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COMPANION ANIMAL NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2024

STRESS FREE VET VISITS

Veterinary visits are vital for your cat, whether for annual vaccinations or general health checks they can help detect early signs of illness or disease. It has been reported that many appointments are missed or overlooked because owners feel it is too stressful to get their cat to the vets (PDSA 2023). With this in mind, we ask how can you help your cat to have a more positive experience going to the vets, and how can you make it less stressful for them?

Getting your cat carrier out a few weeks in advance, if possible, is a great start. Cats are very cautious, often suspicious animals, and this can help them get used to the carrier being around rather than being forced into an unknown box on a day which has the potential to be stressful. Having got the carrier out put some of their bedding into it, along with some treats and maybe some catnip. Covering it with a blanket might encourage them to go and hide in it, making them realise it can be a safe place to retreat. Using a pheromone spray can help them feel more relaxed when inside the carrier, we have a selection of pheromone sprays available at the surgery.

We are a silver-rated Cat Friendly Clinic, and you can find us on the Cat Friendly Clinic register. We have been certified by International Cat Care and have met extremely strict requirements to achieve this status. The ICC ensures we meet cats' welfare needs and make the whole experience much more positive for cats who visit us. The ICC have specific requirements such as having separate dog and cat waiting areas, and ensuring that our staff are up to date with the best handling techniques.

Whilst travelling to the surgery with your cat, try using a pheromone spray in the car applied ten minutes prior to the journey, ensure the cat carrier is level (place on towels to achieve this), secured in place so that it will not move about during transit, and cover the carrier during the journey; it is especially stressful for cats to see out during their journey and whilst in the waiting room. Keep the car quiet and talk reassuringly to your pet whilst you travel.

We have cat and dog waiting areas in our waiting area which is undergoing refurbishment. The pink seated benches are specifically for cat owners with table top seating for your cat carrier to keep your cat off the ground. Cats feel very vulnerable when on the floor, so placing them on the table top on the bench seating will help them feel much safer. Once in the consultation room, allow your cat time to leave the carrier on their own, never pull or tip them out, open the door and let them have a look around. Having a carrier with a top opening or taking it apart can be much less stressful and we can examine them from the safety of their carrier.



If your cat needs to stay with us, we have large, quiet kenneling areas for them with deep bedding, hiding castles for them to either sit under or on top of and large litter trays. We use various kinds of feeding bowls as some cats prefer plastic to metals. The kenneling area also has the plug-in pheromone diffusers which help settle and ensure your cats stay with us is a relaxed one.

If you are concerned about bringing your cat to the vets and would like information on products we recommend and use in the practice, please contact the surgery and speak with one of our veterinary nurses.



Certificate of ISFM Practice Membership

This is to certify that

Dalehead Veterinary Group

is a Practice Member of the International Society of Feline Medicine supporting the work of International Cat Care in creating a world where all cats are treated with care, compassion and understanding

Expires: 11/2024



ISFM is the veterinary division of the charity International Cat Care (www.icatcare.org)



On 14th September our team will be in attendance at Hodder Valley Show which this year is being held at Hallgate Hill, Newton in Bowland, BB7 3AB. See the show website for further details:

www.hoddervalleyshow.co.uk

It's a great day out so why not head along with the family and your canine companions? Don't forget to call in to see us on our stand for some light refreshments and to say hello to the Dalehead team!

We all love our pets and so we have set up a fun competition at our show stand. Take a photo of your pet through the heart at the show, and share on our Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/daleheadvetgroupcompanion>

One photo will be chosen at random to win a prize.

Honey, pictured left, is showing us how it is done—good girl Honey!



CANINE CONTAGIOUS COUGH

Canine contagious cough (CCC), more commonly known as Kennel Cough is a disease we can often see here at the surgery.

Many of us will already have been on our summer holidays, however, once the children are back at school we tend to have another wave of tourists heading to the Dales bringing along their pets.

Equally, those of us without children at school may be now planning to head on our staycations, and head off to different areas of the country with our dogs, or maybe you are planning to jet off for some winter sun in the next few months, and booking your dog into kennels whilst you are away? This can be a time when our pets are potentially at more risk of catching the disease, due to greater socialisation or close proximity to new canine friends. We need to consider this increased risk and whether to protect our pets against Kennel Cough before they are exposed.

The good news is for those dogs that would benefit from protection there is a vaccination available to provide cover. We hope the information (right) helps but if you would like to speak with a vet who can risk assess your pet and help you to make an informed decision whether to vaccinate them, please contact the surgery.



KENNEL COUGH & YOUR DOG

WHAT IS KENNEL COUGH?

Kennel cough is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by various viruses and bacteria.



HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Kennel cough is spread via contact with another infected animal or by inhaling/digesting secretions from an infected nose or mouth. E.g Sneeze/cough/bowls/toys.



INCUBATION PERIOD

This can be from 2 days to 2 weeks.

MILD KENNEL COUGH SYMPTOMS

- Dry, persistent, hacking cough
- Retching and gagging
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Loss of appetite
- Listlessness
- Fever



KENNEL COUGH TREATMENT

Typically most cases are not serious and symptoms will improve without treatment within a few weeks.

Elderly dogs, puppies and dogs with underlying health issues, should be monitored closely as complications can occur.

In some cases, vets may prescribe cough suppressants and anti-inflammatories. Antibiotics will only ever be used if the infection is severe and is caused by a bacteria.



PREVENTION

There is a vaccination which is given in addition to your dog's routine vaccinations. The Kennel cough vaccine is often required if your dog is visiting kennels, mixing with large groups of dogs or walking in high traffic areas.



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Check out our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk for more information about caring for your pet, special offers, vet and staff profiles and much more!

