

In this issue

Willows building expansion

| Mystery solved for Angus

| Garden dangers

| Harvest mites

| Travel sickness



We are extending our building... ...so we can extend our services to you!

We are beginning to outgrow our current centre as we have continued to offer new services, therefore we are delighted to announce that we are undergoing an extension project, due to be completed by the end of this year..

The new extension will provide us with:

- Radioactive iodine unit for treatment of hyperthyroidism in cats
- A new and larger echocardiography suite for our cardiac patients
- Oncology procedure room to allow safe and efficient administration of chemotherapy agents to cancer patients
- Endoscopy suite
- Ophthalmology procedure room
- Dedicated operating theatre for minimally invasive procedures, fully equipped with fluoroscopy as well as rigid and flexible endoscopy
- 41 new kennels, including 13 additional large walk in kennels
- Dedicated anaesthesia recovery ward

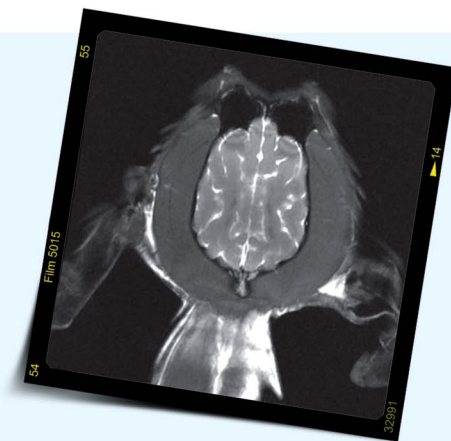
Our commitment to excellence and our dedication to our clients will continue as normal during this expansion period.



If you have any questions or need any further information during this period, please don't hesitate to contact us on 0121 712 7070.



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seizures but much less frequently and they are a lot shorter. He remains under the care of Cristoforo and the neurology department and any changes in his condition are monitored closely.

What is a seizure?

Seizures are a result of sudden and abnormal neurological activity and are accompanied by altered or loss of consciousness. There are two categories of seizures in dogs: generalized seizures and partial/focal seizures.

Causes of seizures

- Epilepsy
- Hypoglycaemia (low sugar)
- Hypocalcaemia (low calcium in nursing dogs)
- Trauma
- Toxicity
- Brain tumours
- Liver/Kidney failure
- Inflammatory
- Nutritional
- Infectious
- Vascular

Mystery solved for Angus

Angus presented to the neurology service after his owner noticed he was displaying some very 'odd' behaviour at home. He had started to chatter his teeth while sitting in his bed, staring at walls and trying to catch flies (that were not there). He had also started chasing his tail and showing changes in his relationships with the other dog in the house.

Angus came in to visit Neurology Clinician, Cristoforo, who carried out a number of physical tests on Angus, including checking his reflexes, watching his movements, and co-ordination and testing his back for signs of pain.

Cristoforo placed Angus under general anaesthesia, carried out an MRI scan of his brain, and took a sample of the surrounding fluid (CSF).

Once the neurologist was happy that there was nothing structurally wrong with Angus, he was diagnosed with partial



seizures. He was started on medication to help reduce the frequency and severity of these partial seizures.

Since starting on medication Angus has been much happier, he still suffers from

What to do if your pet has a seizure?

It is essential to seek medical care as soon as possible if your pet has a seizure. Note the duration of the seizure, if they are recurrent and any unusual circumstances that may have happened leading up to the event. The time between the seizures should be noted as well. In addition, the vet will want to know if your pet lost consciousness or was incontinent during the seizure. Most importantly, allow your pet to overcome his seizure in a calm quiet place.



Garden dangers

The improving weather means we often spend more time outside, but there are a few things in our gardens that can be dangerous to our pets:



Stick injuries – awkwardly catching or chewing on sticks can lead to severe injuries that can potentially be life-threatening, therefore a suitable toy is preferable.

Fruit stones – as well as stones from fruits potentially causing an intestinal obstruction if swallowed, some fruit stones (such as apricots) contain cyanide which can lead to animals having breathing problems.

Cocoa mulch – the mulch, made from cocoa shells, contains theobromine, which can lead to gastrointestinal upset, but in severe cases can lead to hyperactivity, hyperthermia, tremors and even an abnormal heart rhythm.

Compost – the mould found in compost heaps or mouldy food can also lead to vomiting, twitching, tremors and hyperthermia, and in severe cases convulsions and seizures.



Other plants - Lilies are particularly toxic for cats, ingestion of any part of the plant can lead to kidney disease. Laburnum causes hypersalivation, vomiting, diarrhoea and rarely neurological signs in dogs. Rhododendron and Yew are poisonous to both cats and dogs, again initially hypersalivation, vomiting and diarrhoea is seen, but can progress to lethargy, weakness and trembling.

