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Pet Care Newsletter



Vet Nurse Day 2020

Veterinary nurses are celebrating Vet Nurse Day, in association with International Vet Nurse Day, on Friday 9 October 2020. Vet Nurse Day provides an opportunity for the veterinary industry and veterinary practices to acknowledge the important role that vet nurses perform within the veterinary medical team and reinforces the value and professionalism of veterinary nurses. Veterinary nurses are highly skilled, have ever increasing responsibilities and play a valuable role, whether in surgery, practice administration or consultations. Vet Nurse Day is also a time for grateful pet owners and the wider community to say 'thank you' to their local vet nurses for who they are, and what they do best.

How will we be celebrating our wonderful nurses here at MBVC?

Make sure you are following us on Facebook and Instagram, where this week we will be showcasing our wonderfully skilled team of Veterinary Nurses and asking them why they love what they do!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram



Puppy Pre School Graduates

Congratulations to the puppies who have graduated from the September Puppy Pre-School Class.

Alfred
Gypsy
Jett
Fritz
Gracie
Monty

To view all the adorable graduation photos please visit our [website](#).

What will my puppy gain from Puppy Pre-School?

Your puppy will gain valuable social skills by simply interacting with other puppies and people. These skills the pup develops it will use for life. Your puppy will learn how to interact with lots of people, loud noises and children and even a visit to the vet will become fun rather than something to shake about. Your puppy will develop into a friendly, educated, confident adult dog.

How will I benefit?

Owning a dog will be enjoyable rather than a chore. Having an obedient, well socialised dog is much more pleasant and stress free. You will also gain knowledge in all areas of pet care from dental, nutrition, solving behavioural problems, toilet training and lots, lots more. Weekly freebies and samples to take home for the puppy.

For more information please visit our [website](#)



Hip Hip Hooray!!

A really BIG Happy Birthday to our current Healthcare member who will be celebrating in October

Oscar - 15 years old

MBVC Healthcare plans are available for cats and dogs of all ages! If you would like some more info on our Healthcare Plans please contact us or read more on our website. There you will find how the plan could help you to provide comprehensive preventative healthcare for your pet, spread the cost and take advantage of special offers for Pet Healthcare Members.

[Click here to find out more](#)



Welcome to the team Dr Molly

I grew up in the Adelaide Hills on a hobby farm surrounded by a range of animals.

After finishing school, I moved to Wagga Wagga (NSW) where I studied Bachelor of Veterinary Science/Bachelor of Veterinary Biology at Charles Sturt University.

I had a fantastic time at university with highlights of traveling to Thailand and Fiji to provide care and perform surgery on community dogs. During the summers I always made sure to come back to the Adelaide hills to shear the local alpacas.

I graduated from university in July 2020 and shortly after I began my career at Murray Bridge Veterinary Clinic. I love the variety of animals and exciting challenges of working in mixed practice.

I have a wonderful greyhound named Jack who has been with me all through university, I love to take him on walks to explore new places. Since returning to South Australia it has been great to spend time with family and old friends. I also love swimming laps and I am looking forward to travelling more when possible!

[Click here to see all our staff](#)



What is kidney disease?

Just like humans, our pets have kidneys too. The role of the kidneys is to filter out waste from the blood to produce urine, together with playing an important role in maintaining the balance of fluids and electrolytes within the body, the kidneys produce hormones and enzymes that help regulate various metabolic functions throughout the body. When there is a problem with any aspect of the kidneys function, this is referred to as kidney disease or renal failure.

Signs of kidney disease

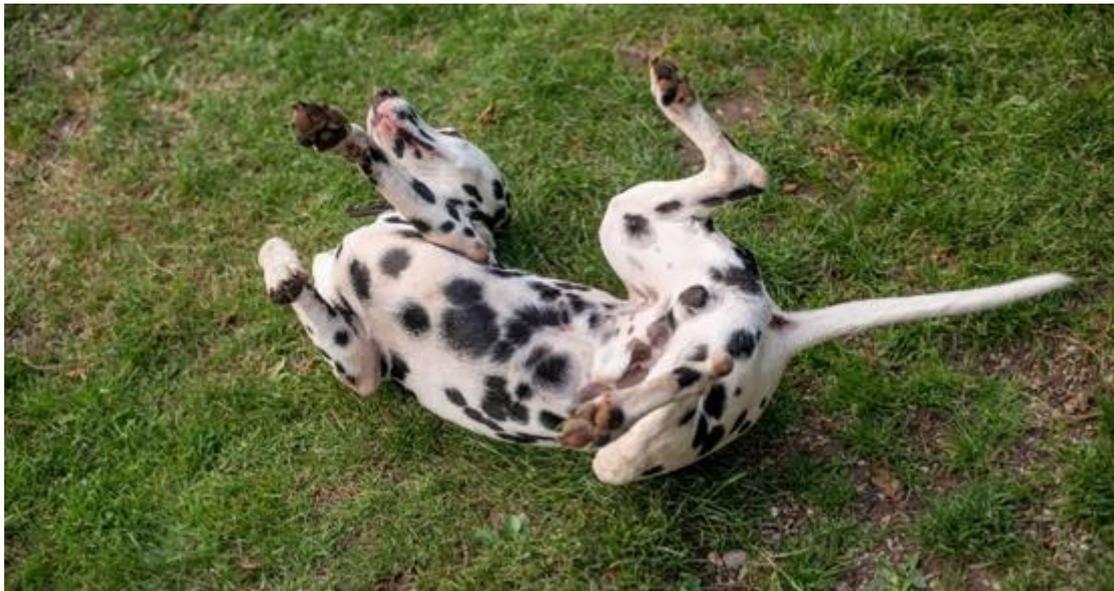
Because the kidneys play such a vital role in filtering waste products from the blood, if this process is not working correctly then your pet can become sick due to the build-up of toxic waste products in the blood which would normally have been excreted out of the body via the urine. Kidney disease can be caused by infections, traumatic injuries, exposure to toxins, dehydration and heatstroke. Kidney disease can also occur more commonly in older pets.

