



## Zoonosis

Dogs and cats get various diseases and most of these are not transferable to humans. However there are some diseases that are contagious to humans and these are called zoonotic diseases. Ringworm is perhaps the most commonly known zoonotic disease and we sometimes get people phoning us to book an appointment for their cat because their GP has diagnosed ringworm on the owner. Cats don't always show symptoms but are good carriers of this fungal infection.

Other zoonotic diseases include Salmonella, Campylobacter, Cryptosporidium and some other causes of diarrhoea. Some worms are also transferable to humans and it is for this reason important to always wash your hands after handling animals. Make sure children wash their hands too as they are more likely to stick their fingers in their mouth and are more susceptible to getting infected. Regular worm treatment is always beneficial as a precaution. There are several different products available; some have combined effect against both fleas and worms. Fleas will bite humans but do not survive without their main host; a cat or a dog.

Cats are good carriers of Toxoplasmosis which can cause issues in pregnant women. It is transferable via cat's faeces and hence pregnant women should be careful when gardening (cats use the flower beds as a toilet) or emptying the cat's litter tray. Perhaps good excuses to get your husband to do these jobs?

## Blood Transfusion

Dogs have at least 12 different blood types, but the most important type is referred to as Dog Erythrocyte Antigen (DEA) 1.1 Positive and negative. A DEA 1.1 Positive dog can receive blood from any dog and is referred to as a universal recipient. A dog that is DEA 1.1 Negative is classed as a universal donor and can donate blood to any dog with a minimal risk of blood transfusion reaction.

Most blood transfusions are done in an emergency situation and it is safe for a dog to receive one blood transfusion without checking blood type of donor or recipient first. This is because the dog receiving the blood transfusion will not have developed an immune response to the blood of the donor. But if available, it is best to use dogs known to be DEA 1.1 negative as blood donors. Donor dogs need to weigh 25kg or more and can safely donate 2 units of blood (450ml). The donor is given IV fluids after donating blood for the same reason you are given biscuits and tea or coffee after you donate blood.

Blood transfusion is used in treatment of severe bleeding or sudden destruction of blood cells due to other disease. Sometimes the immune system gets it wrong and starts destroying healthy blood cells such as the Red Blood Cells or Platelets. The blood transfusion is then used to stabilise the patient before treatment can be initiated. The treatment will then involve a high dose of steroids and frequent monitoring by way of blood tests long term, sometimes for the rest of the dog's life.

Severe bleeding is often associated with trauma, but can also be caused by bleeding tumours originating from the spleen or sometimes liver.

Cats can also receive blood transfusion, but they are more complicated and require accurate blood typing every time. There are no universal donors among cats because they naturally have antibodies against the blood group antigen that they lack.



*Goldie made a full recovery, Bruce was thrilled.*



## Animal Trivia

- Dragonflies are one of the fastest insects, flying 50-60 mph
- In its entire lifetime, the average worker bee produces 1/12th teaspoon of honey
- Owls have eyeballs that are tubular in shape. Because of this, they can not move their eyes
- Sharks apparently are the only animals that never get sick. As far as is known, they are immune to every known disease including cancer
- Snakes are immune to their own poison
- Tape worms range in size from about 0.04inch to more than 50 feet in length
- The blood of mammals is red, the blood of insects is yellow, and the blood of lobsters is blue
- The bones of a pigeon weigh less than its feathers
- There are around 2600 different species of frogs. They live on every continent except Antarctica
- The chicken and fish are the only animals that are eaten before they are born and after they die
- The phrase 'raining cats and dogs' originated in seventeenth-century England. During heavy rainstorms, many homeless animals would drown and float down the streets, giving the appearance that it had actually rained cats and dogs



## Contact phone number in case of emergency

Whenever you are dropping your beloved pet off to the vet for surgery, we ask you for a contact phone number in case of emergency. This is so that if there is a question regarding treatment or management of your pet while under general anaesthetic, we can discuss and then proceed, knowing that we are doing what you want us to do.



But don't panic if you get a phone call sooner than you expected during the day. It is not always an emergency as such. Sometimes it is because we found a lump while doing surgery for another reason and want to offer removal under the same anaesthetic. Or it may be to discuss a change of plan based on what we find during surgery.

In short, it is important that we will be able to contact you while your pet is in our care. We have had a number of situations lately when we have not been able to get in touch with the owner and had to wait, sometimes causing the anaesthetic time to be extended until we get hold of the owner. Occasionally we get given a phone number that is wrong, so please do check that you provide a correct contactable number.

All in all, we want what's best for your pet and strive to make sure you are involved in any decision that needs to be made.



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