



THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE SMALL ANIMAL TEAM - ISSUE # 25

MARCH 2013

Lumps and Bumps

A common reason to visit the vet, especially in older pets is to investigate a lump. Lumps and bumps are usually found when patting your cat or dog. There are two main types of lumps – benign or malignant. If you find a lump on your pet it is best to get it checked out by a vet.

Benign lumps are slow growing and do not spread around the body. Malignant lumps are the opposite. These are faster growing and eventually spread to other places in the body.

Some lumps are very typical in their presentation and a likely diagnosis can be made just by looking at the lump. To know for sure what type of lump is present a small sample can usually be taken using a needle and syringe. The sample is blown on to a slide and sent to a lab to find out what type of lump it is. For some lumps not many cells are obtained with this method and a biopsy must be taken to find out what the lump is.

Once we know what type of lump it is we can decide on the best plan of attack. Benign lumps can often be left and monitored if they are not causing a problem. Malignant lumps are best removed surgically. It is best if a malignant lump is removed as soon as possible before it starts to spread.

If you have noticed any lumps and bumps on your pets then please phone us to arrange an appointment for your pet to be checked. Even if it is just a benign lump, finding out what it is will give you peace of mind.

Responsible Cat Ownership

Feral cats have a huge impact on New Zealand's unique native wildlife populations. Cats are highly efficient predators and pose a significant threat to endangered birdlife. Feral cats are often the source of toxoplasmosis which causes abortion in sheep and illness in humans. Feral and stray cats can spread disease such as feline aids and cat flu to domestic cats and get into fights resulting in injuries and cat bite abscesses.

Cats that are not desexed before puberty and cats that are abandoned are a major contributor of the stray cat population. If the majority of cat owners ensured their cats were desexed by 6 months of age this would make a huge difference in reducing the number of cats on the loose.

Other things that can be done to reduce the impact cats have on native species include keeping cats inside at night, attaching a collar and bell, microchipping and providing adequate food and water. Keeping your cat inside at night also helps to prevent cat fights and road traffic injuries. Microchipping helps to reunite you with your cat if it does go missing. If you really want to make sure your cat does not roam too far then there are products available to kitty-proof your section.



Farewell to Kate

Many of you would have met our superb vet nurse Kate from Cambridge, England. She has been with Vetco for the past year and is now heading back home. On her way Kate is stopping off in Fiji to do some volunteer work.

Kate has really enjoyed her time in New Zealand and hopes to be back sometime in the future.

Try saying these fast....

- Six slippery snails slid slowly seawards.
- This is the sixth zebra snoozing thoroughly.
- Five frantic frogs fled



- from fifty fierce fishes.
- How many yaks could a yak pack pack if a yak pack could pack yaks?



- A real rare whale.

Pet of the Month—Ki

Ki is an 18month old well-loved male bearded dragon. Bearded dragons originate from Australia. They are very friendly and make great pets. His owner saw him swallow a stone when he was out sunbathing one afternoon and he had been unwell ever since. When Ki came in to see us he was lethargic, not eating and not toileting. We could feel a hard object in his belly and decided to x-ray him to see if it was the stone.

The x-ray showed that there was a large stone like mass in his intestines. As he had already been unwell for a week before we saw him it was decided to remove the stone surgically.

Ki was given fluids under the skin, antibiotics and vitamins the day before the surgery to help prepare his body to cope well under anaesthesia. The next day we gave him a sedative and pain relief injection under the skin to make him drowsy then we injected an anaesthetic drug in his tail vein to make him more asleep. Ki then had a gas mask put over his face to make him even more relaxed so we could put a tube into his airway and connect him to the anaesthetic machine.



We put a 2mm diameter tube down into Ki's airway and breathed for him while he was anaesthetised. Ki's heart rate and temperature were monitored closely while he was asleep.

An incision was made over his belly and the stone was soon found lodged in his small intestine. His intestines were quite bruised around the stone indicating the stone was starting to cause some damage. A cut was made into the intestine and the stone was removed. The intestine was then carefully stitched back together with very fine suture material. The rest of Ki's abdomen was checked and then he was stitched back together.

We turned off the anaesthetic gas and kept Ki's airway tube in and kept breathing for him for the next hour until he started breathing for himself. The airway tube was then removed. Ki was given more antibiotics, fluids and pain relief. He was then put into his enclosure and kept at a constant temperature while he regained consciousness over the course of the evening.

Ki went home the next day. He came back a few days later for a follow up antibiotic injection. As he had not started eating at this stage we started syringe feeding him. By the time of the next antibiotic injection a few days following Ki was licking up the food when it was syringed around his mouth and he had eaten 2 spiders himself. He was also becoming much more active and wanting to explore.

Ki is making great progress and we hope his appetite will return to normal as he continues to heal.



Parvo Warning

Parvo is out and about in Southland again. We have seen a number of cases over the past few months. Parvo is a highly contagious vomiting and diarrhoea disease most often seen in young unvaccinated puppies. As parvo is almost completely preventable by vaccination it is a shame puppies are still getting sick from it due to their owners not vaccinating. Pregnant dogs can also be vaccinated to help pass immunity on to their pups in the first few months of life. Vaccinating your puppy is much more economic and kinder than treating your pup for parvo so if you have an unvaccinated puppy over 6 weeks of age then book in today for a health check and vaccination.



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

