



Oakwood Newsletter

SPRING 2009

Tellington TTouch™ For Companion Animals



An animal's posture & behaviour are inextricably linked. TTouch uses a system of gentle movements of the body & skin to improve posture & free up your animal from many problems with behaviour, healing, learning & confidence.

Learn more at a workshop or a one-to-one: Shropshire & Mid Wales. Check online for further details.

Rachael Manns – TTouch P2
01938 811777
www.animalsense.co.uk



Practice News

Wildlife Talk at Whittington Cricket Club on Thursday 16th April 2009 7.30pm By Megan Morris-Jones of Cuan House, Megan has many years experience rehabilitating and nursing wildlife from her hospital in Shropshire. This will be an informative talk explaining how to care and help our wildlife and what to do in an emergency.

On Sunday 26th April at 2.00pm we will hold a Spring Walk Quiz in the grounds of Babbinswood Farm, follow the trail and answer the questions, prizes will be given.

With great sadness Christine Shields has retired from the practice. Chris has worked here for over 10 years, many pets have benefited from her extensive homeopathic knowledge and their lives have been made comfortable and happy. We will miss Chris very much.

Daytime Surgery

(By appointment only)

Monday - Friday: 9 - 6pm

Tuesday Evenings: late surgery until 7.30pm

Saturday: 9-1pm

24 hr Emergency Service

Tel: 01691 679699

Fax: 01691 657563

Email: oakwoodvets@onetel.com

The battle of the bulge!



THE long winter months are often a time of inactivity and weight gain for many pets. However, keeping our pets fit and trim is just as important for pets as it is for ourselves, since obesity is known to cause or *worsen* a number of conditions including **arthritis**, **heart disease**, and **diabetes mellitus** – to name just three!

If you suspect that your pet has become a little *too* “cuddly”, the first thing to do is to arrange for us to weigh him or her. We will also give your pet a thorough physical examination to

check for any *medical* conditions that can also result in weight gain (such as hypothyroidism – see panel right).

Although conditions such as hypothyroidism can be an issue for some pets, in the majority of cases there are no underlying medical problems and here we can advise you on the best form of weight loss programme for your pet. So, if your pet is looking a little podgy get in touch since weight loss can make a huge difference to your pet's health!



X-ray of an arthritic hip joint in a dog. The symptoms of arthritis are often much worse in overweight pets. Should your dog slow down due to arthritic changes, there are products available to ease the pain caused by arthritis, and support the changes within the joints.

Hypothyroidism

The thyroid glands, found in the neck, produce thyroid hormone which regulates your pet's metabolism.



Under production of thyroid hormone is called **hypothyroidism** and is a relatively common condition in older dogs. Lower levels of thyroid hormone result in a *decrease* in the metabolic rate, usually leading to weight gain and generalised lethargy. Other signs often include coat problems and recurrent ear and skin infections.

Diagnosis of hypothyroidism can be tricky, but in cases confirmed by a specialized laboratory in the US and by the world renowned consultant Dr Jean Dodds, daily treatment with oral thyroid supplements are usually very successful in treating the condition, as is complimentary and nutritional thyroid support.

Autumn Fayre and Open Day



OAKWOOD VETERINARY CENTRE would like to express their gratitude to all that came along to support the Autumn Fayre and Open Day on Saturday October 25th.

Despite a terrible weather forecast the rain held off and the stall holders braved the chilly wind to sell their wares in our court yard. The Old Cat People managed to raise £100.00 which will help care

for, neuter and re-home some of the 40 cats they currently have at their home in Llandrinio. Our clients and their friends were able to go behind the scenes and view our digital x-ray processor and laboratory equipment. These items are crucial when diagnosing ailments with your pets and help with their speedy and comfortable recovery.

Everyone enjoyed the complementary mince pies and tea which were offered in the warm and cosy farm kitchen. Especially enjoyed was the fire engine. Oswestry Fire Crew brightened up everyone's day explaining the workings of the impressive fire engine. Many thanks to the lads for taking the time to join us.

The dogs had their turn to shine with an agility and training display. Well done to all those that attended and to Fiona of PHAT (Park Hall Agility Training) and Karen of Beastly Thoughts Dog Services for organizing the displays.



The heart of the matter!



DID YOU know that the heart is the most vital muscle in the body? The key function of the heart (see box right) is to pump de-oxygenated blood to the lungs where it is reoxygenated and pump reoxygenated blood back to the tissues of the body – delivering oxygen and vital nutrients for life. Whilst most of us (and our pets!) thankfully take all this for granted, heart disease is nevertheless surprisingly common; around 10% of older dogs suffer from heart disease and

it can affect younger dogs and other pets as well.

