



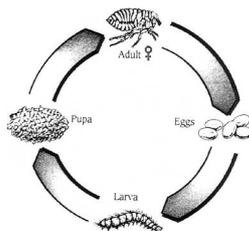
Fleas

Fleas survive well in our carpets and furniture. They sense body heat and will jump onto a host when it comes nearby. In order for fleas to reproduce they must bite the host and ingest a blood meal. The biting causes the animal to itch. Some animals are allergic to flea saliva and react strongly to flea bites.

Once a flea ingests blood from its host it can produce thousands of eggs. The rest of the life cycle is similar to that of a butterfly. The eggs hatch into larvae after a few days. The larvae then form into pupae and then into adults. Warmer weather speeds up the life cycle. In colder weather fleas can become dormant at the pupae stage and continue to survive for many months.

Sometimes you may see live fleas on your pet's coat, often around the tail base, but it is more common to see flea dirt. Flea dirt is digested blood (flea poo). It looks like black specks and turns a red colour when rubbed on wet paper.

Fleas cause itching and scratching, they carry tapeworms and can pass on blood parasites in cats. With the weather getting warmer the life cycle of the flea speeds up. Therefore more fleas are produced and pets are more likely to become infested. Come in to see our range of easy to apply over the counter flea treatment options for your cat or dog.



Podgy Pets

With the days getting longer and the weather getting warmer this is a great time to shed those winter kilos and get your Podgy Pets back into shape. Obesity is the most common nutritional disease we see in cats and dogs and is an area where you can make a huge difference by feeding and exercising your pet correctly. The most common health problem we see as a result of overweight cats and dogs is arthritis. The more you over feed your pet the greater the strain you are putting on your pets joints. With time the lining of the joints breaks down resulting in grinding and pain. Other health risks associated with obesity include diabetes, skin disease, heart disease, lung disease and cancer.

Obesity is caused by too much food and not enough exercise. So to treat obesity we need to reduce food intake and increase exercise. It is a good idea to figure out how much food your pet actually needs each day to maintain a healthy body weight and from there work out what you need to cut out. We can help you with this.

Your pet has a healthy body shape if it has ribs that are easy to feel but not visible through the coat and a tucked up waistline. Gradual weight loss over time is the best way to achieve a healthy body shape. Tubby pets are unhealthy not cute. We would love to help your pet get back into shape with our free Podgy Pets Club.



How to tell if your cat or dog is on heat

Dogs – a female dog will come on heat for the first time between 6 and 12 months of age. A heat can last for 3



weeks and occurs every 6-12 months. The vulva will become swollen and a red vaginal discharge will develop for the first week or so. The discharge will then change to a yellow colour indicating the dog is ready to be mated.

Cats – a cat will come into heat from 6 months of age onwards but can come on earlier in some



cases. Usually cats come on heat in the warmer months. A heat can last for a week and occurs every 3 weeks until they are bred. Cats do not have obvious physical signs of being on heat like dogs and only show behavioural signs. Signs of being on heat include vocalising, rolling around on the floor, holding the tail up and being more affectionate than normal.

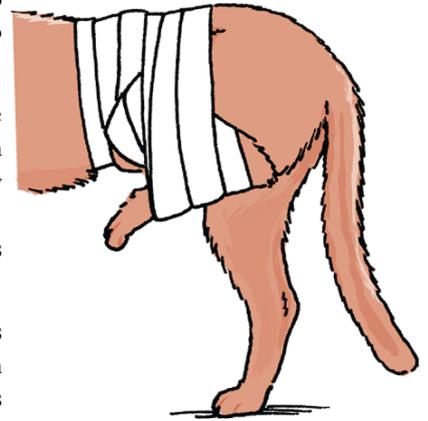
Desexing at 6 months of age will stop your pet from coming on heat in most instances and therefore avoid any unwanted pregnancies.

Case of the Month - Jane

Jane is a hardworking sheep dog. She hurt her leg while working in the sheep yards with her owner one morning. When Jane came into the clinic she was holding her left hind leg under her body and could not put any weight on it. We gave Jane some pain relief and sedation medication so we could take x-rays to find out what she had injured. The x-rays showed her left hip joint was dislocated. We also saw that the hip was a bit flattened and likely to develop arthritis over time. Because the hip was flattened this would have made it easier to dislocate than a dog with healthy hip joints.

Jane was put under a general anaesthetic then we popped the hip back into place. Once the hip was back in the socket we took great care to make sure it would not pop out again by rubbing the joint and applying a sling to keep it in place. We intended the sling to stay on for 2 weeks but after 1 week it started rubbing into her flank causing a skin wound. The sling was trimmed back so we could manage the skin wound then the sling was removed completely a few days later.

Jane started using her left hind leg again immediately after the sling was removed and has been doing very well. She will need to be rested for another 2 weeks then she can gradually go back to her farm duties. Jane's owner will watch out for signs of arthritis over the next few years as she is likely to need an early retirement.



New Faces at Vetco

Tania is the new receptionist at the Kennington clinic. She shifted down from Auckland late last year and is quickly settling into the Southland lifestyle. Tania enjoys watching motor racing.

Kate is from a farming background in Cambridge, England and has joined us as part of the vet nurse team at Kennington. She has a vast array of nursing experience and enjoys shooting and dog training in her spare time.

Charlotte has joined the Edendale clinic on reception. She is originally from Wellington but can now call Invercargill home. Charlotte enjoys the outdoors, socialising and her cat Bert.

Karena has also joined the Edendale Clinic. Karena is Southland born and bred. She enjoys playing squash, gardening and spending time with family and friends.

Worming

We have a range of products available for treatment of worms in dogs and cats. We recommend treating your animals every three months (puppies and kittens need more frequent dosing as do animals in heavily contaminated areas).

Worming pills come in a range of sizes depending on the weight of your animal and are the cheapest broad spectrum treatment for worms.

Spot on flea treatments don't cover tapeworm so if you suspect that your animal has tapeworms we recommend ensuring you purchase a product which covers tapeworms as well.

We understand that our feline friends can be difficult to tablet at times which is why we stock a product called Profender which is a three monthly spot on treatment that treats roundworms and tapeworms.

Human Medication in Pets

We have had a few cases of anti-inflammatory tablets being eaten by dogs. Different types of animals vary with how they respond to different types of anti-inflammatories. Human anti-inflammatories (e.g. Voltaren, Ibuprofen) are very potent in pets and can easily cause adverse effects such as kidney and liver damage as well as gut ulceration. Make sure your animal friends do not have access to any medications besides what has been prescribed by your vet.



** Cat Toys **

Cats love to play. Providing your cat with toys is a good way to keep your cat active and happy. Toys also help to encourage a podgy cat to get some exercise. You don't have to spend lots on toys for cats. A simple cardboard box is an all-time favourite. You can make a tunnel out of cardboard for your kitty to race back and forwards in. Save up toilet paper rolls and tape together to make a pyramid. Hide cat biscuits inside the rolls and your cat will have fun trying to get the biscuits out. Even just a peg or a scrunched up bit of paper put on the floor can entertain some cats for ages as they flick it about the place.

Puppy Preschool

Give your puppy the best start in becoming a good canine citizen by enrolling in our puppy preschool. Classes are suitable for puppies 8-14 weeks of age who have had at least one vaccination. These are held on Thursday evenings and run for 4 weeks. This is a great way to socialise your pup and start some basic training. Contact us to find out more.

