Willows | Newsletter
PRIMARY CARE CLINIC WINTER 2018

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Potential changes to pet passport requirements

We want to make you aware that, as of March 2019, there may be significant changes to the legislation and arrangements covering pet travel due to the UK's exit from the European Union.

Our current status as an EU member means that pet travel between the UK and EU is fairly simple. After our exit from the EU (as a non-member state) we will be assigned to one of three different categories, depending on the deal that is agreed. In the best case scenario there will be little change in the current arrangements; but in the worst case significantly longer preparations for travel could be required, with additional certification prior to each trip. **The initial preparation for travel could take four months or longer in this event, even if your pet currently has a valid Pet Passport.**

As yet we do not know what the arrangements will be (and so what will be required if you wish to continue to travel with your pet). At the moment we believe that it is likely a deal will be reached that means the protocols will remain largely unchanged. However, we would advise you to **contact us as soon as possible if you have any fixed plans to travel with your pet beyond the end of March 2019**. We will try and advise you as best we can – if the travel plans are essential and cannot be altered then it may be sensible to begin preparations assuming a worst case scenario.

If you have no travel plans in the near future then no action is currently needed, but be aware that in the future additional preparations may be required, which could take significantly longer than you have been used to. We should have more information soon, which will be published on our website.

willows.uk.net/travel

If you would like to receive this newsletter and other information from Willows by email, please subscribe to our mailing list at: www.willows.uk.net/signup

Obesity in Pets

Over the winter months due to shorter daylight hours and colder weather, our pets often do not spend as much time outside as during the summer. A decreased amount of exercise can lead to weight gain, and even obesity, which is a growing problem in the pet population.

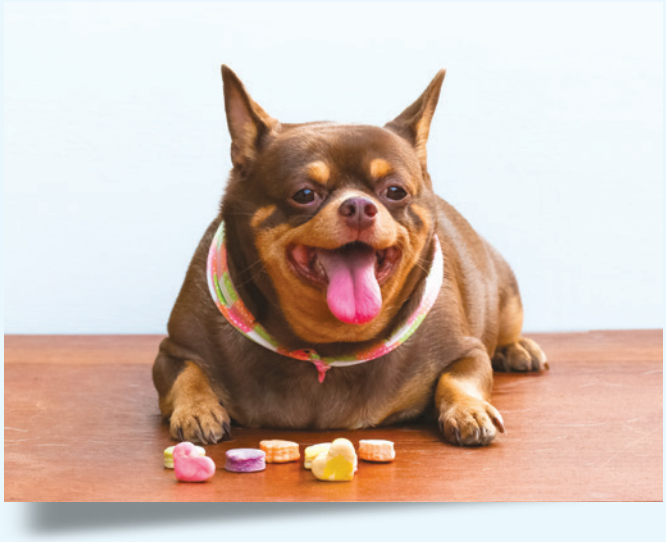
In the long-term this can have potentially serious health implications for our pets, various conditions are either more common in obese pets, or are worsened by weight gain. These include:

Degenerative joint disease

Arthritis (inflammation of a joint) and osteoarthritis (loss of cartilage covering and protecting the end of bones in joints) are painful conditions commonly seen in middle aged to older pets; obesity is a contributing factor. Additional strain on a pet's joints due to weight gain can lead to joint instability and abnormal movement of the joint, leading to lameness and reluctance to exercise. These conditions usually require lifelong management including diet control, medication and potentially surgical management.

Hypertension

An increase in fatty tissue (adipose tissue) in the body causes an increase in the release of certain hormones in to the circulation, leading to an increase in blood pressure (hypertension) via various mechanisms. Hypertension can then predispose patients to other diseases, such as heart disease, kidney disease, visual problems and potentially neurological problems.



Cardiorespiratory disease

As well as obesity being a predisposing factor for hypertension, which can lead to heart disease, obesity triggers the release of various inflammatory mediators in the body, which can adversely affect the cardiovascular system. In addition, extra weight puts increased strain on the heart, and can lead to changes in the structure and therefore function of the heart. Increased fatty tissue can also accumulate in and around the chest cavity, causing collapse of some of the airways and may even compromise lung function.

Diabetes mellitus

Obesity is one of the main predisposing factors for canine and feline diabetes. Patients with diabetes are unable to produce enough insulin to control blood glucose levels; in obese patients the increased amount of fatty tissue produces chemicals which can cause a reduction in insulin sensitivity, again making it less effective at controlling blood glucose levels.

Cancer

Although there is little evidence available, there is a potential link between obesity in dogs and certain types of urinary tract and mammary gland cancers.

In cats, dental disease, skin disease and some urinary tract problems have been linked to obesity, while in dogs obesity can be associated with pancreatitis, some hormone disorders, urinary tract disease, oral disease and problems during pregnancy. Rabbits are also more prone to certain problems if they are obese, including fly strike, skin infections, complications during pregnancy and gut stasis.

Therefore it is extremely important to ensure your pets maintain a healthy weight by providing a well-balanced diet and plenty of exercise. If you would like advice on your pet's dietary needs then please contact us, we would be very happy to help.

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Body Condition Score

UNDER IDEAL

1. Ribs visible on shorthaired cats. No palpable fat. Severe abdominal tuck. Lumbar vertebrae and wings of ilia easily palpated.
2. Ribs easily visible on shorthaired cats. Lumbar vertebrae obvious. Pronounced abdominal tuck. No palpable fat.
3. Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering. Lumbar vertebrae obvious. Obvious waist behind ribs. Minimal abdominal fat.

