



#### **VETERINARY SURGEONS**

Dr. MICHAEL J. AVERILL, B.V.Sc (Dist)  
Dr. CATH NEVILLE B.V.Sc  
Dr. LINDA SORENSEN DVM  
Dr. CHANTAL MORETON B.V.Sc  
Dr. FRANCESCA MATTHEWS B.V.Sc

## **THE STRAVEN ROAD VETERINARY CENTRE (LTD)**

#### **STRAVEN RD. VET CENTRE**

8 STRAVEN RD, RICCARTON  
CHRISTCHURCH.

#### **Postal address**

PO Box 8169, RICCARTON  
PH. (03) 348 9728 FAX (03) 348 8012

#### **469 Papanui Road**

PH (03) 352 5749, FAX (03) 352 5780

### **Newsletter – Spring 2008 Issue 1**

Spring has arrived and summer is just around the corner. After a long cold and wet winter it's time to get moving again! With the new season there are some extra things we should think about with our pets.

#### **SEASONAL ADVICE**

##### **Fleas**

Although fleas cycle all year round, their life cycle certainly tends to slow down somewhat during the winter months. Now is the time to get all of your animals back up to date with their flea treatments.

The flea life cycle takes about 3 weeks to complete in optimum conditions and for every adult flea hatched they can lay up to 2000 eggs so it is essential to keep on top of the flea life cycle before it takes hold.

##### **Are your pet's vaccinations up to date for the holiday season?**

If your cat or dog is going to a cattery or kennel over the holiday season, you need to make sure they are up to date with their vaccinations. In most cases these need to be repeated annually.

In the case of kennel cough though, if your pet had this over 6 months prior to its next visit to the kennels it would be advised to get this again as immunity to kennel cough wanes in the 6-12 month period post vaccination.

##### **Time to shed that extra winter weight**

Just like us, our pets come out of winter hibernation and there are many that are carrying extra kilograms. In fact, it is a sad fact that more pets are overweight than the correct weight these days.

To ensure your pets are able to make the most of the summer season and to improve their health and enjoyment of life (extra weight is hard on joints and all the internal organs) it is essential to get the weight off.

Weight loss in pets, like in humans should be done slowly and under supervision. Just reducing your pet's standard diet can make your pet feel even hungrier and you may inadvertently reduce the level of other nutrients to below the recommended level by feeding less than the manufacturers recommend.

There are specially formulated light diets for pets that are prone to obesity or are just a tiny bit overweight. For pets that are more significantly overweight there are special reducing diets only available from your veterinarian.

Contact us for a free weight check and advice on the ideal weight for your pet and the best weight loss programme for your pet.

Remember if your pet is on a diet it needs to be weighed every 2-4 weeks to ensure it is losing weight at the correct weight. Especially in cats, fast weight loss can have detrimental effects to the liver. Weight loss must be slow and steady.

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#### **MUST HAVE**

##### **Pet Insurance**

Have you ever considered Pet Insurance?

Did you know that there are a number of companies now offering pet insurance?

Pet Insurance is really affordable if you own a pet. It just takes one accident or unexpected illness and the vet bills can sky rocket quickly. Cruciate ligament repairs, fracture repairs, medical treatment for diseases such as diabetes, treatment following poisoning or being hit by a car easily reach the \$1000 mark and many things cost significantly more.

If you would want to do everything for your pet but are unable to access those quantities of money at short notice, then you should consider pet insurance.

The main providers in New Zealand are:

- Ellenco ( [www.pet-insurance.co.nz](http://www.pet-insurance.co.nz) )
- Pet Plan ( [www.petplan.net.nz](http://www.petplan.net.nz) )
- Pet n Sur ( [www.pet-n-sur.com](http://www.pet-n-sur.com) )
- Pet Protect ( [www.petprotect.co.nz](http://www.petprotect.co.nz) )

Compare and contrast what each company has to offer before choosing your pet insurance provider. Please feel free to talk to us if you have any questions. Although we can't help you choose the best plan for you, we can answer questions on likely costs if certain things happen.

Remember that like human health insurance policies

existing conditions will not be covered so it is best to insure your pet early. Another consideration is that some policies will cover genetic conditions whereas others will not. For some breeds in particular it would be important to have one that does cover genetic conditions. We can advise on your breeds risk in this regard too.

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## INTERESTING CASE

### Poisoning

Recently we were presented with a young Labrador who arrived at the veterinary clinic with severe tremors. These tremors were exacerbated by noise and light.

The history was a walk in Victoria Park, where the dog did go off on its own for a little bit and being a Labrador it was expected that he ate something.

Although it is impossible to get a definitive diagnosis, by ruling out all other causes, we were left with the diagnosis of mycotoxin poisoning.

It is likely that the dog ate a quantity of mouldy fruit or other mouldy or fungal item in the park. Having been such a wet season it is possible that there are more moulds and fungi around than usual.

The significant tremors lasted for 4 days and during this time he needed hospitalisation and medication to help control the tremors. He was then able to be nursed at home and over a period of the next 10 days he returned to normal.

This serves as a warning to us all that we should ensure our pets are not allowed to eat unknown items when out on dog walks. If they cannot be controlled by voice commands they should be kept on a lead.

Not only are moulds and fungi a risk. Poisons can often be laid down or there may be dead animals such as rabbits that have died due to eating a poison. This can then go on to affect another animal eating the body.

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## STAFF NEWS

### New Head Nurse

Recently we farewelled our head nurse, Jo Robinson, who has moved on to a new role as a surgical nurse at another veterinary clinic.

We now welcome Tania who ably steps up to this very important role. Tania has been at the Veterinary Centre for 6 years. Many of you will already be familiar with Tania, at our Straven Road branch.

Tania completed her National Certificate in Veterinary Nursing at the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology and offered a job with the Straven Road Veterinary Centre. She started as a junior nurse and during the 6 years had worked her way through the ranks to the role of head nurse, which she took over in July. Tania is excited to be in

this new role where she will be able to work with the veterinary nursing team and veterinarians to offer extended services to our clients.

Tania has owned a variety of pets throughout her life including horses, birds, cats and dogs. She definitely considers herself an animal lover.

### Words of wisdom from Tania:

One thing to remind you as owners of dogs is the importance to feed dog specific food instead of our diet.

Some of the food we eat is poisonous to them. I know a lot of people know about the dangers of chocolate, but a lot of people don't know about onions and some other foods. So please take care and think about how the foods we eat may harm them.

I look forward to seeing you all in the future.

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## NEW PRODUCT

### Profender®

Finally the answer to every cat owner's prayers! A worm treatment that does all worms, including tapeworms that is not a tablet! Bayer has recently launched the product called Profender®, which comes as top spot applications. These are only available from your veterinary clinic.

The product comes in boxes containing 2 doses – each dose lasting 3 months. There are products for small, medium and large cats, based on weight to ensure they get the correct dose.

To read more about Profender® visit <http://profender.petparents.com/> or come and visit us and talk to our friendly staff about this excellent new product.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

We do free dental checks for your pets. We recommend that you avail yourself of this service 6 monthly to ensure your pets dental health is maintained. This is similar to you visiting your dentist every 3 or so years!

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## CHECK THIS OUT

[www.thepethub.co.nz](http://www.thepethub.co.nz) is a new website, set up by one of our part time veterinarians. A great website for all pet owners.

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## COMING SOON

Regular email updates from The Veterinary Centre containing news, information and promotions. Please make sure we have your email address so you are included.

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