

The Clock Ticks By....

ORCHARD
VETERINARY CENTRE

news

Winter 2022/23

Practice life has certainly been very busy during 2022, and with winter now ahead, we look forward to those cosy cuddly evenings with our pets and brisk walks in the chilly air. Your pets are our number one priority and we always work towards helping them live healthier and longer lives.

There is so much we can do to help your pets enjoy a good quality of life during each life-stage. A combination of preventative healthcare, a good diet, regular exercise, and the ever-increasing advancement of medical care now available, means that your pets are living much longer than in the past.

One Step Ahead Young, middle-aged or old, there will be constant yet subtle changes in your pet's physical condition. You may see a little weight gain or incontinence, but others are not visible like sore joints, failing eyesight or loss of hearing. Organs such as the heart, kidneys, liver or thyroid glands may not work as well as they used to. Don't wait for your pet to show signs of illness; be prepared by being one step ahead. Have a chat with our team, as they can best advise about tests and changes you can make to accommodate your pet's ageing process, especially as they enter the senior and geriatric stage.

Regular health and blood checks can help identify problems in their early stages.

Examinations to check out the condition of their teeth, skin, weight, eyes and ears.

Simple blood & urine tests help identify diabetes, hyperthyroidism, arthritis or how well their organs are functioning.

If results show your pet is developing a condition, we can discuss the many forms of treatment that modern veterinary medicine now provides. Not all conditions can be cured, but lifestyle changes or medication may help to improve your pets' quality of life.

Eating is probably one of your pet's favourite pastimes, but.....

- ✓ **Is it right for your pet?**
- ✓ **Will it suit their age or any medical conditions?**
- ✓ **Is your pet allergic to any ingredient?**

It is important that what your pet eats suits their needs, so book an appointment with us to discuss which food would best benefit your cat or dog to help keep them healthy and maintain a good weight.

Our pets give us so much pleasure and love throughout their lives, and ask for very little in return.

Being loved, hugs, walks, food and a comfy bed, are probably all their hearts desire, but we can do so much more. Whatever age your pet is, be aware of their different needs as the clock ticks by to help them enjoy an even better life!



Fond Farewell

It is with great sadness that we announce the departure of our senior vet Alison.

Ally has been with us for 14 years and in that time has become a firm favourite amongst many of our clients. Having made the decision to take up a role closer to her home in Hereford, Ally hopes to be able to spend more time with her family, especially her 9-year-old daughter.

We wish her every happiness for the future and know that she will be greatly missed by you, as well as us here at Orchard Vets.

"I have really loved being part of the Orchard team for the last 14 years. I've had the privilege of working with caring, professional and competent people – vets, the nursing team and support staff – all of who have become lifelong friends. We've had many laughs along the way. I am looking forward to a new chapter – an exciting and different role closer to home and family. Finally, I feel extremely lucky to have met every single client and shared the love (and kisses!) of their furry family members. Thank you and I'll miss you." Ally



HOURS

410 Birchfield Lane

OLDBURY

B69 1AD

0121 544 0404

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm

Sat 8:30am - 12:30pm

Home Farm

Northfield Road

HARBORNE

B17 0TD

0121 428 1777

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm

210 Holyhead Road

WEDNESBURY

WS10 7DH

0121 556 6890

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm

www.orchardvets.co.uk



Most of us have experienced the feelings of stress or anxiousness and our pets are no different. There are many reasons, so you may have to do a little investigation to identify the underlying cause. For some pets it can be when left **alone at home**, during **fireworks**, **thunderstorms**, **car travel**, in **public places** or even because of a **noisy household**. None of us like to see our pets unhappy and hiding in the corner or shaking. If you have a rather anxious pet, you could consider some aids that may help to ease your pet's tense feelings. There are products from calming **pheromone plug-in diffusers** to special **thunder shirts**. Even an **animal behaviourist** could be the answer to your pet's problem. **Pheromone diffusers** can help to build up a calming atmosphere by emitting a comforting scent similar to the soothing pheromones produced by nursing animal mums to babies.

Sprays and collars are also available, which can be helpful for car travel and visits to the vet.

Thunder Shirts are worn by your pet, and designed to put gentle pressure on the body to mimic the feeling of being hugged to help create a calming effect.

A Safe Haven for your pet to disappear to for 'time out' that is in a quieter part of the house, with a cosy bed and a piece of your clothing for a comforting scent.

It can take preparation and time for the results to show. You may even need to try a few before finding the correct one for your pet, but we have lots of help and suggestions. Our friendly team will be happy to discuss your concerns and which treatments may best suit your dog or cat to help them keep calm.

Danger.... Chocolate!



Oh my..... with winter and the festive season, there's going to be plenty of this around!

We have covered the dangers of chocolate before, but there are always new pet owners out there that are unaware of just how serious chocolate poisoning can be, should their dog eat chocolate in any form.

Chocolate is toxic to dogs as it contains **theobromine**, which their systems do not easily break down.

The effects of chocolate poisoning will differ depending on - quantity ~ when it was eaten ~ type ~ size/weight of your dog.

If you see or even suspect your pet has eaten chocolate no matter how little, **please immediately contact your vet** for advice. The quicker action is taken the better.

When you call and if possible, please have the following information ready....

1. When and how much was eaten.
2. What type e.g. dark, milk, cake, hot chocolate powder, biscuits etc.
3. Packaging for content information.

Symptoms of Chocolate Poisoning

**Vomiting - Diarrhoea - Drooling
Increased Thirst - Seizures - Collapse
Muscle Tremors or Twitching
Agitation - Increased Heart Rate**

- X Never feed your dog chocolate.**
- X Never leave chocolate lying around.**
- X Never think a little will be ok.**
- X Ensure all household members especially children are aware.**

Keep your Chips Hot!

Hot chips are just the best when you are hungry, but these are not the only 'chips' that need to be at their best to hit the spot. The microchips that identify your pets need to be hot too, and that means ensuring that all the details are up to date!

If old details are stored, then you sadly run the risk of not being reunited with your pet should he or she become lost.

Have you

- ☛ **moved recently?**
- ☛ **changed email address or phone numbers?**
- ☛ **updated these details on the national database?**

It only takes a short time to amend to keep your pet's record piping hot, so check all is correct....now!

If you are not sure how to do this, just give us a call and we will do our best to help.

Wintry Walkies!

There's a little chill in the air now, so you may need to wrap up more for the daily dog walk, but it's certainly good to have some fresh air and get those leg muscles working.... the four and two-legged kind! Some of you may walk early morning and others late afternoon, which can mean it might be rather dusky as the sun rises or sets.

It is important that you and your dog are visible, so to help keep you safe, consider reflective clothing for you both. Should your pet be having a run around off lead whether in the countryside or town park, there are also lighted collars and harnesses to help you and others see your dog in darker conditions. Even on an early winter afternoon visibility can be very poor, so an 'illuminated' pet is a real bonus!

On your wintry walks remember -

- ❄ **When walking past frozen ponds or rivers to keep your dog on the lead as their weight could cause the ice to break.**
- ❄ **Salt and grit on icy pavements are an irritant to paws, so ensure you give all four paws a good wash on returning home.**
- ❄ **Antifreeze for cars tastes sweet to pets, but is potentially fatal if swallowed. Please don't let your pet drink from puddles.**

