

# Feline Care



## Fleas..... Nippy Little Parasites!

Fleas cause major irritation for some pets and households, and soon with milder temperatures moving in, fleas will certainly ramp up their activity. Don't be fooled that fleas were not about during the past winter months. Our centrally heated homes and carpet, even wooden or laminate floors can hold flea eggs that sit and wait for the right conditions to hatch!

Fleas are a year round problem, so please maintain treatments to help avoid problems like a nasty flea infestation. There are many products available to treat and help protect your pet in the form of tasty chews, spot-on liquids, tablets and collars. As always we are here to advise you, so either call our friendly reception team or pop your pet in to our clinic for a weight check, so we can assess the correct dosage for your pet..... and while you are here we can discuss treatment for worming too!



Cats are very clever creatures and have owners wound round their little paws, pampering and serving their every whim! Our felines deal with life in their own time and never seem to rush anywhere, except to the feeding bowl! They can be very vocal and communicate by meowing, purring, growling, trilling, hissing, with pheromones and also body language. It is thought that cats evolved 12 million years ago, and can be seen in ancient Egyptian paintings and sculptures.

### Common Cat Ailments

#### FLUTD

Feline lower urinary tract disease covers a wide range of conditions affecting the bladder and urethra, such as bladder stones, urinary crystals, stress or infection.

**Signs can include - squatting to urinate but cannot urinating frequently and in unusual places - blood in urine**

#### Mouth

Providing routine healthcare for your cat or administering medication can prove a fiery business of possible scratches and bites, which does cause owners and even us vets to be a little wary! However, regular mouth checks are needed as some cats are prone to oral disease.

**Watch out for - ulcers or cuts on tongues - bad breath inflamed swollen or bleeding gums (gingivitis) - broken teeth excessive drooling - reluctance to eat**

#### Hair Balls

Ingested hair from grooming generally passes through their digestive system and out the other end. However, a hairball can develop in the stomach or small intestine. You may find your cat retching or gagging in an attempt to remove it.

**Other signs to look out for - loss of appetite constipation - a swollen abdomen**

#### Routine Jabs

Vaccinations can help protect your pet against infectious diseases. Cats wander freely outdoors, and may come into contact with unvaccinated, feral or stray cats carrying diseases such as **Cat Flu and Feline Leukaemia.**

Effective and regular flea, tick and worm treatments will help to avoid parasite infestations, which can cause many health problems.

#### Neutering

At about six months old, cats can reproduce and often! Tom cats fight with other male cats and are at risk of disease via bites and scratches.

**A queen cat will deliver 3-4 kittens or more, and then shortly after is off to get pregnant again!** Neutering provides health and social advantages, as it helps to reduce fighting, aggression, spraying, the spread of fatal disease and unwanted kitten litters.

**We have plenty of advice, help and treatments to tackle the above ailments, so if you notice any signs of ill health in your feline friend or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.**

## Hours

The Veterinary Hospital  
**Hungerford**

01488 683999

Mon to Fri 8am - 6pm

Sat 8.30am - 12.30pm

Belmont Veterinary Clinic  
**Pewsey**

01672 563413

Mon to Fri 8.30am - 6pm

Sat 9am - 11.30am

**24/7 Emergency**

01488 683999

# Tooth Troubles

**Q.** Does your pet suffer from bad breath or have difficulty eating? **A.** YES

**Q.** Does your dog drool or have inflamed, red or bleeding gums? **A.** YES

**Then book your pet in for a dental check with the vet!**

Almost 80% of dogs and 70% of cats show signs of periodontal disease at just 3 years old.

## Toothbrush Training Tips

It is really important to keep your pet's teeth in good condition, as tartar can build up on the teeth causing inflamed and infected gums, which can lead to tooth decay. Brushing is the way forward to a healthy mouth and ideally should begin when pets are young, but please be patient, especially if you have an older pet. Do not rush, build confidence and give lots of cuddles and praise. **Always use animal toothpaste NEVER human paste**, and over a few days introduce teeth cleaning to your pet.

-  Just with your finger, lightly touch in and around their mouth, softly rubbing the front teeth.
-  Once your pet is confident, cover your finger with a soft damp cloth to gently rub the teeth.
-  Introduce a soft bristle toothbrush with something tasty on the bristles. Allow your pet to lick and investigate the brush while you are holding it.
-  When the brush becomes familiar, lightly brush their front teeth.
-  Gradually progress to using animal toothpaste, introducing a gentle vertical motion to the front teeth and a circular action for the back.

Some pets enjoy having their teeth cleaned, but others.....well it may take a while! Treat toothbrush time as a fun and happy event for your pet.

**We are here to help! If it all seems a bit daunting, our nurses can show you how to brush your pet's teeth. It's never too late to learn!**



Carrie  
Cat



## Avoid At All Costs!

Reporter  
Extraordinaire

As a high profile news reporter, I get plenty of invites to cover various events. Glitzy and very enjoyable they are too, a perk of the job one might say! However, just recently I was attending a film premiere, and to my horror found the venue adorned with lilies! Indeed a beautiful flower, but if you are a cat, you need to give them a very wide berth! Hence this report to all you lovely felines out there, young and old, as some of you may be unaware of the dangers of lilies!

**Every part of this plant is a potential hazard to cats;** the flower, stem, leaves, stamen and pollen. Tiger, Stargazer, Easter and Rubrum to name but a few in the Liliaceae Family, are highly toxic to cats. By nature we are inquisitive creatures, especially the young and in particular kittens! News travels fast in my line of work, and reports have landed on my desk of unfortunate illness, and sadly in some cases fatalities. Fallen pollen licked off coats and paws while grooming; lily flowers and leaves bitten playfully in a vase, even a large plant in the garden used as a bed for the night.

**It takes just a small amount of this plant to be licked,** chewed or ingested to cause vomiting, lethargy, breathing difficulties and loss of appetite. If you recognise any of these signs or suspect your cat has been in contact with lilies, take your pet to the vet without delay, as lily poisoning can cause acute kidney failure. The sooner treatment can begin the better.

**Play it safe and avoid having lilies in your home or garden!**

*This was Carrie Cat reporting for Hungerford Veterinary Hospital.*

## We Are RCVS Accredited High Standards and Assurance

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, regulate the veterinary profession in the UK. They provide a form of quality assurance for animals and their owners that veterinary services are received from qualified vets in a professional manner. For a Veterinary Surgeon to practice in the UK, they must also be registered members.

For Hungerford Vets to be an RCVS Accredited Practice, requires us to meet the strict and high standards set by the RCVS in such areas as **clinical care, hygiene, equipment and staff training**. As part of this accreditation, we also volunteer to be inspected at least every four years and are open to 'spot checks' between these inspections.

As an RCVS Accredited Practice, you can feel confident that we maintain high clinical standards, while providing a caring, comprehensive and professional service for you and your pets.



Published by [www.vetarazzi.co.uk](http://www.vetarazzi.co.uk) 01787 828361



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