



Newsletter

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Winter 2011-12



Thinking about getting a new puppy or kitten for 2012?

Before going to see any puppies and kittens we recommend doing some research and working out which pet is likely to fit your lifestyle best. There is a wealth of information on the internet but not all sites provide reliable, accurate information.

In 2009 a group of animal charities, veterinary associations and dog breeding societies got together to form the Dog Breeding Stakeholder Group and produced a set of guidelines to help owners choose a new dog. This can be found at www.bva-awf.org.uk/headlines/Guidance_on_choosing_your_new_dog.pdf. Another very useful source of information is the PDSA website, which has an easy to use online tool to help you find the right pet for you: www.pdsa.org.uk/pet-health-advice/puppies-and-dogs/your-right-pet. Alternatively call or visit the practice and one of our nurses will be happy to help you make the right decision and answer any questions you might have. The key points to consider are:

- ❖ The needs and temperament of your pet. How much time do you have available for exercising and training a new pet and will you be able to keep this up long term? Are you able to provide a suitable environment for your pet? A major cause of disruptive behavioural problems is inappropriate exercise/environment and these problems can be both time consuming and expensive to correct as well as damaging to the pet-owner bond.
- ❖ Look at the average lifespan of any pet you are considering and try to get a realistic idea of the likely costs involved in keeping that pet happy and healthy for that length of time. Insurance companies can give you an estimate of the costs involved in insuring a pet and talk to a member of staff here about joining our health plan to spread the costs of routine healthcare, and get additional discounts, over the year. Don't forget that under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 it is your legal responsibility to ensure that the welfare needs of your pet are met.
- ❖ If you are considering a pedigree pet do some research into any health problems that they may be at an increased risk of. Some breeds have health schemes which the parents should have been tested under. A responsible breeder should be happy to provide you with details of these and also let you visit the puppy or kitten with its mother in the environment in which it was raised. The better socialised a puppy or kitten is when it is young the more easily it will cope with new experiences as it grows up.
- ❖ Finally remember to try and pick your pet on temperament and health over appearance alone. A happy healthy pet will easily become a much loved and important member of any family, whereas an unwell or bored, disruptive pet, though still loved, can cause years of worry and increased costs in both time and money.



New Food

Overall our transition from Hill's to Royal Canin as our main food supplier has been remarkably smooth. We would like to thank all our clients for their patience during the changeover and also during the few days of disruption while the display was changed and the waiting room had a fresh coat of paint. Feedback so far has been positive and many of you took advantage of the 3 for 2 offer on life stage diets during November. So much so in fact, the storage of all the orders before collection meant space in the storeroom was getting a little tight!

For December we have a limited number of '£5 off' vouchers for all Royal Canin food. These are available on a first come first served basis, just ask at reception. If food orders are high in December it is also likely that we will get a second batch of vouchers through in the second half of the month, so do keep asking! Upcoming offers will be displayed in reception. If you would like details emailed to you please ask at reception and we will add you to our mailing list.

Don't forget that PHP members, or clients who pay at the time of ordering, also get 10% off food. In addition Royal Canin offer a loyalty card on their clinical range (collect six stamps for a free bag or tray of food).



www.endellveterinarygroup.co.uk



Festive Hazards

There are a variety of hazards to pets around the Christmas period, the majority of which are easily avoided with a little planning. A few of the more common problems we see are highlighted below.

Chocolate

As well as stealing chocolate left out on the side, dogs commonly also get hold of chocolate which has been wrapped and left under the tree or sent through the post. A sufficient quantity of any chocolate is poisonous to dogs but much smaller amounts of dark chocolate will cause problems.

Chocolate contains Theobromine which affects the nervous system and heart. Signs of ingestion include; shaking, hyperactivity, panting, diarrhoea and can progress to seizures.

Avoid giving chocolate as a treat to your pet and keep it somewhere secure, not wrapped under the tree or hanging as decorations.

Grapes, Raisins and Sultanas

As well as being one of the main ingredients in Christmas cake and pudding, these are also present in many chocolate bars. There is no specific toxic dose as different animals will tolerate different amounts; a very small quantity can cause kidney failure in some animals. Avoid leaving these fruits where your pet can reach them.

Turkey and the trimmings etc

Also be aware that many Christmas foods are very rich and fatty and can give your pet an upset stomach. Think carefully before giving your pet different food over the Christmas period and keep bins tightly closed. Remember even the plastic wrapping from the Turkey may appeal to a scavenging dog.

Poisonous Plants

Poinsettia, Holly and Mistletoe are all common Christmas plants which can cause vomiting and diarrhoea. Make sure they are well out of reach of pets and check regularly for fallen leaves and berries.

Decorations

Tinsel, baubles and coloured lights may all look like toys to your pet. Make sure they are out of reach and that your pet has plenty of their own toys to entertain them. Many decorations can cause serious problems if swallowed and require expensive surgery to remove. In addition cables to lights will give pets an electric shock causing burns and possible fluid accumulation on the lungs if chewed through. This is especially seen in young, inquisitive pets so take extra care to cover exposed wires.

Antifreeze

Not a festive hazard as such but the cold weather brings an increase in the number of people topping up the antifreeze in their cars. Please remember to be careful not to leave bottles open and to clean up spillages promptly and thoroughly. Antifreeze (ethylene glycol) is highly toxic to animals and humans and only small amounts need to be ingested to cause a fatal kidney failure. Unfortunately it is sweet tasting and even normally picky cats will lick it off their paws if they have walked through it. Signs of poisoning include vomiting, lethargy, increased urination and seizures. The sooner treatment is received the better the chances of survival.



With a little prior planning, hopefully you should be able to avoid an unnecessary trip to the vet's over the festive period. However if you are concerned that your pet may have encountered any of the above hazards, don't panic. Phone us for advice as many are easily treated if caught early.

Are you a member of our Pet Health Plan Club yet?

The Endell Veterinary Group Pet Health Plan offers an easy, cost effective way to meet your pet's essential healthcare needs. We believe that preventative health care is an important part of pet ownership; things like vaccines and parasite control are important factors in helping your pet have a long and healthy life. As well as vaccines, wormers and flea control, the plan provides a six-monthly check up to catch any problems early, something that becomes increasingly important as your pet ages. This is not the same as pet insurance but allows you to save money and spread the cost of preventative health care for your pet and works well in conjunction with a good insurance policy.

What's included?

For a regular monthly fee your pet receives:

- Twice yearly health assessments
- Full annual vaccination
- Full worming program for cats and dogs for effective year round protection against round and tape worm (includes lungworm)
- All year round flea control for cats and dogs
- Full parasite program for rabbits to include *E cuniculi* and fly strike prevention

In addition, you get discounts on the following

- Routine consults
- Neutering
- Microchips
- Dental treatments
- Additional vaccinations
- Hill's lifestyle diets

For more information, please visit our website, call in to Reception or ring 0800 169 9958.