

WELCOME TO the latest edition of our newsletter, designed to keep you up to date with your veterinary practice.

### Practice Facilities

- Completely refurbished and extended practice
- Friendly professional service
- Orthopaedic referral service
- Annual health checks
- Nurse clinics
- Full dental facilities
- Puppy parties
- Weight checks
- Separate cat and dog wards
- Convenient surgery hours
- Senior Pet Healthcare programme, for dogs over 8 and cats over 10 years old

### Consulting Times by appointment

Monday - Friday:

9.00 am - 6.30 pm

Saturday:

9.00 am - 12.00 noon



DID YOU know that unless regularly vaccinated, your dog or cat is at risk from several potentially fatal infectious diseases?

**In cats** we recommend regular vaccinations against Cat Flu, Panleucopenia, and Feline Leukaemia Virus.

**In dogs** we recommend regular vaccinations against Canine Parvovirus, Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis and Leptospirosis.

None of these diseases has yet been eradicated although thankfully, as a result of vaccination, their incidence has been greatly reduced. Additionally, vaccination is

## Infectious Diseases: Is your pet protected?

the only reliable method of protecting against these diseases – there is no specific cure for them and treatment may not only be unsuccessful but also very costly.

### The first vaccinations

Two or more vaccinations are usually given as a primary course, giving your pet immunity for the first year of life.

### The annual booster and health examination

Immunity to infectious diseases is not indefinite, and will gradually fall over time, leaving your pet at risk. Regular annual booster vaccinations are required to stimulate your pet's immunity, thereby minimising the risk when challenged by a natural infection. At the same time, we like to carry out a thor-

ough health examination, and also look at other aspects of pet health care such as worming, flea control and diets. This is also an ideal time to ask any questions *you* may have regarding your pet's health.

If you would like any further information on vaccinations or the annual health examination, please do not hesitate to ask!



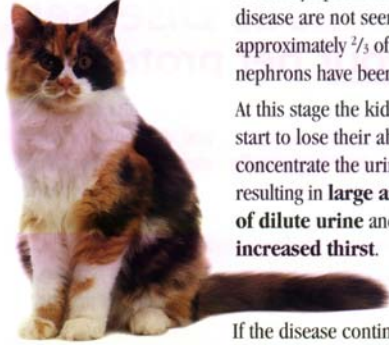
## Permanent pet identification!

THERE is now a simple and effective means of identifying your pets *wherever* they go! It involves injecting a tiny microchip (the size of a grain of rice) into loose skin at the back of the neck. The microchip contains a unique code identifying your pet.

Veterinary practices, the police and pet rescue organisations have special scanners that can detect and "read" the information on your pet's microchip – identifying your pet so that you can be reunited without delay. For further information on the benefits of microchipping or to arrange to have your pet microchipped, please contact us now!

## Does my pet have kidney disease? Rabbit teeth: time for a check-up?

AS OUR pets grow older, certain health problems are more likely to arise. One example of this is kidney disease which is particularly common in middle-aged and older cats.



Both dogs and cats have a pair of kidneys. Each kidney is made up of millions of tiny units called **nephrons** which filter the blood, removing toxic waste products, salts and water. These are then concentrated to form urine.

Over time, a proportion of the nephrons will disappear and not be replaced.

Photo: Jane Buxton

Other factors such as infections, toxins and cancer may also destroy nephrons.

However, the kidneys have excess filtering capacity with the result that the *visible* symptoms of kidney disease are not seen until approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the nephrons have been lost.

At this stage the kidneys start to lose their ability to concentrate the urine, resulting in **large amounts of dilute urine** and an **increased thirst**.

If the disease continues to progress, toxic waste products start accumulating in the bloodstream, leading to **loss of appetite, weight loss, weakness, depression, vomiting and poor coat condition**.

As you can see the symptoms of kidney disease are unfortunately very often *bidden* until the disease is in the very advanced stages.

However with regular veterinary check-ups the symptoms of kidney disease can often be detected at a very much earlier stage – *before* they become outwardly noticeable. As with most illnesses, early detection of kidney disease is very important.

Whilst kidney disease cannot be cured, a combination of specially formulated diets (with restricted levels of high quality proteins and salts) together with new forms of medication, can often significantly improve the quality of life of pets with this condition.

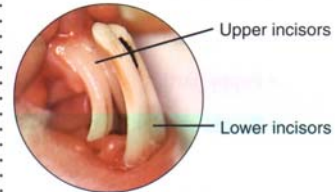


Please contact us for further information, or to arrange a check-up for your pet.



YOU MAY be surprised to learn that the most common health problem in rabbits is dental disease. Rabbits have continuously growing teeth, with both the cheek teeth and the incisor (front) teeth growing by as much as 1-2 mm per week!

The **incisor teeth** should meet, thereby ensuring that as your rabbit chews, they will wear down. If they become misaligned (as seen below) they will continue to grow and will *overgrow* past each other; this invariably leads to eating problems.

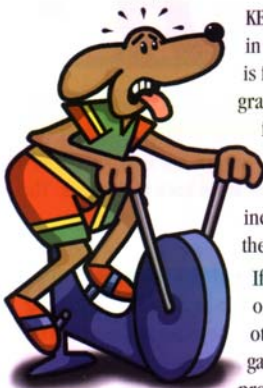


Misaligned and overgrown upper and lower incisor teeth

Turning to the **cheek teeth**, rabbits can develop a variety of problems associated with continual tooth growth. Symptoms commonly include "slobbers" with saliva dribbling around the mouth and loss of appetite leading to weight loss.

If you are worried about your rabbit's teeth, we would be pleased to check them for you and also advise you on diet and feeding regimes aimed at controlling many of the problems described above.

## Obesity – an expanding problem!



Cartoon: Gareth Davies

KEEPING OUR pets healthy and trim is just as important as in ourselves. Obesity is a common problem, and one that is frequently overlooked, since weight gain usually occurs gradually. Pets become obese when the energy level in their food is greater than their daily requirements, and this excess energy is laid down as body fat.

Obesity is known to worsen a variety of conditions including heart disease and arthritis. For pets suffering with these conditions, weight loss can make a huge difference.

If you are concerned that your pet is a little heavier than he or she should be, we are happy to help! Having ruled out other medical disorders which can be a cause of weight gain, we are happy to advise you on the ideal diet and exercise programme for your pet. Contact us now for further details!