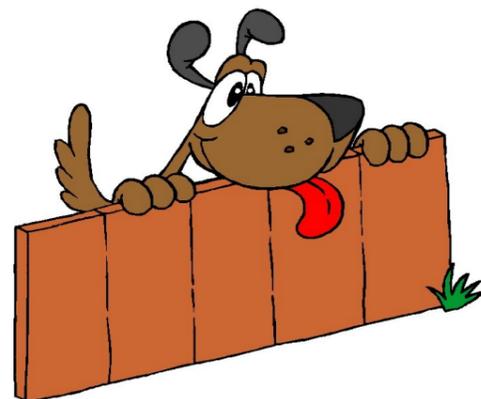


## DOGS AND KIDS

There has been a lot of media surrounding dog attacks on children lately. Often this situation happens when young kids are left unsupervised around a dog. Kids are usually not very good at reading a dogs body language and don't pick up on the warning signs before a dog decides to attack. Small children are at the same height as dogs so are commonly bitten in the face.



You as an owner can do a lot to prevent dog attacks. Kids should be taught to be gentle with animals and should always be supervised when around a dog (or cat for that matter!). Dogs should be well trained so they respond readily to commands ('sit', 'stay' and 'come' as a minimum) and are gentle around people and other animals. Puppy preschool is an excellent way to start training your puppy to help it fit into the family. There are a number of places that offer dog obedience for adult dogs in Invercargill. Give us a ring if your dog does not respond to basic commands to find out more



Dogs should be confined to your property. We have heard of a number of incidences where a dog will run out of an unfenced property and attack a person or another dog which is running past.

It is up to you the owner to take responsibility for your dogs behaviour. If you have a dog or are thinking about getting a dog then a great website to look at is <http://www.dogsafety.govt.nz>. Remember, any dog that is provoked or frightened could growl, snap at, or bite a child.

## WHAT TO FEED YOUR BUNNY

Rabbits have teeth which grow continuously. Bunnies chew up to 120 times per minute to help wear down their teeth. They need a good source of fibre in their diet to chew on to help them wear down their teeth and prevent them from overgrowing. Teeth which are not worn down properly can form into sharp points which cut into the cheek or tongue. Fibre is also important to help to maintain a healthy gut. Hay is a good source of fibre. Your bunny should also be fed commercial rabbit pellets, fresh vegetables and water.



## Cat Facts—Did you know.....

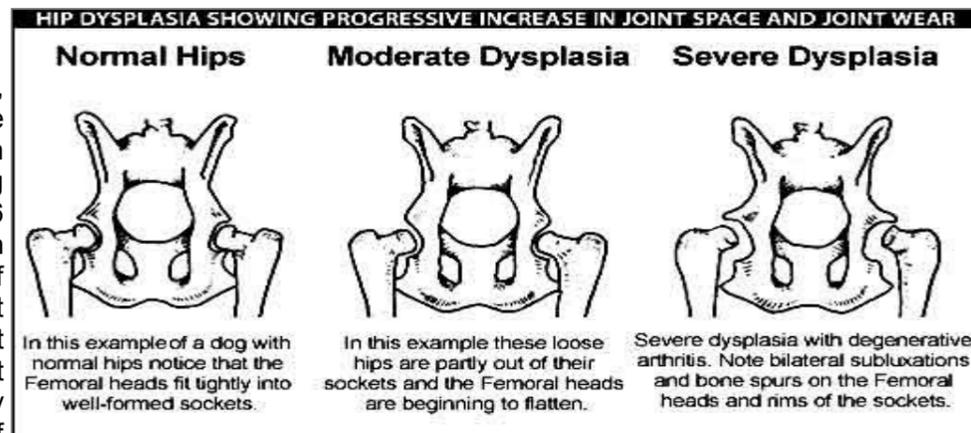
- Isaac Newton is credited for inventing the cat flap door
- Your cats front paws have five toes, the back paws have four toes
- Cats prefer their food at room temperature
- Your cat purrs at the same frequency as an idling diesel engine, this is around 26 purrs per second
- Your domestic cat can run at 48km's per hour
- Your cat can see in the dark—cats can see at one-sixth of light level required for human vision
- Cat World Records—the most fertile cat gave birth to 420 kittens
- Cats bite out of pleasure as well, so when you're petting your cat, if they bite you, it may not be a negative response
- 30% of a cats waking hours are spent on grooming

## PARVO WARNING

We have had a number of Parvo cases lately. Parvo is a nasty and expensive disease for puppies to go through (or possibly die from) and at the same time is totally preventable via vaccination. If you have a puppy 6 weeks or older then get it vaccinated and keep up to date with the boosters. If you are breeding dogs then make sure the bitch is up to date with her vaccinations before she has the puppies.

## Hip Dysplasia

Arnie is a happy, lovely natured, one year old golden Labrador. Starting when he was 6 months old, he began showing signs of lameness in his right hind leg. This got gradually worse but was confounded by the fact that he fell off



a truck and wounded the knee joint in that leg when he was 9 months old. When his knee was completely healed he still had a very evident limp in that leg and x-rays were taken of his hip.

Unfortunately Arnie had hip dysplasia, a far too common disease of Labradors, Golden Retrievers and German Shepherd dogs with some incidence on other breeds. Dogs hips are ball and socket joints and the top of the thigh bone (femur) fits into a socket in the pelvis. In dogs with hip dysplasia the shape of the ball and the socket are abnormal so that there is much more instability in the joint while the dog is performing normal movement. This inevitably leads to arthritis and pain and can be very debilitating to the dog, even shortening their life span. Arnie's case was very severe due to the early age it started and by the time he was one year old it was having a severe impact on his quality of life.

The sad truth however, is that the likelihood of hip dysplasia can be decreased dramatically by examining and x-raying the hips of the parents of a litter before mating is attempted. There has been a long, ongoing and concerted effort by the registered breed societies to decrease the incidence of hip dysplasia by careful breeding of dogs with good hip conformation. Their excellent efforts have been well rewarded. The problem arises when unscrupulous breeders mate two dogs without doing the preliminary work. This is likely how poor Arnie came by his bad conformation.

In Arnie's case the only option was surgery. He has improved dramatically after surgery, acting more like a normal happy lab than he was previously and he is much more comfortable. Over the longer term however the already existing arthritis can't be fixed and he will required medication for arthritis.

If you are getting a puppy ask if the parents have been hip and elbow scored. If you have trouble interpreting the answer, we are happy to help you. If the parents have not then consider the possibility they may have to have expensive surgery at an early age and not have the quality of life they deserve.

## DO YOU HAVE A NEW PUPPY?

Puppy Preschool is underway at our Kennington Clinic. This is a great opportunity to socialise your pup and start some basic training. Puppy Preschool is a fantastic way to get onto the right track with your new puppy and to avoid potential behavioral problems. It is best to start puppy preschool when your dog is 7-16 weeks of age. It involves 4 one hour sessions on Thursday evenings. Topics covered include socialisation, basic training, clinic tour and vet talk. Puppies must have had their first vaccination before starting. Cost is \$45 for the 4 sessions. Let us know if you are interested so we can book you in.



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