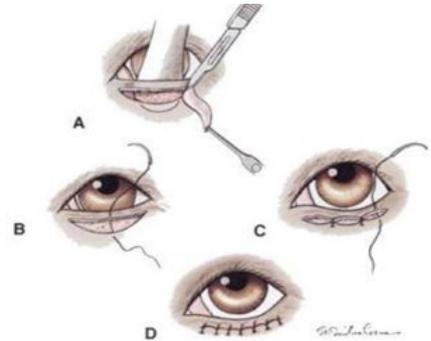




Eyelid Issues

Eyelids are an important anatomical component in many animals. They provide protection to the eye ball, help distribute the tear film and produce secretions which are vital for eye health. However when the lid conformation changes or an animal is born with abnormal lids we can get some serious issues. Entropion is a condition where the lid is rolled inwards against the eyeball. This can happen when a dog has really small eyes, or with certain breeds that have excessive facial skin e.g. Shar-Peis, Persians. In older dogs this can occur when they have lost a lot of weight or due to lid spasm as a result of conjunctiva inflammation or corneal disease. With entropion the eyelashes rub against the eyeball which if left untreated can cause corneal ulceration and eventually blindness. Signs of entropion include squinting, excessive tear production, rubbing of the eye and corneal colour changes however these signs are not exclusive to entropion.

Entropion can occasionally be medically managed especially if secondary to conjunctivitis/corneal disease BUT often requires surgical correction. In very young animals tacking the eyelids may be sufficient but others will require excess lid tissue to be removed. If you suspect your pet has entropion or any other eye conditions it is advised to get them checked out sooner rather than later as eyes are very sensitive with scarring having lifelong consequences.



Chocolate Toxicity

With Easter just around the corner, there is sure to be an abundance of chocolate around the house. A delicious sweet treat for us but potentially lethal for our four legged friends. They love the taste almost as much as us but can't metabolise a component of the chocolate called methylxanthines as well as humans. There are a couple of methylxanthines which can be in chocolate including caffeine and more importantly theobromine that can be toxic to our pets. Different types of chocolate contain different amounts of the toxic component; including and not limited to baking chocolate, dark chocolate, milk chocolate, chocolate flavoured cakes/slices and white chocolate.

Caffeine and theobromine have similar effects, but the theobromine effects tend to last a lot longer. Onset of clinical signs usually occurs within 1-4 hours of digestion. These signs can include any of the following;

- Diarrhoea/ vomiting
- Hyperactivity/ restlessness
- Tremors
- Weakness
- Seizures
- Fast heart rate and abnormal rhythms
- Hyperthermia (high temperature)
- Possible death



If you know your pet has eaten chocolate please contact your vet immediately. The amount and type of chocolate as well as your pets weight are critical information needed. If caught early enough vomiting can be induced. However, if it is suspected that your pet has eaten chocolate several hours earlier your pet may need hospitalization. This is because the toxic components of chocolate have had time to absorb into the blood stream. Your pet may require fluid therapy and other symptomatic supportive care.

'Bud' with the blitzed back leg

'Bud', a 7 year old heading dog, presented to the clinic after being hit by the Ute when out and about on the farm. He was very sore through his right hind leg being unable to bear weight but otherwise appeared ok. On evaluating 'Bud's' previous history we could see he had dislocated his right hip earlier in his life making a repeat dislocation likely. A full clinical exam was performed, which showed no life threatening injuries, however the hind leg was held at an unusual angle and was just hanging. X-rays were taken which showed a highly comminuted (lots of fragments) fracture to the shaft of the femur, this fitted with the described accident as requires a high impact trauma. The x-ray also showed a badly arthritic hip which was assumed to be the result of the past dislocation.



Various options were discussed with the owner:

- Staged surgical repair. First requiring the fracture to be addressed and later a femoral head and neck osteotomy where the ball of the hip joint is removed to help with the pain from arthritis.
- Amputation

The 1st option would require multiple surgeries with long recoveries and no guarantee 'Bud' would be sound to work again. For this reason amputation was opted for. There are a couple of different ways a hind limb amputation can be performed. Either a mid femoral approach (where the femur is cut half way along its shaft and the animal keeps the proximal part) or coxofemoral disarticulation (the whole femur including the ball is removed) can be performed. Given the high fracture point and the arthritis in the hip joint the latter was performed in 'Bud's' case. Bud was recently discharged and is back home recuperating and adjusting well to life with three legs.

The one time you want a chip on your shoulder

Microchipping is a legal requirement for most dogs and a highly recommended procedure for cats. All dogs registered for the 1st time after July 2006, except working farm dogs, require microchipping. All dogs should be registered by 12 weeks of age and therefore they should be microchipped by this age also. The easiest time to microchip your furry friend is at the time of puppy and kitten vaccinations but we can do it at any time. For dogs we can either put their microchip on the local council register or the national register, cats can only be put on the national register. The national register is a good idea if you travel out of Southland with your pet to a holiday house/elsewhere or if you are worried your pet may be stolen and taken out of area. As a vet clinic we generally are one of the first ports of call for sick/injured animals that get hit on the road. By microchipping your pet we can quickly contact you so the best course of treatment can be carried out or so you can come and pick up your beloved pet.

Fun Facts about New Zealand Wildlife

- NZ has only one type of native land mammal—The Long Tail Bat & The Short Tail Bat
- There are six different species of Penguins in NZ
- NZ is the home to the world's heaviest insect—The Giant Weta
- The South Island is home to a Carnivorous Snail—The Powelliphanta
- There are no snakes in NZ
- NZ has the only alpine parrot—The Kea
- Tuatara are a living descendant of the Dinosaur Era and they happen to have a third eye
- NZ's national icon—The Kiwi



MOLLY THE MADLY MATTED MOGGY

Molly's owners gave the vets a call
 Her fur was matted and in a tight ball
 She was lethargic and didn't want to play
 It hurt to move, so she just lay
 With her nice new winter coat
 When she groomed hair got stuck in her throat
 The dog groomers had said cats aren't for us
 But her coat needed to be sorted Molly was making a fuss
 The vets can groom cats even those that bite!
 Sedation sure helps when they want to fight

