

New ear gear

New otoscopic equipment has been put to good use at the clinic. Ear problems are very common in dogs, and (as many of you owners of ear-problem-prone dogs can attest!) can be ongoing and very frustrating cases to treat. This new equipment allows us to more easily flush and then totally dry out the dog's ears with a suction devise during cleaning. A fibre optic scope allows full visualisation of the ear canal, and can be more easily introduced into very swollen or scarred ears. The ear drum can also be visualised, allowing us to make more indepth diagnoses of ear problems.

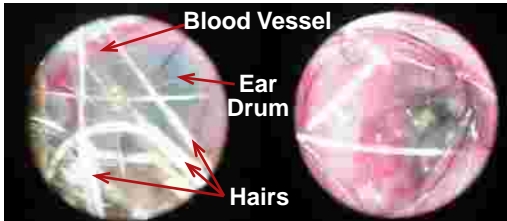


New Otoscope in action

Video monitor and light source

Bracken Lovell - Cocker Spaniel ear problems

Bracken's ears have given him a spot of bother lately. When his ears were sore at the end of last year, Bracken was brought to see us, and was booked for an ear clean under anaesthetic. A grass seed was removed from one ear, and after medication over following weeks his ears healed well. Mid this year, when the ears were sore again, another flush and clean revealed another grass seed - these are nasty foreign bodies, that cause a lot of irritation when lodged in the ear. This time,



Normal ear canal

Infected ear canal

the ears did not resolve as quickly, and ear swabs sent to the lab revealed that Bracken had a *Pseudomonas* infection. This bacteria is associated with chronic ear problems, and can be difficult to treat. With intense ear treatments and oral medication, and commitment to revisits from his owners, the infection has now resolved, and Bracken has clean and pain-free ears.



Bracken enjoying life pain free

Holiday pet fare - Don't let pets overindulge!

Keep in mind some of the food related problems that occur more commonly over the summer and holiday season in pets, in order to prevent or reduce the risks of emergency vet trips.

Over-indulging in rich and fatty foods - yes it happens to pets too! Too much rich fatty food can trigger a bout of intestinal upset, with vomiting and diarrhoea. For some animals, the food may even trigger a serious inflammation of the pancreas or intestine, which requires intense treatment and in some cases may cause ongoing illness.

Food that may have become spoiled is even more dangerous. This includes food that has not been eaten in the few days following preparation, especially if left out of the fridge. Bacteria start to grow on the food and produce toxins, and when ingested by the dog or cat, these toxins injure and inflame the lining of the stomach and intestines, which again requires veterinary treatment. Meat, such as left over roasts, chicken, and cold cuts may be particularly prone to spoilage.

Chocolate poisoning is more common at holiday times, as it is more readily available and easier to steal! Small dogs are more at risk of poisoning, because the toxic level is relative to body size. A small six-kilogram dog can be poisoned by as little as 100 grams of chocolate. Early or mild signs of chocolate poisoning include restlessness, and possibly vomiting and diarrhoea, but large doses can cause neurological symptoms. If your dog ingests what you consider may be a dangerous amount of chocolate, ring the clinic for advice.

Lily poisoning in cats

It is lily season, and these beautiful flowers are a popular indoor pot plant or flower arrangement over the summer months. But beware - true lilies (easter lilies, tiger lilies, rubrum or Japanese showy lilies and various day lilies) can cause acute kidney failure and death in cats. Even minor exposures - a few bites of a leaf or flower, or ingestion of pollen - may result in toxicosis, and all feline exposures to true lilies should be considered potentially life-threatening. The lily toxins do not affect dogs in the same manner - they at most will have a gastric upset after eating lily plants.



Affected cats often vomit within a few hours of exposure, but the vomiting will then usually subside. The cat will often then seem quiet and depressed, and be off their food. Early decontamination and intravenous fluids are often successful in treating cats, but delaying treatment frequently results in death or euthanasia due to severe renal failure within three to six days of ingestion.

So, if you have a cat that likes to munch on the flower arrangements, be careful not to display lilies. If you suspect your cat has ingested any part of a lily plant, seek immediate veterinary attention.