

## Cat & Dog Breast Bumps

Unfortunately, dogs and cats can be diagnosed with breast cancer. Both male and female animals have mammary tissue so it is possible for males to be affected as well, however it is much less common (<1% of male dogs). Some mammary lumps in cats and dogs are what we call benign (unlikely to spread but may grow locally). In dogs roughly 50% are benign and 50% are malignant. Cats have it a little worse off with about 85% being malignant and 15% benign, however mammary lumps are far less common in cats vs dogs. It is impossible to determine if a mammary lump is benign or malignant just by looking at it or feeling it. In order to determine what type it is we need to do a fine needle aspirate where a needle is inserted into the lump (often while the animal is conscious), cells are sucked out and examined under the microscope.

So what can we do to stop mammary tumours in their tracks?

- Early age neutering is our best form of defence. Neutering helps prevent mammary tumours developing as opposed to treating your pet once lumps have already developed. A dog spayed before her first heat has only a 0.5% chance of developing mammary lumps. If a dog is left to have 1 heat her chance increases to 8% and after 2 heats 26%. In cats the chance of developing mammary tumours is reduced by up to 91% if done before six months of age.
- After a fine needle aspirate is performed we can look at removal. If the lump is diagnosed as malignant a chest/lung x-ray is advised prior to removal, this is because one of the first places malignant mammary lumps spread is to the chest cavity. A benign tumour may get bigger but doesn't often spread. On very rare occasions benign tumours can turn in to malignant ones. For these reasons it is often advisable to look at removal of benign lumps also.

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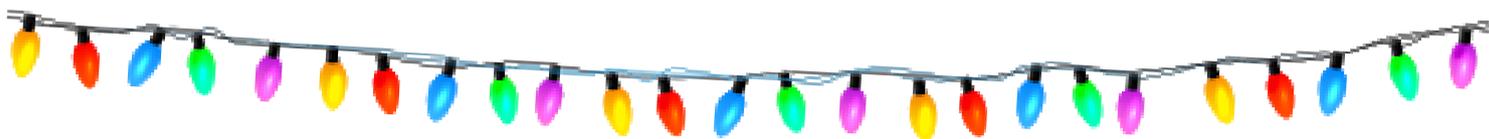
## Pre Anaesthetic Pet Checks

Surgery is inevitable in most pets' lifetime, whether it be a routine procedure such as neutering or dental or an emergency procedure such as a foreign body surgery. With every anaesthetic we perform there is always an associated risk and we want to make this risk as low as possible for your pet. One of the ways in which we can ensure it is as safe as possible is doing a screening blood panel. If you have a geriatric pet the vet will likely discuss this with you pre surgery as this group of animals is at greater risk of health complications but younger animals can also benefit from pre anaesthetic bloods. Bloods help give us a better picture of an animal's physical status prior to anaesthetic so the appropriate drugs and protocols can be used.

At Vetco we have an in house blood machine which can process a blood sample in roughly twenty minutes giving us critical information instantly. Some of the key information provided is kidney and liver function, protein levels and blood sugar levels. If there is organ damage already existing we may advise against the procedure or just change our drug protocol to ensure there is the lowest chance of further damage or delay the procedure to after we have addressed the organ damage. The liver has a key role in metabolising many of the anaesthetic agents we have access to. If the liver is not working properly recovery can be much slower. The kidney also has an important role to filter many of the anaesthetic drugs out of the body. It is also an organ which can be affected quite dramatically by changes in blood pressure and dehydration, both influenced by anaesthetic agents. If we know one is affected we can choose a drug which is not solely metabolised/processed by the affected organ or one that doesn't have such an impact on blood pressure. We assess protein levels as they are a vital part of wound healing post-surgery.

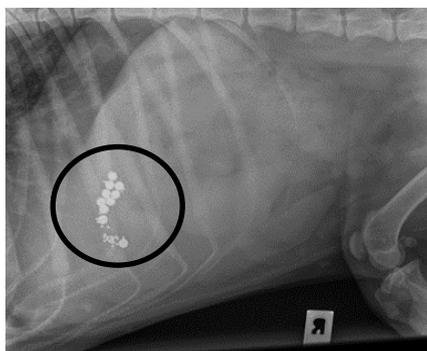


These pre anaesthetic tests will also allow us to schedule further testing to monitor your pet's health if required. If the results are normal it will provide a good base line for any future blood tests.

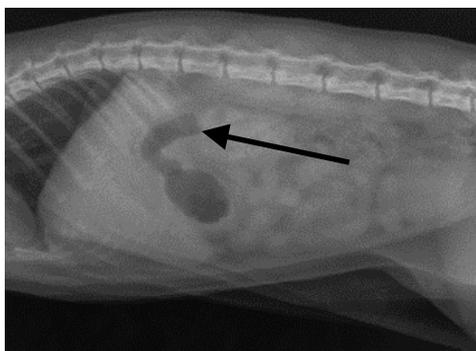


### Tasty treats, and it's not meat!!

Foreign bodies are a lot of dog owners and the occasional cat owners worst nightmare. We see all too often a pet who has eaten something they shouldn't, but there are a few items which are more common than others. Bones are the number one culprit, these can either cause an obstruction at the outflow of the stomach or pass in to the intestine and block food from passing through. More surprising but almost as common is the humble corn cob, covered in compost pets often see these as a treat and they tend to be a perfect size to cause a lot of trouble. We often diagnose foreign body obstructions using a good history paired with clinical signs. An animal with an obstruction will often exhibit vomiting, inappetance, lethargy and sometimes diarrhoea. X-rays can be quite useful in diagnosing the foreign obstruction. Some items like bones are what we call radio-opaque so they show up on the x-ray while other items like cloth or corn cobs don't show up on an x-ray as they appear the same colour as the gut and fat so we have to look for other signs. With an obstruction, especially if it is complete the part of the intestine upstream from it can become very distended and gas filled. If we aren't 100% confident on whether there is an obstruction we can feed the animal radio-opaque BIPS which will get stuck where the obstruction is.



X-ray 24 hours after BIPS administered, all stuck in same place



Rubber foreign body (can't be seen) causing gassy distension of the intestine which stops abruptly



Bone foreign body in stomach causing outflow obstruction

### Fireworks Frenzy

New Years day is sneaking right up  
 Fireworks are fun for us but can scare cats and pups  
 What can we do to help them stay calm?  
 Lock them inside to keep them from harm  
 Shut windows and doors with the curtains pulled tight  
 The bright flashes can give them a really big fright  
 Prepare a safe place where they feel at home  
 In a cupboard, bed or where they get their daily comb  
 Turn the TV or music up nice and loud  
 Provide a distraction invite some friends around  
 Your furry friends feed off your emotions a lot  
 Stay calm and relaxed otherwise your pets will not  
 Make sure they are microchipped in case they get out  
 A pheromone diffuser may help if you still have your doubts  
 Remember we are always here if you need some advice  
 Most of us have had experience with scared pets  
 once or twice

### Christmas/New Year Hours

Vetco Edendale and Kennington clinics will be closed on the following days:

Christmas Statutory Days.....25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>  
 December 2020

New Year Statutory Days..... 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>  
 January 2021

If you require Veterinary Services while our clinics are closed please follow the usual after hours procedure which is dial the listed clinic number. Your call will be automatically diverted to the cell phone of the duty veterinarian. After dialing the clinic number there is a pause while the call is diverted, please wait while the call is being connected.



**KENNINGTON CLINIC - 11 CLAPHAM ROAD (03) 230 4689**  
**EDENDALE CLINIC - 14 SWEENEY STREET (03) 206 6170**