The signs of kidney disease can include:

- Increased thirst and urination
- Reduced appetite and weight loss
- Bad breath
- Vomiting and diarrhoea

Diagnosis and treatment

If we suspect that your pet may be suffering from kidney disease, then it is common to consider performing a urine test and a blood test which can measure different enzymes and substances in the blood and urine to determine if the kidneys are functioning normally. Further diagnostic tests may often also be indicated, including imaging (x-rays or ultrasound), blood pressure measurement and further blood tests. Treatment for kidney disease will vary depending on the cause and severity of the illness, but we will be able to advise you on what is involved in your pet's case and how it will help.



Bladder stones and obstructions

Bladder stones are rock-like accumulations of minerals which can form in the bladder. The bladder stones can occur as a few larger stones or multiple smaller stones. The smaller stones can sometimes block the urethra, which is the outflow tube from the bladder, causing pain or difficulty with urination.

Signs of bladder stones

Depending on the size and number of stones that form in the bladder, sometimes pets do not show any signs of having them. In other cases, the presence of bladder stones can cause blood-tinged urine, difficulty urinating and increased frequency of urination. If the stones are blocking the urethra preventing urination, this can quickly become painful for the pet, and they may appear lethargic, lose their appetite and can often vomit.

If the bladder cannot empty urine, not only is this painful for the pet, but the toxic products that are normally excreted out of the body in urine, build up in the bloodstream and can result in kidney damage

and other problems. A blocked bladder is also at risk of rupturing, where urine can leak into the abdominal cavity causing disease.

Why do bladder stones form?

There are a variety of causes which can contribute to the formation of bladder stones, including high blood levels of particular minerals, changes in the acidity of the urine, bacterial infections and abnormal metabolism of various minerals, which can occur in specific dog breeds such as Dalmatians.

Depending on their size, number and location, bladder stones can often be diagnosed via a combination of physical examination, urine tests and imaging (x-rays). Treatment of bladder stones will vary depending on the size of the stones and the type of mineral which has formed them. Larger bladder stones in the bladder can be removed surgically, and pets with urethral obstruction will require surgery or other procedures under anaesthesia to flush the urethra. There are also special urinary diets which we may recommend to help dissolve and prevent bladder stones forming.



Animal News In Brief

Image source: [Doda](#)

Exercise at home can be a little easier with your pet's support

Whether it's your kitty-accompanied morning yoga cat poses or weight-lifting with your woofers, home workouts can really turn the corner when our favourite furry friends get involved. Now that we've been spending more time at home, our pets are (mostly) loving any excuse to spend time with us, so why not include them in our less-preferable activities? This proud dog dad in Italy has found that motivation for stay-at-home exercise has considerably improved since his push-ups now each include a kiss to his slightly lazier bull-terrier pooch, Sparky. Could your pet join in on your home-workout routine and help boost your motivation?

Read about Sparky the muscle motivator [here](#).

This litter box sensor could revolutionise wee-watching

Monitoring how your pet occupies themselves in the loo isn't usually our first call of action day-to-day, but keeping an eye on these habits can be critical for noticing when something is off. Taking note of toilet changes can help identify any potential risks to your pet, such as kidney disease or UTIs. Now, meet the WeCare: the litter box sensor that detects the frequency of your kitty's offerings each time they make a visit on their throne, helping to track any unusual activity. Also able to use weight detection to

distinguish between whisker friends in multi-cat households, this new technology is truly some out-of-the-litter-box thinking.

Find out more about the WeCare [here](#).