Any loss of normal heart function is called **heart disease**, and

this can be gradual or sudden in onset. There are many pos-

sible causes of heart disease, however the two most common causes are due to either **heart valve** problems, or a problem with the **heart muscle** itself.

Heart disease is commonly associated with a range of symptoms including:

- Reluctance to exercise
- Tiring more easily
- Coughing
- Laboured breathing
- Pale or blueish gums
- Fainting or collapse

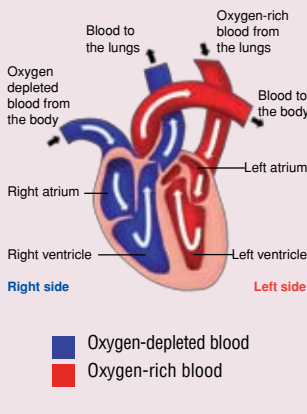
If you are concerned that your pet is showing *any* of these signs, please come and see us for a full clinical examination – as with many illnesses, early detection is the *golden rule*!

The good news however is that new methods of diagnosis and novel forms of treatment are now transforming the lives of many pets with heart disease.

The heart as a pump

In a healthy heart, the right side of the heart receives deoxygenated blood from the tissues of the body. As the chambers of the right side contract, they pump the blood to the lungs where the blood is reoxygenated. The oxygen rich blood then flows back into the left side of the heart. As the chambers of the left side contract, the blood is then pumped to the tissues of the body. This is illustrated diagrammatically below.

As the heart muscle squeezes and pumps, valves within the heart prevent back flow of blood.



If we catch it early herbs and homeopathic remedies can support the heart and circulation to delay the need for conventional medication.

Our Senior Citizens by Hel Jones



Sadly no one can stop the process of getting older but we can make the transition to old age more comfortable. I think we have all stopped and suddenly noticed those flecks of grey in their muzzles or the general slowing down (I can sympathize with the slowing down).

Many elderly cats find it increasingly difficult to reach around and groom those awkward parts. Their fur can get very matted and their skin sore and scurfy. Daily brushing can be a pleasure and beneficial but must be done regularly to stop the fur from becoming tangled. It is not advisable to try and scissor out the fur 'matts' as the skin can be easily cut meaning a visit to the vet.

An elderly arthritic dog will benefit from a ramp in the place of steps and to access the car. The elderly cat that is fed up off the floor will benefit from a helping hand as jumping up and down from heights will become more difficult.

A warm comfy bed either by the fire or the radiator will provide a wonderful place to sleep, to dream and twitch of running in fields and playing catch.

All these little things will help your four-legged family have a contented retirement.

A word in your ear!

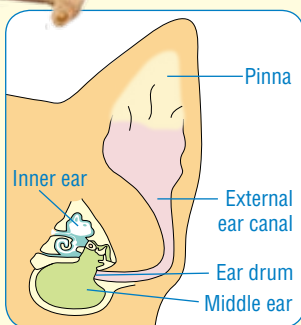
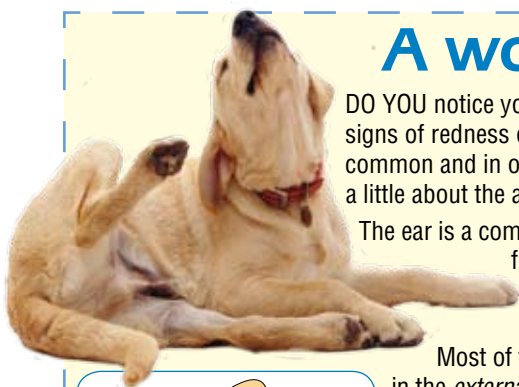
DO YOU notice your pets scratching their ears? Are there any signs of redness or discharge? Ear problems are surprisingly common and in order to understand them better we need to know a little about the anatomy of the ear.

The ear is a complex structure protected externally by a pinna (or flap). A narrow external ear canal carries sound down to the ear drum, where it passes onto the middle and inner ear.

Most of the ear problems seen in dogs and cats occur in the *external* ear canal – a condition called **otitis externa** (or canker). Symptoms commonly include **ear rubbing**, **head shaking** and **reddened skin** lining the ear canal. This is often accompanied by a **discharge** which may be foul smelling.

There are several underlying causes of otitis externa including **ear mite** infestation (common in puppies and kittens – see article right), trapped **foreign bodies** (such as grass seeds) and localised inflammation of the skin lining the ear canals – often seen as part of a more generalised **allergic skin** condition.

The key to success with otitis externa is *early* diagnosis of the underlying cause and effective treatment. Please come and see us if you are at all worried about your pet's ears.



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