



WINTER NEWSLETTER



Winter And Christmas Hazards

Rock Salt Poisoning Rock salt is a mixture of salt (sodium chloride) and grit, and is used to help de-ice roads in winter. Rock salt can be a danger to pets such as dogs and cats, if they lick it from their paws or fur. It's difficult to say how much needs to be eaten for signs of toxicity. Ingestion can result in high blood sodium concentration which can cause thirst, vomiting and lethargy, and in severe cases there is a risk of convulsions and kidney damage.

If your animal has possibly walked in or around rock salt it is important to make sure you thoroughly wipe your pet's feet and the fur on his/her legs and tummy after a walk or being outside. If your animal is showing any signs of toxicity please contact your vets immediately.

Possible foreign bodies Foreign bodies are very common this time of year with cracker prizes and batteries being popular hazards in most households. Please be aware of your animals when pulling crackers or opening presents with batteries. Dogs in particular are likely to swallow these items which could result in a blockage in their intestines and consequently would require an emergency operation to remove.

Pancreatitis Animals have a high risk of pancreatitis at Christmas time with lots of fatty foods in homes. Please think of your animals when preparing food at Christmas and please avoid giving tit bits to your animals.

Candles If you have candles lit during the Christmas period, please be aware of your animals and do not leave them burning unoccupied.

Christmas lights Cats especially love Christmas trees. Climbing and jumping on them is so much fun but can be a big fire risk if the lights are left on when unoccupied.

Glow sticks The liquid inside glow sticks contains Dibutyl Phthalate an irritant that can cause pain. Signs to look out for if your animals have been in contact with glow sticks are high salivation, frothing, foaming and irritation to skin and eyes.

Poisoning

Chocolate poisoning is a major risk during Christmas time. Please do not leave your dog unattended around chocolates and make sure they are kept out of dogs reach. If your dog has ingested some chocolate you need to seek veterinary attention immediately.

Raisin poisoning Please keep all Christmas puddings and cakes out of dogs reach. Raisin poisoning is very dangerous and if your dog could have ingested even a small quantity of raisins seek veterinary attention immediately.

Alcohol poisoning -with lots of alcohol being consumed over the Christmas period please do not leave your glasses on the floor or in reach of your animals. This poisoning can be very serious and so very easily avoided.

Xylitol: very toxic to dogs.



Earlier on this year on our Facebook page we did a feature about Xylitol, and a client has asked us if we could put it in our

newsletter.

Back in January (2015) Wrigley' changed the recipes for their chewing gums and the majority now contain Xylitol (a non-sugar sweetener) due to its dental benefits – good news for us but not so good for dogs. It is also used as an artificial sweetener in some confectionary and baking.

Xylitol is very toxic to dogs causing hypoglycaemia (a deficiency of sugar in the blood), as well as having damaging effects on the liver. The onset of clinical signs are often seen within 2 hours, but hepatic effects can be delayed up to 72 hours. Signs include vomiting, staggering, increased heart rate, drowsiness, collapse, convulsions and coma. Urgent treatment is required.

**So bin it – don't spit it,
and keep it out of reach.**

We are closed:

25th December
26th December
28th December,
1st January.

*Our Bawtry
surgery will close
early Christmas
Eve and New
Year's Eve*



Don't forget from April 2016 it is a requirement by law all across the UK for your dog to be microchipped. If you do not get your dog microchipped, then it will be considered as not complying with the regulations and a notice may be served. If the keeper does not microchip their dogs within 21 days of the served notice, then you will be liable to pay a fine of £500.



FelV and FIV

The Facts

FelV (Feline Leukaemia Virus) and FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus) are similar to the human virus HIV, but affecting both domestic and wild cats. Their main route of transmission is via the saliva, therefore close contact such as mutual grooming and fighting (especially in un-neutered male cats) is required. Other routes of transmission include through the placenta or milk, so infection in kittens is especially common. Blood transfusions, contaminated needles and faeces are other uncommon routes.