New welfare laws proposed for German dogs

Germany's Agriculture Minister Julia Klöckner is advocating for some big changes in how dogs are treated across the country. From daily walks increasing to two times a day for a minimum 60 minutes total, to banning the chaining up of dogs for long durations and reducing the time pups are away from human socialisation, this plan is a driving commitment to "ensure animal protection and welfare", says Klöckner. It can sometimes feel tricky fitting an entire 60 minutes into your day to give your doggo a proper walk - but as the Agriculture Minister puts justifiably, "Pets are not cuddly toys, their needs have to be taken into account". Hopefully, this minimum-responsibility threshold can trend across the globe, to ensure pooches everywhere are happy, healthy and in good care, daily.

Catch the BBC's story on Germany's proposed law changes [here](#).



How urine tests can help us diagnose disease

A urine test is a simple and effective method for us to check the health of your pet's urinary system. The process involves collecting a urine sample from your pet, which can then be tested within the clinic or sent to a pathology laboratory for analysis. If you notice a change in your pet's urine, such as discoloured urine then you could try to collect a urine sample to bring into the clinic for testing. Alternatively, we may ask you to collect a urine sample from your pet to aid in the diagnosis of particular diseases.

How to collect a urine sample

With dogs, collecting a urine sample is usually a matter of waiting until they go to urinate, and then catching a sample of the urine into a clean and dry container such as a plastic bowl or jar. Once the sample is collected, you can bring it into the vet hospital for testing.

For cats, collecting a urine sample can be a bit trickier. If your cat uses a plastic litter tray, you can remove the cat litter and replace it with shredded bubble wrap, and then when the cat urinates you can tip a small amount of urine from the tray into a clean plastic container.

If you're unable to collect a urine sample from your cat, then you can organise to bring them into the clinic. We can often palpate and express a cat's bladder to collect a urine sample. If this is not possible,

we may consider using a technique called cystocentesis, which involves collecting a urine sample from the bladder by passing a needle through the abdomen – we can explain this procedure in more detail if it is recommended.

The benefit of testing your pet's urine is that it provides us with a large amount of information on the health of your pet's urinary system. Urine tests can be helpful in assessing for conditions such as urinary tract infections, kidney disease, diabetes, bladder stones and other metabolic conditions.



Why we measure blood pressure

We may measure a pet's blood pressure to check for conditions which could affect their health and wellbeing. Blood pressure refers to the force exerted by the circulating blood on the walls of the blood vessels. Measuring blood pressure is a common procedure in human healthcare, and in pets the technique allows us to determine if your pet is suffering from a blood pressure abnormality.

With pets, their blood pressure is measured by using a small Doppler ultrasound probe, which uses the ultrasonic waves to detect the pulse pressure. It's important that your pet is as calm as possible, so we will often measure your pet's blood pressure in a quiet room. If a procedure is required, we will explain more about what's involved for your pet. Often several blood pressure measurements will be recorded to gain an accurate assessment.

High and low blood pressure

High blood pressure, or hypertension, in pets is usually caused by an underlying disease. Various metabolic conditions can cause high blood pressure, such as diseases of the kidneys, adrenal glands, thyroid glands and conditions like diabetes. High blood pressure can also cause further complications, affecting your pet's eyesight, heart and kidneys.

Low blood pressure, or hypotension in pets, occurs when there is a reduced amount of blood being pumped around the body, or if other cardiovascular problems are present. Causes of low blood pressure include heart disease, some metabolic conditions, injuries involving bleeding, some toxicities and also shock. Animals with low blood pressure may be weak and lethargic, as a result of inadequate blood supply to their critical organs.

We will be able to advise you further about whether checking your pet's blood pressure is worthwhile. We will then also be able to explain the findings, discuss what may be causing the problems and lay out what treatment options might be available.



Safe use of antibiotics for pets

Your pet may be prescribed a course of antibiotics to treat an infection. When we prescribe antibiotics, it is very important to follow the label instructions on how often to give the antibiotics, and for how long to continue the course. The reason this is so important, is because the inappropriate use of antibiotics can lead to the emergence of resistant bacteria which do not respond to antibiotic treatment, referred to as antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

Different diseases require different lengths of antibiotic courses. Even if your pet looks better after a few days of being medicated with antibiotics, it's important to complete the course as stopping early risks bacteria failing to be completely eliminated, which can result in the illness returning.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is such an important issue because it impacts the health and medical care of both animals and humans.

You can help reduce your pet's need for antibiotics by keeping them up to date with regular vaccinations and parasite prevention, ensuring they live in a clean environment and making sure you feed them good-quality nutritious food.

If we prescribe your pet a course of antibiotics, you must:

- Always carefully read the label instructions
- Always complete the full course
- Seek advice from us if you have any concerns

Together we can all do our bit to prevent antimicrobial resistance and keep our pets safe.

This email contains comments of a general nature only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional veterinary advice. It should not be relied on as the basis for whether you do or don't do anything.

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