

COMPANION ANIMAL NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2025

WHATS NEW?



We would like to thank all of our clients for their patience whilst the surgery has been undergoing renovations. We have now extended our surgery to provide three consulting rooms, along with a separate waiting area for both cats and dogs.

The consulting rooms have been refurbished, and after reaching out to our clients via our Facebook page for photographs of their pets, we were inundated with a fabulous response and had well over 100 to go through! These were narrowed down to a small selection which now adorn the walls in the waiting areas and consultation rooms, we hope that you like them as much as we do.

Our team of five dedicated small animal vets and five veterinary nurses are now available to provide additional morning and evening surgery appointments for your convenience, and should you need us in an emergency, we are proud, as an independent practice, that our own vets are on call out of hours to attend to our clients' animals.



Making it a smooth ride with our Calming Kits

Our goal for your dog or cat is to have a safe, fear free, comfortable experience at our practice. Fear of the unknown, clinical smells, visits for injections and anaesthesia can be scary for both you and your pet and we want to make that journey as stress free and calm as possible.

Anxiety, stress, or fear in your dog or cat can have effects on anaesthesia and increase complications such as elevating temperature, blood pressure and heart rate. Some dogs and cats may be frightened or over-stimulated coming into the surgery. Each of our patients require special consideration when coming in for a general anaesthetic, and there are anxiolytic medications which can help reduce the anxiety, stress, and fear.

After assessment by one of our vets, we can prescribe a Pre- Anaesthetic Calming Kit. This is a combination of medications tailored to your pet that will help them feel more relaxed traveling to the surgery and waiting for their procedure. Your pet will usually need to take their pre-visit medications the night before and morning of the procedure in a small amount (around 1 teaspoon) of meat, chicken or Pill Assist treats, so they are not having a full meal prior to their anaesthetic. The kit also includes Calmex – a calming supplement which can be given the day of the procedure and for several days post which can be useful if your pet needs resting during this time to allow any surgical wounds to heal.

Depending on how anxious your pet is, we can plan to suit your pet's individual needs and discuss how to help make their visit to the surgery a calm experience. Please do not hesitate to contact the surgery and discuss the options with one of our clinical team.



CALMEX®

Available only from
VetPlus

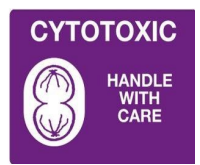


VetPlus



Chemotherapy for Cats and Dogs

Learning that your pet has been diagnosed with cancer can be a very scary and worrying time. Not only is there the emotional challenge of dealing with this information, but as an owner we have some big decisions to make regarding their treatment. In some cases (patient dependent) we would be able to surgically remove all of a tumour and it wouldn't grow back. However in some cases we will consider chemotherapy.



What is chemotherapy?

Chemotherapy is using medications to kill cancer (tumour) cells or to slow the spread and growth of a cancer. This is no different in principle to antibiotics. However cancer cells are so similar to normal healthy cells that there can be worse side effects as there can commonly be with any drug. Chemotherapy can be given in three ways; orally, intravenously, or injected directly into the tumour.

What are the aims of chemotherapy?

The goal of chemotherapy is to extend the life of the patient for as long as possible, without compromising the quality of his/her life. If the tumour shrinks or goes completely this is a bonus. We do not want to use more intensive doses to increase the chance of a cure as this makes the side effects unethical for the animal. We try to get a balance between as much as needed to stop the tumour progressing whilst minimising the side effects as best we can.

Is chemotherapy in animals the same as with humans?

Yes and no. Many of the medications are the same, but they are used at much lower doses. Whilst the aim of chemotherapy in humans is cancer remission and length of life with a higher tolerance for side effects, in animals our aim is to minimise the symptoms associated with the tumour – and prolong the best quality of life for them. If your animal is suffering from side effects, we lower the dose and reconsider the risk and the benefit of treatment going forward.

What are the possible side effects of chemotherapy?

Cats and dogs generally tolerate chemotherapy much better than human patients however, there is the possibility of some side effects. We will always try to provide doses and combinations of drugs that are least likely to cause side effects, whilst achieving the best possible outcome for your pet. Every pet will react differently to treatment and their tolerance will vary. Hair loss in humans is well recognised, but is rare to see in animals. The chemotherapy drugs tend to target cells which divide rapidly so any area of our patient that has large amounts of cell turnover can be affected. For example, they can get low white blood cells counts making them more at risk of infections, gastrointestinal upset: vomiting, diarrhoea or loss of appetite, these can be proactively managed and if severe, treatment altered accordingly.

Choosing chemotherapy for your animals is never an easy decision, we would highly recommend having a discussion with one of our veterinary surgeons, where they can go through everything and provide a tailored plan that would best suit your pet.

Staying Safe around Livestock

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the countryside with mile upon mile of land to walk our four legged friends. The Countryside Code advises that all dogs should be kept on a lead when walking in rural areas, regardless of their nature. This is because even the most gentle of dogs can create problems for wildlife and livestock without realising they are having a negative impact. At this time of year, ground birds are nesting and the fields are filling with newborn lambs so it is more important than ever to follow these guidelines.



Please keep your dog on a lead whilst walking through fields or on moorland where sheep are grazing. Most sheep are herded by trained working sheep dogs, so their natural instinct as a flight animal is to run away when they see a dog. At this time of year ewes are either heavily pregnant or have just lambed. Heavily pregnant sheep stressed by being startled, scared, moved too fast or too far, can easily abort their lambs. Ewes with young lambs which are disturbed and become separated do not always reunite quickly. The lambs can become 'mis-mothered' trying to follow and feed from the incorrect ewe or losing contact with their mother. This in turn can result in the lambs not feeding enough, getting too cold, and dying.

In recent years we have seen a rise in the incidence of sheep worrying in our locality. As a farm veterinary practice we see the devastating effects that sheep worrying has on livestock with almost all incidents resulting in the euthanasia of the sheep involved. Please keep your dog on the lead around all livestock for safety's sake.



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