



West Gippsland Veterinary Centre

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Practice News

Welcome to our winter newsletter for 2007. Since our last newsletter, we have sadly said goodbye to Kat Hilder. Kat left the practice in April after 12 months with us. She is now devoting all her time and energy to running the mini-digger business that she owns with her husband. Kat's stock-ordering duties have been taken-over very capably by Cindy. Salty and Felicity have taken-on more hours to cover Kat's shifts so you will be seeing more of them around the place.

Many of you will remember Lisa Wilms who worked with us for many years. We would like to congratulate Lisa and her husband, Mark, on the birth of their first child, Rory who was born in February.

On the topic of children, congratulations also go to Ben and Stephanie Smith who have announced that Steph is pregnant again. Their second child is due to join the family in October.

In our last newsletter, Ben was in the process of completing his accreditation for Penn HIP. Since then he has completed all that was required for his assessment and is now registered to take x-rays for this program. Please see the small article on this program in the following pages.

Grant has recently completed the Countdown Downunder advisor accreditation course. This allows him to conduct full on-farm mastitis investigations. Joe, who is also an accredited Countdown Downunder advisor, has recently updated his knowledge on the topic by attending the mastitis lectures at the annual Australian Veterinary Association conference.

Meg also attended the AVA conference for a day, attending lectures on canine respiratory disease. In addition, Meg recently attained accreditation to prepare dogs and cats for export and the practice now has two vets (Meg and Ben) who can provide these services.

Quiz?

1: What is the largest breed of domestic cat?

Choose Your Answer: A: Siberian,

B: Ragdoll, C: Singapura, D: Maine Coon

2: What is the largest breed of dog?

Choose Your Answer: A: Great Dane,

B: English Mastiff, C: Irish Wolfhound,
D: St. Bernard

3: What breed of cat has a reputation for being cross-eyed?

Choose Your Answer: A: Siamese,

B: Himalayan, C: Persian, D: Egyptian Mau

4: What breed of dog was originated in Germany by a tax collector who needed a guard dog for protection?

Choose Your Answer: A: Rottweiler,

B: Great Dane, C: Pit Bull,
D: Dobermann

5: If a male cat is both orange and black, he is probably ...

Choose Your Answer: A: Deaf,

B: Blind, C: Schizophrenic, D: Sterile

6: What is the only dog that cannot bark?

Choose Your Answer: A: Borzoi,

B: Saluki, C: Basenji, D: Whippet

1: B, 2: C, 3: A, 4: D, 5: D, 6: C
Answers:

The importance of VACCINATION

By Louise Flinker, Veterinary Intern, University of Sydney

Recent conditions have led to the increased incidence of diseases that can be prevented when vaccination protocols are conducted. Clostridial organisms are commonly found in the environment and ingested by healthy animals. These can pass in the faeces and contaminate the soil for other animals to ingest. Situations can occur that lead to the bacteria multiplying in number. This can result in diseases such as pulpy kidney after the ingestion of lush pasture or a penetrating wound contaminated with clostridial bacteria leading to black leg or tetanus.

Leptospirosis is widespread in Australia and can lead to major losses in production, particularly in cattle. Signs can include abortions, weak or stillborn calves, sudden milk drop, mastitis and infertility. Humans can also be affected by leptospirosis by contact with infected urine or placental material.

5-in-1 vaccines protect against the five main clostridial diseases blackleg, pulpy kidney, black disease, malignant oedema and tetanus. 7-in-1 vaccines have the added protection for *Leptospira pomona* and *Leptospira hardjo*. These vaccines do not completely prevent animals from being affected from leptospirosis however they can reduce the effects of the disease. When choosing a vaccine a product that stops the shedding of bacteria is ideal to help reduce the contamination in the environment.

Calves and lambs are protected by passive immunity in the colostrum if the dam is vaccinated 1 month before she is due to calve or lamb. Young animals should then receive their course of vaccinations, which consists of 2 booster doses. The initial dose should be given at marking time or when the mother's milk is starting to decline. The second dose should be given 4 to 6 weeks later. Annual boosters are essential in maintaining protection and should not be excluded from a management program.



You Won't Die Laughing

An event for everyone affected by the drought.

Join the authors of the best-selling book

You Won't Die Laughing!

for an evening of fun and laughter. Patricia Cameron-Hill and Shayne Yates are world experts on stress and humour. As a former nurse and doctor they know about the value of laughter medicine to bring relief. You'll discover how your sense of humour can be your best defense against stress and tough times.

When: Tuesday 24th July, 7.30pm-10.00pm

Where: Leongatha Football Club Rooms

Cost: FREE! Supper provided, drinks available at bar prices.

RSVP: Wednesday 18th July, Department of Primary Industries, Leongatha, Ph: 56629900.

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL, FIRST-IN-BEST-DRESSED

Enquires: South Gippsland Shire Council, 56629202

Transport available, please indicate when RSVP. Ask about childcare facilities.

Feline Acne



Acne unlike in humans isn't hormonally triggered. Is a skin condition that occurs in cats of all ages.

Feline Acne is a term used to describe a skin condition that develops on the chin and sometimes lower lip in some cats.

In mild cases, acne may look like flea dirt on the chin and the hair may be thin and appear greasy in this area. Mild cases, can be gently cleaned with mild soap and water to remove dirt grease and bacteria.

In severe cases a cat may develop blackheads and deep pimples, and the chin may become painfully sore and swollen, resulting in a grumpy, depressed cat who may of lost their appetite.

More severe cases may require antibiotics and or medicated shampoo.

