

Belmont Vets

Spring Newsletter 2024



Spring is such a beautiful time of year with blooming flowers, chilly walks, and lighter evenings. Take a browse through our helpful information below to help make sure it stays beautiful for you and your furry friend!

### **Watch out for those stinging insects!**

Our pets are not the only ones enjoying the spring season, bees and wasps can cause varying allergic reactions in pets, just as in humans. When your pet is out playing in the garden ensure they are supervised as best as you can. If your pet is stung then we recommend contacting your vet for advice and they may advise a consultation for them to be checked over, especially if they are showing signs of any redness, irritation or swelling.



### **Seasonal allergies**

Humans with pollen allergies are usually in for a very rude awakening when the Spring first arrives, and at the same time we can notice the same issue with some of our pets.

Pets that are already diagnosed with a skin disease and are prone to being itchy are more affected, but it can also be a time where we see those supposedly 'normal' animals presented to us for being particularly itchy all of a sudden. If you notice your dog or cat scratching more often than usual, any skin redness or irritation, any swellings or alopecia (loss of hair), then it is probably time to get your pet a consultation with a vet. Your vet will perform a full clinical examination, advise on any appropriate diagnostic tests e.g., allergy testing, skin scrapes, and also provide any treatments necessary. Antihistamines are often advised online to try and dampen any pruritus (itching) and whilst they may help, it is always best to check in with us before giving any medication to your pet to ensure it is appropriate and safe.

### **Know your poisonous plants!**

**1 in 5 toxic  
plant  
poisonings are  
due to Lilies**

Arguably the best part about spring is beautiful blooming flowers, budding trees, and chilly morning walks. Spring flowers are lovely to look at, but some can be toxic to both dogs and cats, so before you head out on a nature walk or start on any new garden projects, it is always best to get familiar with those common plants that are poisonous for dogs and cats. Ensure you stay clear of them.

If you are going to use any weed killers or pesticides in your garden that your pet has access to, then make sure to use a pet safe variety. Lilies in particular



are popular plants around Easter and throughout the spring but if you have a cat then you definitely need to stay clear of these flowers as they can cause kidney failure and can be fatal if a cat ingests one. Any part of a Lily (e.g., bulb, stem, petals) is poisonous to a cat and even coming into contact with just the pollen or drinking the water from a vase of lilies can be super dangerous. Snowdrops, Daffodils, Rhododendrons, Hyacinths, Tulips and Crocus are also amongst the flowers to avoid. The bulbs are toxic to pets, as are the actual flowers which can cause vomiting or gastrointestinal upset when eaten or chewed. Bulbs can also be choking hazards, especially in smaller dogs and cats.

### **Easter fun!**

With spring comes Easter and while it can be lots of fun for our families as we humans love our chocolate! Chocolate contains Theobromine, the chemical found in cocoa, which is toxic for both dogs and cats but for dogs it is especially harmful, causing convulsions and heart failure, even in small quantities. Simnel cake and hot cross buns are also eaten at this time of year and can be found in most homes, these contain dried fruit (e.g., raisins), which can cause kidney failure. Ensure you keep out of reach to ensure all pets stay safe and well.



### **Keep your lawn tidy!**

Watch out for rocks, stones, gravel, or dry patches of soil in your garden. If you use lawn feed or fertilisers, then make sure you read the labels carefully and don't let your pet out into the garden until it is safe to do so. Better still, try and use products that are pet friendly. If you store products like slug pellets, antifreeze or herbicides in your shed then make sure they are securely locked away so dogs and cats cannot gain access to them. Do not feed lawnmower clippings to your rabbit or guinea pig as a foreign body may have been mixed up with it.

### **Stay one step ahead of those pesky parasites!**

Many parasites start to flourish as the temperatures begin to increase in the spring and nasty fleas will be more prevalent too. Along with staying up to date with their preventative treatment you can protect your dog or cat by washing their paws thoroughly after an outside adventure. Ticks also like to linger in long grass so arm yourself with a tick remover just in case. Parasites can linger on grass and crawl/ jump onto your pet when out for a walk in the woods, a jaunt in the field or a playdate at the dog park.

### **Is your pet fully vaccinated?**

Come spring your dog will be out on longer walks and your cat may be off on their own adventures and so both will be encountering more animals than they will do in the winter so it is important to stop any spread of nasty diseases but making sure they are fully up to date with their core vaccinations.

**92% of pets will have at least one emergency situation during their lifetime**



### **Microchipping**

Microchipping has been a legal requirement for dogs since 2016 and in April this year we will see it become law for cats. The process is quick, painless, and dramatically increases any chance of finding a pet if they wander off at little too far.

### **Slugs and Snails**

Dogs can catch Lungworm, a potentially fatal disease, by eating slugs and snails which are carrying the larvae of the parasite. The best way to avoid this is by ensuring your dog is kept up to date with appropriate worming treatments

### **Flystrike in rabbits**

As the months begin to get warmer flystrike can become an issue. Although mainly seen in rabbits it can affect any animals. It happens when flies lay their eggs on your rabbit, and those eggs hatch out into maggots. These maggots can eat into your rabbit's flesh within 24 hours, which can cause death in a truly short time. It is crucial to check your rabbits bottom every day and more than once during the warmer months. More tips can be found here <https://rabbitwelfare.co.uk/rabbit-health/illness/flystrike/>



### **Adder bites**

As it becomes milder adders can appear out of hibernation. If provoked, adders will bite, which can result in swelling, pain and even shock

### **Practice news!**

After 2 years of full time working, attending college and studying Jess has qualified as a registered veterinary nurse! Joe also finalised his year long Diploma in becoming a veterinary nursing assistant. Well done to both on passing your final exams which we know are always worrying despite all the hard work and preparation that you put in.

You'll be seeing more of Jess during her regular clinics at the practice so don't forget to say hello!

We have introduced two new babies into the Belmont Vets family! Charley had a beautiful baby boy towards the end of 2023 and Maria had a lovely little girl at the start of 2024. We wish them all the best and look forward to having them back in practice on a regular basis!

