

The PARK VETERINARY PRACTICE

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NEWS

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Fully equipped

- Operating theatres
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- Xray and Ultrasound
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- Hospitalisation
- Endoscopy
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Seasons greetings
to all of you;
Happy New year



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Pet Passport: it's simpler now!



Taking your cat or dog abroad will become easier when new rules come into force on 1 January 2012. It is going to be very simple indeed!

All you will need to do is have a rabies vaccine and three weeks later you can come and go as you please.

No blood test. No six month wait.

You still need to have your pet microchipped prior to the rabies vaccine, and you will still need to have your pet checked by a vet abroad before you return but that isn't a hassle as any vet can do it.

You will simply be issued with your Passport at the time of the rabies vaccine.

We use Nobivac® Rabies Vaccine: for every dose sold in the UK the manufacturer gives one dose to the Serengeti Project in Africa. This has reduced the number of rabies cases in dogs by 95% in the last ten years. A good enough reason for this practice to support them!

The microchip we use here contains a thermometer unlike cheaper versions. Much nicer than having to take temperatures up the bottom! And being an Identichip® then it is more reliable and very unlikely to move around. Only £24.00 and that includes lifelong registration on the worldwide database.



New Website

The whole practice website has been completely overhauled! The original site was way ahead of its time when it was launched but the internet has advanced and so we have had a re-write.

Take a look: this is just the beginning of a whole new era. We have a lot of information on there including our newsletters and some videos of operations. The fact sheets will be particularly useful. Over the next few months we will be adding more videos and more pages so keep popping back to see what is new.

The website has been designed and run by Roger Huggins. He is an approachable chap and certainly good at his job. We have used him for several years for computer problems and he offers a very reasonable service if you have any technical PC problems or want your own website – 07883 061360.

Give a stray a Christmas Dinner!

Every year we collect food at Christmas time for cats and dogs being looked after in the local charity rescue homes. Scratching Post for cats and All Dogs Matter – smaller charities that otherwise get forgotten. We're pleased with our record and we have managed almost ½ tonne of food some years.

This year is no different: Please bring in food, toys, bedding and treats. Anything really, even half open bags of food – they all get used.

Thanks

Winter Care for Rabbits and Guinea Pigs



Rabbits and Guinea pigs that are kept outside will need extra protection from not only the cold but the damp too. A useful tip is to **replace some of the straw each night with a fresh wad** as this will be dry and absorb a lot of moisture – a natural dehumidifier! Make sure that there is enough bedding for them to burrow completely. How about putting a gallon drum of hot water in one corner, or under the cage, for extra heat?

Water bottles are bad news because the metal feeder tube will get so cold that the ball-stop inside will freeze. Always have a bowl of water handy as well, even though it may get filled with straw. At least there is still water that can be drunk.

Don't Panic!

“My dog has got something stuck in his throat”

This is a very common phone call and it always seems to cause panic.

First of all ask yourself these questions:

1. Is your dog able to eat? If YES then there can't be anything stuck.
2. Is he/she pawing at his mouth? if NO then he can't have anything stuck.
2. Does it happen when he/she gets excited? (such as the doorbell ringing). If there are periods when there is no cough then there can't be anything stuck!

99% of these panics turn out to have a throat infection such as a sore throat or kennel cough, even if he or she hasn't been near a kennel. Other dogs in the park might have been and it is highly contagious.

Come and see us but at your leisure – you don't have to race here in a panic! Treatment is needed but is simple and effective.

Garden Birds



As we sit snugly inside this winter, it's worth sparing a thought for our feathered friends. Severe winters can be a real test of survival skills for many of our commoner species such as blackbirds, blue tits, robins and sparrows. On a cold winters night, birds can use up an incredible 10% of their body weight just keeping warm. As a result they need to feed well *every day* just to replenish their reserves for the cold night ahead. Prolonged cold spells can lead to a high mortality rate in birds.

So what can be done?

With a little water, food and shelter, gardens can become a haven for birds and other wildlife. Ensure a supply of fresh water every day – if it is very cold, use tepid water. During the cold winter weather, birds require high energy (high fat) foods to maintain their fat reserves to survive the frosty nights. A bird table stocked with a high calorie seed mix will be very welcome. In addition a wide range of household scraps such as cooked potato, cake crumbs, grated cheese and soft fruit can also be fed. Hanging feeders containing sunflower rich mixes or unsalted peanuts are also much appreciated!

Bird tables should be placed where birds are safe and able to feed undisturbed. Try to avoid putting them near fences or dense hedges where crafty cats can easily get to them. Siting them near branches or other perches is ideal. Further information on all this can be found at www.rspb.org.uk

Fact File: Ear Disease

Does your pet show signs of head shaking and ear scratching? These are commonly seen in pets and, combined with other symptoms such as ear redness and discharge – point to ear disease as a problem. The ear is protected externally by a pinna (or flap). A narrow ear canal carries sound to the ear drum where it passes onto the middle and inner ear.

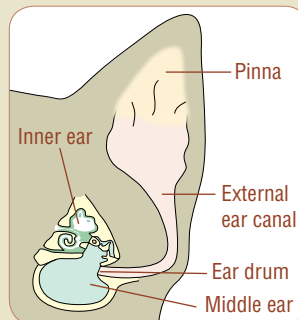
Unlike the situation in humans where middle and inner ear disease is common, most of the problems seen in pets occur in the *external* ear canal – an often very painful condition called otitis externa.

Virtually all otitis externa is triggered by an underlying cause; common underlying causes include: –

- Ear Mite (*Otodectes cynotis*) infestations – commonly seen in puppies and kittens.
- Trapped foreign bodies such as grass awns.
- Localised allergic skin disease affecting the skin lining the external ear canal – often as part of a more generalised skin condition. Inhaled allergies and food allergies will commonly present in this way.

In order to effectively treat ear disease, it is important to determine the *underlying cause* of the problem, however this is often obscured and made worse by *secondary* opportunistic bacterial and fungal infections.

If your pet is showing symptoms of ear disease it is important that we examine them and establish the underlying cause of the problem as soon as we can. This will involve an examination of your pet's ear plus further lab tests in some cases. In common with many conditions, *early diagnosis* and treatment gives us the best chance of curing ear disease in pets.



The ear in cross section. Most ear problems occur in the external ear canal



Otitis externa in a cat with ear mites (*Otodectes cynotis*). The photo shows the characteristic crusty brown discharge in the external ear canal



Electron micrograph of the ear mite – *Otodectes cynotis*