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3pm-5pm

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2009

WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER

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in dogs and cats

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STAFF NEWS

Lea Fowler our Nursing assistant is leaving us to travel to Australia and we wish her well.

Jamie has completed his first year of the Veterinary Nursing NVQ successfully and is now embarking on his second year with a view to qualifying in 2010.



Kelly our second year trainee is coming to the end of her second year and has practical exams in December so we wish her good luck with that!

WHAT'S NEW

The Lawton and Stoakes 2010 Calendar is under construction but there may still be time to be a part of this exciting project. We are looking for photos of your pets in all shapes and sizes for inclusion in the calendar. Calendars will be on sale at the end of November with £1 from every sale going to the Zebra Foundation, a charity that supports the education of Veterinary Students and Veterinary Surgeons in exotic species.



The dog recovery room is due for re-decoration this winter to bring it up to the standard of the cat recovery area. The face lift will involve repainting the area and will include tiling of the two large walk in kennels. This is all part of the ongoing refurbishment works at Lawton and Stoakes so that we can

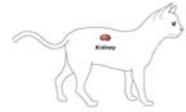
offer our patients the best care. Hopefully this will be complete by the Spring 2010 edition of this newsletter and we will bring you photographs of the new look dog area.

Time for tortoises annual hibernation!
For a pre-hibernation health check and advice on hibernating your tortoise please contact the surgery for an appointment.

KIDNEY DISEASE

What do the kidneys do?

The kidneys have many functions. They principally act to remove waste products from the blood stream, retain essential nutrients such as potassium at the correct level, produce a hormone which initiates red blood cell production in the bone marrow, maintain hydration and produce urine.



What are the causes of kidney disease?

Congenital malformations of the kidneys - such as polycystic kidneys in long haired cats

Bacterial kidney infections called pyelonephritis

Glomerulonephritis - damage to the kidney's filtration membrane

Neoplasia - various tumors of the kidney, most commonly lymphosarcoma

Amyloidosis - this is the build-up of an unusual protein in the kidney that prevents the kidney from functioning normally often seen in the Shar pei breed of dog

Viral infections such as feline leukemia virus (FeLV) or feline infectious peritonitis virus (FIP)

Chronic renal failure is the end stage of a number of different disease processes rather than a specific condition in its own right.

Signs of Kidney disease

Because the kidney has many functions the signs of disease can be vague. Signs appear late in the course of disease as approximately 70% of the function has to be lost before signs appear. Often the first signs are an increased thirst and urination. Your pet may lose weight and have a poor coat. In advanced cases your pet may develop bad breath and mouth ulceration or have vomiting and diarrhoea. Rarely, renal failure is seen as sudden onset blindness.

How is the disease diagnosed?

Renal failure is usually diagnosed by looking at the level of two waste products in the bloodstream, blood urea nitrogen (BUN) and creatinine, in conjunction with the urine specific gravity (USpG) which tells us how dilute the urine is. Tests to measure the blood levels of other substances such as potassium, phosphorus and calcium as well as the red and white blood cell counts are important in order to determine the extent of failure and whether the kidney disease is secondary to some other disease process. This allows us to choose the best course of treatment.

What treatments are available?

Depending on the results of blood tests your veterinarian may be faced with several problems that require different treatments. The majority of pets can be effectively managed with diet change.

Specialised kidney diets aim to lower the level of waste products in the bloodstream by reducing levels of protein and phosphorus. These can be prepared at home or are available ready prepared from your veterinary practice.

Phosphate binders - despite low phosphate in the diet, blood phosphorus levels remain above normal in some pets. Reducing blood phosphorus can have a major effect on improving your pet's well being and slowing disease progression. Phosphate binders are given by mouth to further lower the amount of phosphorus absorbed through the gut wall.

Antibiotics - many pets seem to respond well to antibiotics though the reason for this is not always clear.

Potassium supplementation - pets in renal failure tend to lose too much potassium in the urine. This leads to muscle weakness, stiffness and poor hair quality. Low potassium levels may also contribute to the worsening of the kidney failure.

Vitamins B and C - these vitamins are lost by the failing kidneys and need daily supplementation.

Anti-emetics - for those pets that are experiencing vomiting, the use of anti-emetics reduces nausea, thereby improving appetite.

Blood-pressure lowering drugs - significant numbers of pets with kidney failure have high blood pressure. In some cases lowering their blood pressure may be necessary.

Treatment of anemia - Many pets with CRF are anemic due to a lack of stimulation of the bone marrow. Newer drugs have been developed to help stimulate bone marrow production and may be prescribed for your pet.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT FRESH WATER IS AVAILABLE AT ALL TIMES BECAUSE PETS WITH RENAL FAILURE CAN DEHYDRATE RAPIDLY.

How long can I expect my pet to live?

Unfortunately, once the kidneys are damaged, they have very limited ability to recover. Most CRF cases progress very slowly. However, with treatment and regular monitoring, your pet may have several years of good quality, active life ahead.





KIDS CORNER

Can you spot the difference?

Moet the Border Terrier is getting into the Christmas spirit. There are five differences in the picture above can you spot them all? The first correct entry will win a £10 WHSmith gift voucher. So send in your answers for a chance for an early Christmas present!!

STAR PET



This edition meet Fern a very special Cocker Spaniel puppy. Fern is only 13 weeks old and had just got over her primary vaccination course when she developed a severe urinary problem. Tests showed that her left kidney had swollen to twice its normal size and she was in considerable pain. Fern underwent a nephrectomy (removal of the damaged kidney) and here she is pictured with her young owner as she went home just one day after the operation.

Fern stole all our hearts as quite the bravest little pup we have met.

EXOTIC SPOT

UROMASTYX (SPINY TAILED LIZARD)

There are approximately 13 species in the genus Uromastyx. These lizards are adapted to arid regions



and are found from northwestern India throughout southwestern Asia and the Sahara. Most species are under 36cm (14inches) in length. They come in a variety of colours depending on species and range from shades of brown through to yellow, orange or green. The males can sometimes be distinguished by large femoral pores as in other types of lizard. Uromastyx are territorial and will often fight so are best housed individually.

They require a dry environment and a hot basking spot of 47°C (120°F), which can be provided by an incandescent or ceramic lamp, with a cooler end at about 30°C (90°F). A full spectrum UV light should be provided giving a daylength of least 12hrs. They require rocks upon which to bask and a hide. Hot rocks are not recommended as they can cause injuries and severe burns to the lizard. Although these animals are adapted for arid climates water should be provided, however if a water bowl is situated in the enclosure it must not

increase the relative humidity in the environment.

These lizards are omnivorous and it can be difficult to fulfil their dietary needs in captivity. A mixed diet consisting of greens (romaine lettuce, cabbage, kale) with bird seed mixed in and insects (crickets, mealworms etc). A good Calcium supplement is also recommended (Nutrobal, Vet Ark). Insects should always be gut loaded (fed) with a high calcium supplement prior to feeding to the lizard.

These animals do not breed readily in captivity and require a “winter” cooling period to stimulate breeding activity.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS OUTSIDE THE SURGERY

Thank you to our many clients who have signed the petition to try to stop Havering Council’s plans to increase the parking restrictions outside the surgery. This petition along with others from the businesses in Oak Road/ Fitzilian Avenue will be presented to the Councillors at the next Harold Wood Area Committee meeting on 20th October.