IDEAL

4. Ribs palpable with minimal fat covering. Noticeable waist behind ribs. Slight abdominal tuck. Abdominal fat pad absent.
5. Well-proportioned. Observe waist behind ribs. Ribs palpable with slight fat covering. Abdominal fat pad minimal.

OVER IDEAL

6. Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist and abdominal fat pad distinguishable but not obvious. Abdominal tuck absent.
7. Ribs not easily palpated with moderate fat covering. Waist poorly discernible. Obvious rounding of abdomen. Moderate abdominal fat pad.
8. Ribs not palpable with excess fat covering. Waist absent. Obvious rounding of abdomen with prominent abdominal fat pad. Fat deposits present over lumbar area.
9. Ribs not palpable under heavy fat cover. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area, face and limbs. Distention of abdomen with no waist. Extensive abdominal fat deposits.

Bjornvad CR, et al. Evaluation of a nine-point body condition scoring system in physically inactive pet cats. *AJVR* 2011;72:433-437.
Laflamme DP. Development and validation of a body condition score system for cats: A clinical tool. *Feline Pract* 1997;25:13-18.

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Body Condition Score

UNDER IDEAL

1. Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.
2. Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominences. Minimal loss of muscle mass.
3. Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.

IDEAL

4. Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.
5. Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.

OVER IDEAL

6. Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.
7. Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.
8. Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.
9. Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.

German A, et al. Comparison of a bioimpedance monitor with dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry for noninvasive estimation of percentage body fat in dogs. *AJVR* 2010;71:393-398.
Jeusette I, et al. Effect of breed on body composition and comparison between various methods to estimate body composition in dogs. *Res Vet Sci* 2010;88:227-232.
Kealy RD, et al. Effects of diet restriction on life span and age-related changes in dogs. *JAVMA* 2002;220:1315-1320.
Laflamme DP. Development and validation of a body condition score system for dogs. *Canine Pract* 1997;22:10-15.

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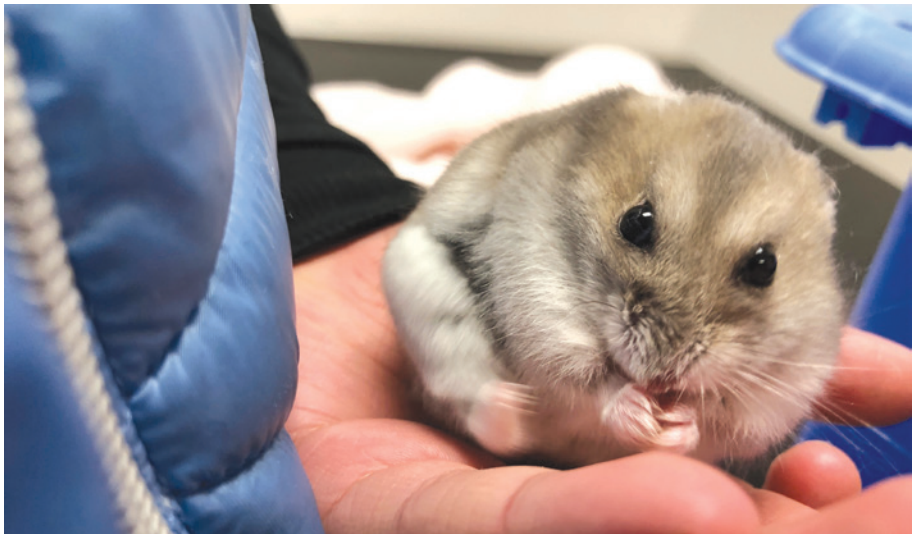


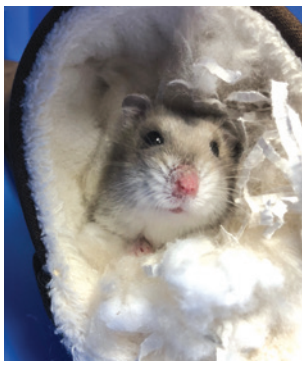
A big problem for little Hettie

Recently, 4 month old Russian Dwarf hamster Hettie visited primary vet Georgina as her owners had noticed she had developed a lump the size of a grape just behind her right elbow.

The lump was found to be a cyst which was drained but unfortunately it continued to grow and started to slow her down. Like any youngster Hettie loved to spend time playing and having fun so her owners decided to have the lump removed so she could start enjoying life again.

At only 48 grams in weight Hettie's surgery posed some challenges, with the average veterinary patient being 500x her weight (25kg Labrador). However she proved to be a fighter and the surgery was a success. The lump was removed in full and Hettie was home the same day enjoying her new found freedom. Seven days later Hettie was back at the surgery for a check-up; her surgical wound had completely healed and she was back to her usual tricks!

▲ *Before surgery*



▲ *After surgery*

Emergency Critical Care Service (ECC)

Specialist-led emergency and critical care service, based within our advanced intensive care unit and fully supported by our experienced multi-disciplinary team. This service provides advanced diagnostics and treatment of the most critical patients.

Our emergency and critical care service provides an unrivalled level of care for pets with any critical disorder, in one of the best equipped veterinary intensive care units (ICUs) in Europe. Our Specialist-led team cares for the sickest dogs and cats, 24/7.

In addition to state-of-the-art and advanced facilities, critical care dogs and cats benefit from our nutritional support service and a range of advanced procedures and therapies.

We are supported 24 hours a day by each of our clinical services. Our emergency and critical care vets and nurses are supported by Specialists across all disciplines, allowing us to provide the highest level of care to critically ill patients.

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