

Autumn 2019

Welcome to our autumn newsletter. We hope you find something to interest you.

Pet Insurance

Pets can suffer illness or injury at any time. As there is no NHS for pets, it is important to consider how you would cover the costs of treatment for your pet if the need arises. Pet insurance can help, however there are some areas to be aware of.

Benefits of pet insurance:

- Peace of mind
- Financial help to cover the cost of treatment
- Improved treatment options and outcomes

Choosing the right pet insurance, there are a variety of policies available:

- Lifetime policies:
 - Cover is provided up to a set amount for veterinary fees each year
 - No time limit on how long you can claim for each illness or injury as long as the policy is renewed each year without a break in cover
 - Ideal if your pet develops an ongoing condition, for example, arthritis or heart disease
- Maximum benefit policies:
 - Cover is provided up to a maximum amount per condition (e.g. £2,000)
 - Once you have claimed to the maximum amount the condition is excluded from the policy
- 12 month/Time-limited policies:
 - Cover is provided up to a maximum amount per condition
 - There is a 12 month limit, meaning conditions will only be covered for 12 months from initial clinical signs
 - After 12 months the condition will be excluded from the policy
- Accident only:
 - No cover for illness
 - Provides a fixed sum of money for each accidental injury
 - Some policies have a 12 month limit
 - Often only covers a certain amount of accidents
- Other things to consider:
 - Excess – the contribution you make towards the cost of a claim
 - Additional cover – some policies may cover the cost of advertising if your pet is lost or stolen
 - Pre-existing conditions – pet insurance does not normally cover pre-existing conditions
 - Price – not all pet insurance is the same so shop around, the cheapest is not necessarily the best



Autumn Hazards

Conkers and Acorns

- There are a lot of fallen acorns and conkers on the ground. Please ensure your pets do not pick these up and eat them as they are poisonous. They may also cause obstructions and require surgery to remove.

Mushrooms and Toadstools

- Mushrooms and toadstools are going to be more common with the wetter weather. Please ensure that your pets do not consume them as some species are poisonous.

Halloween and Chocolate

- As young and old enjoy trick or treating please make sure that your pets do not gain access to the goodies, particularly the chocolate. Chocolate contains a product called theobromine which is toxic to dogs and cats. If eaten chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhoea and dehydration. It can also cause our pets to become hyperactive, develop increased temperature and in severe cases fits or seizures. Treatment involves the Veterinary Surgeon inducing vomiting and in severe cases fluid therapy may also be required.
- **If you think or know your pet has eaten any chocolate please contact the surgery immediately.**

Firework Season

Unfortunately for many of our pets this is a scary, traumatic time as they find it difficult to cope. There are some ways that we can help them during this period:

- Two weeks prior to bonfire night and continue throughout period - Pheromone therapy, either Adaptil plug in or collar for dogs or Feliway plug in for cats
- During firework season, please remember this can continue into the New Year:
 - **DO NOT TAKE THEM TO FIREWORK OR BONFIRE PARTIES**
 - Walk dogs earlier in the afternoon to avoid any one off fireworks and walk on a lead to avoid them running off
 - Keep cats in the house
- On the day of fireworks:
 - Keep all pets in a quiet, dark room and ensure they have a safe place (this can be a covered crate, under the table or where they choose, see image below for example)
 - Key features of the safe place:
 - Put out before firework season is due to start and allow your pet to investigate
 - Position away from doors and windows
 - Cover with a dark cover
 - Fill with a comfortable bed
 - Place in favourite toys
 - Give your pet a Kong or similar food based toy

Other things to do:

- Keep curtains or blinds closed
- Play music that is of a slow tempo or have the TV on
- Nutraceuticals which are designed to calm the pet
- It is essential that you remain relaxed and do not overly reassure your pet
- It is important that you are aware of the signs of low level anxiety, for example: nose licking, yawning and increased blink rate

You may choose to use a nutraceutical, for example, Nutracalm which is available from the Veterinary practice. They contain natural ingredients that are designed to calm your pet and are recommended to be given 2 hours before required. **It is important to remember that these are not a cure, and if your pet has an extreme response it is recommended that you proceed with desensitisation and counter-conditioning once the season has finished. Please contact the Veterinary Surgery for full details.**

