

# Shake it off!

Hands up those of you who have been the target of a wet dog body shake? Oh yes, if you are standing close to a dog whose coat is full of water then you are in for a bit of a drowning!

**In a few seconds your dog can shed 70% of the water from their coat**, whether after a bath or a swim in the sea. A built in hairdryer!

A dog's skin is loose, so it can amazingly twist and whip around increasing in speed as it does a body shake. Dogs are great at getting dry quickly with this natural reflex, which comes from their wild dog ancestors who needed to stay dry, as being heavily wet for too long was a matter of life or death. Water sits in the coat and creates poor insulation, which causes a dog's body to quickly lose heat and drain energy reserves. So it was very important for wild dogs to keep dry to help them survive.



**Dry Body Shakes** These get rid of dirt, loose hair and parasites....another throw back to ancestors who slept outside on the dirty ground. Stress can be another reason... maybe from a visit to the vets!

**A good body shake, eases tension and resets the body** allowing the dog to say 'phew that's all over, now time to move on'. **After an excitable playtime** with another dog.....helps again to reset their emotions. **Feeling uncomfortable**.....a good shake does the trick.

**Following a nap**.....gets the body going particularly in the morning after a long sleep. A bit like us when we have a good stretch after rising from bed!

All in all take a leaf out of your pet's book. A body shake helps a dog move on to a better state of mind and a reset of emotions..... **so let's all have a good shake!**

## Welcome to Jenny our new part-time Vet

..... well Jenny is not exactly brand new as she has been a locum vet in our clinics for a few years, but is now becoming a permanent member of our team!

Many of you may have already met her and for those of you yet to say 'hello', she'll be found treating patients on Tuesdays and Wednesdays mainly at our Hungerford branch. Jenny qualified from Bristol University in 2008 and for eight years was a farm animal and also a zoo animal and exotics vet, before moving on to mainly small animal work.

We quick fired some questions at Jenny and got some quick fired answers!

### **Best part of job?**

Meeting so many different animals, from cats and dogs, to tigers and geckos. I love the variety!

### **First ever pet?**

Tigger - an imaginatively named moggy I acquired when I was 2, he lived to the ripe old age of 21!

### **One thing from your bucket list?**

To visit Madagascar and photograph lemurs and chameleons.

### **Favourite drink?**

A nice glass of white wine or fizz.

### **Favourite snack?**

Salt and vinegar crisps, carrot cake, olives, cheese, shortbread biscuits - too many to mention!

### **Pet you would most like to own?**

An elephant!

## New Cat Chipping Law



Information on the gov.uk site reports that **microchipping your cat is to become mandatory**. The government are currently reviewing the dog microchipping laws too, and then both will be enforced at the same time. Once law, **cat owners will need to microchip their cats before they reach 20 weeks old**, plus the details stored and kept up to date on a microchip database.

Many lost unmicrochipped cats never get reunited with their owners and are rehomed from rescue centres. Also owners are often unaware of their pets being injured in road traffic accidents. Please don't wait for it to become law. Just call us and book your appointment now. It's quick, simple and a permanent means of identification for your pet. For further information visit [www.gov.uk/government/news/cat-microchipping-to-be-made-mandatory](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/cat-microchipping-to-be-made-mandatory)



Jenny Grewal BVSc CertAVP(CP) MRCVS

## 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

24/7 Emergency

01488 683999

[www.hungerfordvets.co.uk](http://www.hungerfordvets.co.uk)

# Do Not Disturb.... I'm Busy Grooming!

Cats are very particular when it comes to keeping clean and tidy, and have a great built-in grooming tool kit; a rough tongue, claws, paws and sharp fine teeth! Along with being extremely flexible, your feline friend manages to look pristine most of the time!

**Tongue** When your cat has licked your hand, have you noticed it feels quite rough?

On the surface are numerous spines that are called papillae that 'comb' through saliva to clean their coats. As cats cannot sweat, the saliva also evaporates helping to lower body temperature. Watch your cat.... he or she will start by dampening a forepaw and then rub the paw around the face, head and ears frequently re-dampening the paw. Dirt, loose hair and parasites are removed by cleaning. As your cat twists and turns to groom the rest of their body, the licking stimulates the sebum from the sebaceous glands, which is then spread over the coat to help maintain healthy skin.

**Grooming Problems** Watch out for **excessive grooming**; it can be a sign that something is up! Some cats can even create large bald areas, so please book your cat for a check-up asap. **Gagging and retching** could mean hairballs, which may need a little help to remove. Cats with a poor coat condition may be unable to groom due to old age, arthritis or illness and require special attention.

## An Important Part of Life

For your cat, grooming is not just about keeping clean. It is also a behavioural action that performs as a **self-calming method** for when he or she feels anxious, embarrassed e.g. falling off a ledge or even after a fight! It's best not to disturb your cat during their grooming ritual, as he or she prefers privacy!

**If you are concerned about your cat, please contact our friendly team.**



# What I find is mine!

Your pets are inquisitive creatures, so to play with and taste what they find is just too exciting to ignore! This curiosity though, could cause problems for your pets, as there are potential hazards out there!

**Poison** is a harmful substance that your pet may ingest or absorb through their skin. It can cause anything from a minor stomach upset to heart and breathing problems, and sadly could be fatal.

### Signs of poisoning include

**Drooling - Frothing - Panting - Twitching - Muscle tremors  
Breathing problems - Vomiting - Diarrhoea - Fits - Lethargy  
Increased heart rate and temperature**

**Suspect your pet has ingested or absorbed a poisonous substance?**

1. **Immediately** contact or go to your vet.
2. Unless told by your vet, **do not wait** - time is vital.
3. Try to identify what, when and how much.
4. If possible take the pack/source of the poison with you.

**Old Food** A small food bin for council collection or a compost heap; decomposing food produces mould, which releases poisonous mycotoxins. Ensure your pet cannot reach the bin or compost!

**Chemicals** Spring creates DIY jobs - terrace, BBQ and glass cleaners, bleach, paint solvents, varnishes and wood preservers include chemicals that are potentially dangerous to your cats and dogs. Substances on their coats can be ingested when grooming.

**Rat/Mice Bait** Many varieties are **highly dangerous**, e.g. one type prevents clotting of the blood. If your pet should ingest this, it can cause internal bleeding, which may only become visible as your pet worsens and begins to pass blood in their urine or faeces. Other signs include vomiting, diarrhoea and bleeding from the nose.

**Metaldehyde** in snail/slug pellets is also extremely toxic to animals.

### Safety Comes First

- Read safety instructions on home, garden, DIY and car products.
- Provide 'animal proof' storage.
- Remove pets from working area.
- Keep your cat or dog away from areas recently treated with chemicals.
- Become familiar with the types of products and natural problems that cause poisoning.

We are also available for advice.



The Veterinary Hospital  
4 Bath Road  
**Hungerford RG17 OHE**  
**01488 683999 24/7 Emergency**

Belmont Veterinary Clinic  
Salisbury Rd Business Park  
**Pewsey SN9 5PZ**  
**01672 563413**