When a cat has been infected with FelV, the initial clinical signs may be varied. Some cats are able to mount an effective immune response, and become carriers, although in others, especially kittens, the virus is able to circulate in the bloodstream and the cat becomes ill. Serious complications, including the development of tumours, can develop as a result.

With FIV the clinical signs again can initially be innocuous, however this virus continues to replicate and over time causes destruction to the immune system, making the cat hugely susceptible to other diseases. In the late stages of infection the clinical signs may include weight loss, lethargy, chronic diarrhoea, nasal and ocular discharge and death.

Prevention - Vaccination against FelV is effective, and recommended as part of the standard vaccination in any cat going outside or that otherwise may be vulnerable.

Neutering of a pet and feral (stray) cats is important in preventing the transmission of both FelV and FIV.

Treatment - Maintaining minimal stress can reduce the burden on the immune system, and flea and worm treatment is important. Neutering, and keeping infected cats indoors, plays an important part in stopping the spread of these infectious diseases.

Diagnosis - A blood sample can be taken in the hospital during a consultation which is then tested, allowing us to provide the results the same day.

Overwintering tortoises

'Overwintering' is the term we use to describe the process of keeping tortoises awake throughout the winter months. From September to May our climate in the UK is not suitable to house tortoises outside so therefore they need to be kept in indoor enclosures (usually a tortoise table) or in the case of larger species a heated outbuilding.

There could be many reasons why a tortoise would need to be overwintered- certain species are none hibernating such as Sulcatus and Leopard tortoises, newly acquired, underweight tortoises or tortoises that have been sick within the last 12 months should be kept awake over the winter months for monitoring and/or rehabilitation.

Even tortoises that are used to being kept indoors will require extra care during winter months- even indoors temperatures can dip too low- especially overnight so higher wattage daytime bulbs and an overnight heat source should be used. Uvb lighting should also be provided and should be on for 12 hours during the daytime along with the daytime heat source.

For overnight it is recommended that a ceramic heat emitter should be used, these only produce heat and no light so they do not disturb the tortoises sleeping pattern. Ideally the heat emitter should be attached to a thermostat programmed to switch on if the temperature drops below 20 degrees.

Close monitoring of enclosure temperatures is advisable so adjustments can be made quickly if required.



Another thing to bear in mind is feeding. A tortoise's natural food source such as grasses, weeds and flowers are in very short supply during winter- it will be necessary to purchase seeds to grow indoors in trays to feed over winter. In addition the diet can be supplemented using dried weeds such as plantain and dandelion that are readily available in pet shops, also small amounts of bagged leaves such as watercress, lambs lettuce and rocket can be offered as can good quality pellets such as Mazuri or Nutrazu.

As during summer months the food should be sprinkled with calcium powder and vitamin powders (generally plain calcium 5 days

and multivitamin on the other two days). Regular warm baths should also continue in order to prevent dehydration and encourage bowel movements. Following the basic guide above should ensure that your tortoise remains active and healthy during the colder months.



Neutering for £30!!!

Are you aware that if you are on the following benefits you could get your dog spayed or castrated for £30: Income support, Job Seekers Allowance, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, or Pension Credit.

As a Practice we are encouraging neutering as this will help prevent the more life threatening illnesses in later life such as pyometras and testicular cancer.



Meet Victoria.....

Victoria graduated from The Royal Veterinary College University of London. She started working for us in September. We've asked

her a few quick questions ...

What do you like most about your job?

The people I work with and all the lovely animals I see of course.

Hobbies/interests?

Swimming, doggy walking and currently wedding planning.

Favourite type of holiday?

Beach holiday!!!!

Chinese or Indian takeaway?

Chinese.

What's your favourite film type?

Comedy – Lampoons National Christmas Vacation.

What's your favourite quote?

"Be like a postage stamp, stick with one thing until you get there."

Number one thing on your bucket list?

To visit the orangutans in Borneo

Do you believe in santa?

"Of Course."



Visit our website:
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For out of hours emergencies Monday to Friday between 7pm and 8am, and weekends from Saturday 1pm until Monday 8am please call:
Doncaster Beechwood Veterinary hospital on 01302 215189
Lincoln Park View Veterinary hospital on 01522 690701

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