Rat bait – the most commonly used rodenticides contain products that interfere with an animal's ability to clot their blood properly, and therefore can cause bleeding. This can be external or internal bleeding, so signs can vary and include lethargy, weakness, lameness or coughing.

Barbeques – cooked bones can splinter when chewed, the pieces can be ingested and cause an obstruction or even perforate the animals intestines. Food wrapping and skewers with food remnants on can also be ingested and cause intestinal obstructions. Lighter fluid can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, breathing problems and neurological problems.



Bone meal – small amounts may just cause vomiting and diarrhoea, large amounts may cause intestinal obstruction, or the bone meal may contain other harmful chemicals which cause abdominal pain, shivering and a rash.

Slug bait – the most common ingredient in slug pellets is metaldehyde, which can lead to twitching, tremors, hyperthermia, breathing problems and prolonged seizure activity, often requiring intensive treatment.

Slugs – if ingested, pets can acquire Lungworm – please seek advice on treatment for lungworm from your vet.

Spring bulbs (including daffodils, crocus and tulips) – the main clinical signs are vomiting, diarrhoea and excess salivation, however dogs can become wobbly on their legs, collapse and have heart and breathing problems.



Herbicides/pesticides – signs range from ulcerations in the mouth and hypersalivation to vomiting, diarrhoea, heart problems, breathing problems, kidney and liver failure.

Toads – toads secrete venom which, depending on the species, has varying levels of toxicity. The most common sign is hypersalivation or frothing/foaming at the mouth, some patients may vomit and become shaky.



To get in touch please call or visit

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Travel sickness

Many people will be able to empathise with this problem; some pets find the experience of travelling long distances (especially by car) very unpleasant. Travel sickness in pets can be caused by a 'classic' motion sickness, but is also sometimes associated with other stimuli e.g. anxiety about the car and the whole travelling experience. We tend to think that if symptoms of nausea, e.g. excessive salivation, licking lips, vomiting etc, occur very rapidly when the animal is put into the car, anxiety is more likely to be the problem.

For anxious animals, a programme of desensitisation is likely to be most helpful – this works by giving your pet as many positive associations with the car as possible. You can try feeding them in the car while it is parked with the engine off initially and, once they are comfortable with this, build up gradually by switching on the ignition and then starting to take very short trips around the block. Eventually you will hopefully find that you can start

making short trips to places with positive associations e.g. the park, so that they do not learn that a trip in the car normally means the vet! Always **praise calm, relaxed behaviour** – try to avoid giving your pet too much 'reassurance' when they are displaying anxious behaviours as they will interpret this as a cue from you they are right to be worried. If they do seem anxious, behave as normally as possible yourself and maybe temporarily step the desensitisation back a stage or two until they are relaxed again.

Genuine motion sickness requires a slightly different approach and very good medications are available to suppress the nausea and unpleasant sensations associated with this. If you think your dog is in need of medication, especially for longer car journeys, please contact us and we can advise you. Generally we will need to ask you to bring your pet in for an examination and then we will be able to recommend the most appropriate therapy.

REMEMBER

NEVER leave your dog unattended in a car, especially as the weather gets warmer, as they can very quickly overheat. Always travel with a water supply and bowl for your pets on longer journeys and offer your dog frequent opportunities for drinks and toilet stops.



Harvest mites

*Late summer/autumn is the time of year we start to see cases of harvest mites, which are actually the larval stage of the adult mite *Trombicula autumnalis*.*

The adult mites live on plants, but the larvae (which have 6-legs compared to the adults' 8-legs) live on mammals (including cats, dogs and humans) and birds, feeding on fluid from the skin. The larvae are present on plants, are most active during the day when it is warm and dry, and will attach themselves to any warm bloodied animal that brushes past the plant. They feed by injecting enzymes into the skin which breaks down the tissue; the liquid that is formed is then sucked up by the larvae. Once they have fed for 2-3 days they will drop off to complete the life cycle from larvae to nymph to adult.

The irritation caused by the harvest mites feeding on the skin can cause the skin to become itchy, and in some cases dermatitis (inflammation of the skin) can develop, which can make the skin appear red and have small spots/scabs present. If the patient scratches the skin a lot the skin can become traumatised and occasionally may become secondarily infected with bacteria leading to a skin infection. The mites tend

to feed on areas of the body where the skin is thin and there is little hair, such as the base of the ears (including the little pocket of skin at the base of the ear flap, Henry's Pocket), around the chin and mouth, under the front legs, on the underside of the belly and in between the toes.

The harvest mite is generally orange in colour and big enough to be just about visible to the naked eye. Harvest mite infestation can often be diagnosed by observation of the mite on the skin, then by taking a skin scrape to confirm under a microscope.

Harvest mites can be treated with certain flea treatments (please discuss with a vet as to which products are suitable), and occasionally if the skin is damaged or infected then antibiotics and medications to reduce itchiness may be required. In severe cases patients may need to wear an Elizabethan collar to stop them causing excessive trauma to the affected areas.



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