep you updated.

The Squamous Cell Carcinoma



Cats, particularly white coated ones are prone to getting sunburn. Cats don't have to be outdoors all the time to be affected from UV radiation as it can pass through windows.

Being exposed to the sun on a regular basis can result in skin cancer if not managed early and appropriately. The burns on the skin can leave the skin more susceptible to infections such as ring-worm. The parts of the body most commonly affected are usually the cat's nose, ears, eyelids, lips and even inside the mouth.

The skin cancer is called Squamous cell carcinoma. It is usually considered malignant which means it is aggressive and can spread to other parts of the body.

Skin Squamous cell carcinoma

Squamous cell carcinoma tends to affect middle-age to older cats that are white or have a light-coloured coat. Studies have also shown an increased prevalence in cats that wear flea collars and those in smoking households.

Skin cancers are one of the most common forms of tumours that affect cats.

Common signs include

- Hair loss
- Crusting
- Weepy discharge
- Slow healing sores

The lesions are usually crusty, ulcerated, raised or cauliflower-like and don't heal.

These tumours can be managed by taking a biopsy, surgical removal, cryo-therapy (freezing) and radiation therapy. Treating smaller lesions early gives the best outcome for cats with skin cancer.

Tips of prevention

- Limit sun exposure, especially during UV hours
- Only apply pet sunscreen on the ears, nose and areas that aren't covered with hair – human sunscreen is not appropriate
- UV protected windows
- Keep your pet indoors

If you are worried that your pet may have skin cancer, please don't hesitate to seek veterinarian attention as the sooner it is removed the better for you and your furry friend!