As feline acne, can be come a recurring problem it is recommended that you bring them in so we can discuss the best short and long term treatment.

CAT FLU



Cat Flu is a highly infectious disease which all kittens and adult cats should be vaccinated against.

It is caused by either Feline Calicivirus or Feline herpesvirus and is also known as Upper Respiratory Disease.

The main method that Cat flu virus is spread is by direct contact of one cat with another. Large amounts of viruses are present in saliva, tears and nasal secretions, thus it can be spread by cats sniffing each other, mutual grooming and sharing feeding bowls.

The main symptoms of cat flu are as in human flu. Just before the sneezing begins, the cats temperature will increase. The cat feels ill and is unable to smell his food because of his blocked nose so often the cat will not eat. Feline calicivirus also causes mouth ulcers which makes eating very painful.

SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- 🐾 Sneezing
- 🐾 Conjunctivitis
- 🐾 Coughing
- 🐾 Tongue ulcers
- 🐾 Discharge from eyes
- 🐾 A temperature
- 🐾 Reduced appetite

In short, symptoms point to a miserable cat that appears to have a bad case of the flu.

TREATMENT

Treatment in mild to moderate cases involves a course of appropriate antibiotic as it is the secondary infection that frequently accompanies this condition that makes your cat really ill. While nursing your sick moggy they should be tempted to eat with small but frequent portions of aromatic foods such as sardines, roast chicken or liver. In order to clear the nasal passages it is beneficial to the cat if he can be confined to a steamy bathroom for an hour each day. Vicks Vaporub or a few drops of eucalyptus oil put on the cat's bedding. The cat should be cleaned gently with a cloth and warm water if they can no longer groom themselves and kept warm until dry.

Serious cases may require hospitalisation and intravenous fluid therapy.

After the cat has recovered, it normally becomes a "carrier" of the virus for many months or years. This is a major problem, as these carrier cats continue to shed the virus into the environment although they may appear perfectly healthy, acting as a source of infection for other cats.

VACCINATION

Kittens should be vaccinated with a series of 2 vaccinations, one at 6 - 8 weeks, then another at 12 - 14 weeks.

Adult cats that have not been previously vaccinated require two initial vaccinations given approximately 4 weeks apart. Immunity develops about 10 days after the second vaccination. As immunity slowly wears off over time, all cats should receive a booster vaccination approximately every 12 months to ensure ongoing protection against these serious viral diseases.

CALVING DATES:

always some surprises!



Why do some cows calve more than a week earlier or a week later than their expected date even when early or regular rectal pregnancy testing is implemented?

An average pregnancy?

Cows will vary in the length of their pregnancy. Generally, the length of a pregnancy is 282 days. Hormones, released from the foetal calf, trigger the calving process; but the time at which each individual calf triggers the calving process varies. About 70% of cows will calve within a week of their due date based on early rectal pregnancy testing. It is normal for 10% of cows to calve more than 10 days before their due date and a further 10% of cows to calve more than 10 days after their due date. And calving wouldn't be normal without a few surprises!

What can cause a 'wrong' date?

In a few cows, even experienced pregnancy testers will select the wrong insemination date as the conception date. It is more likely that the wrong insemination date will be selected when:

- mating records are incomplete or inaccurate;
- the cow had two inseminations or services less than three weeks apart;
- bulls are running with the herd and service dates are not all recorded, or
- cows are pregnancy tested when more than 15 weeks pregnant.

Cow identification and recording errors are also common causes of cows not calving within a week of their due date.

More information: Natalie Davey, ph (03) 9640-0731 enquiries@incalf.com.au or www.incalf.com.au

InCalf Book reference: See Chapter 17 of The InCalf Book for more information on choosing a pregnancy testing strategy.

Penn HIP *Accreditation*

Penn HIP stands for the University of **Pennsylvania Hip Improvement Program**. It was developed in 1983 as a method for early diagnosis of Canine Hip Dysplasia (CHD). CHD is a very common, heritable disease in dogs. Over time this disease results in osteoarthritis, which causes pain and discomfort for affected animals and reduces both their ability to work and their longevity. The main aim of Penn HIP is to reduce the frequency of CHD in all breeds of dog. It achieves this by detecting CHD in young dogs and then excluding these animals from the gene pool. The Penn HIP method is currently the earliest (from 16 weeks of age) and most accurate way of detecting CHD. Unlike older methods of taking hip x-rays the method used for Penn-HIP allows estimation of how much laxity there is in the hip joint (ie how loose or tight the ligaments are that hold the hip joint in place). This has been found to be the most accurate way of predicting whether or not a dog will develop osteoarthritis later in life.

For a program like Penn HIP to be effective it must be widely available to dog owners and breeders. To address this, a training program was established to train veterinarians in private practice to take the x-rays used to assess hips for CHD. The x-rays taken by the private

veterinarians are sent to the University of Pennsylvania to be assessed and compared with other x-rays of dogs of the same breed. X-rays are submitted by trained vets from several countries around the world, providing the Penn-HIP program with a comprehensive database. This helps provide greater accuracy and more consistency in assessment of the x-rays. Dogs are given a "score" relative to others of the same breed and only those with good hip conformation (least laxity) are recommended for breeding.

While the Penn HIP program was designed to reduce the incidence of CHD in the population as a whole, the ability to take meaningful x-rays at 16 weeks of age may also benefit individual animals. If severe laxity is apparent on x-ray at 16 weeks old, it may then be possible to perform surgery at that age to improve the conformation of the hips and hence minimize the extent of osteoarthritis that develops in that animal. If you wish to find out more about Penn HIP, please don't hesitate to contact us.

