

# Exercise....

# ORCHARD

VETERINARY CENTRE



Winter  
2017/18

# news

Love it or hate, we all need exercise to help keep us healthy and maintain a good weight, including our pets too! Exercise should suit the age, breed, lifestyle and medical condition of your pet.

**Cats** Infamously known for their sedate, sleepy life, but it is just as important to maintain their weight and encourage exercise. Some cats enjoy an outdoor life of chasing leaves and climbing trees, but others are more 'home birds'.

## Tips to encourage exercise

### Cats love empty boxes!

A variety of shapes and sizes with holes cut out, will create a good 'leaping and jumping through' exercise area.

Lightly screwed up tissue paper creates a lovely noise when chased round the room.

Tiered climbing levels and scratching posts provide exercise and entertainment for cats.

Roll a small cardboard tube across the floor for chasing.

Ribbon, string or shoelace tied to a stick and gently waved, encourages play. However, please be aware that these play items can be choking hazards. If swallowed, they could cause a blockage in the throat or intestines. Pack away after play, and supervise your kitten or cat during exercise time.

**Dogs** When the lead appears there is usually no lack of enthusiasm on their part for walks! Although at times it may be wet, windy and cold, and staying in the warm is more enticing, as pet owners we do have a responsibility to provide regular exercise for our dogs. In the great outdoors, your dog can enjoy investigating the exciting scents, generally have fun, meet other canine friends and play ball. Please be careful throwing sticks for play. Sadly we have seen some horrific injuries, where they have become lodged in the mouth or throat, ending up with lengthy operations to remove stick and splinters!

## Summer exam results are in!

Our congratulations go to **Hannah** and **Alison**, our trainee veterinary nurses, who have both passed their first year of vet nursing! Also to **Elissia** who has passed her first-year exams towards an MSc in Clinical Animal Behaviour at the University of Lincoln.

Last but by no means least, a big 'Well Done' to **Charlotte** who has added honours to the veterinary nursing degree she was awarded in 2016.

Meanwhile **Natalie**, our Senior Wednesbury VN, has completed a certificate to become an 'Oral Care Nurse'. She is now able to give an in-depth assessment of your pet's teeth and offer advice. As part of her assessment she produced a wonderful, informative display on why oral care is so important in our pets, which is now on show at our Wednesbury surgery.

## Dental X-Rays!

At Orchard vets we want to provide the best care for your pets, so we have invested in a dental x-ray service. The tooth that you can see when your pet opens their mouth is only the tip of the iceberg! 60-70% of the tooth is hidden from sight; we often call this the root. X-rays give us valuable information about each tooth and possible problems that may be occurring. X-rays help us identify root destruction and tooth root abscesses without the need for intrusive, exploratory dental surgery. **Kelly** and **Alan** have both undertaken specialist x-ray training and can provide this service for your pets from our Wednesbury surgery.

The service is free to those on our health scheme with classic and complete care, while those with critical care receive 20% off.

*If you want to discuss how to best care for your pet's teeth, give us a call to arrange a free dental check with one of our veterinary nurses.*



Have fun and enjoy exercising your pet. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call us. Our free nurse clinics offer friendly and informative advice on suitable exercise, nutrition and provide regular weigh-ins to keep a check on your pet's weight.



## HOURS

Church Street

**OLDBURY**

B69 3AF

**0121 544 0404**

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

Saturday 11.30am - 1pm

Home Farm

Northfield Road

**HARBORNE**

B17 0TD

**0121 428 1777**

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

Saturday 2.30pm - 3.30pm

210 Holyhead Road

**WEDNESBURY**

WS10 7DH

**0121 556 6890**

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

Saturday 9am - 10.30am



## A Kiss Under the Mistletoe

Ancient Druids and Norse Mythology tell stories of this seasonal plant, but unfortunately the truth for your pet....it's poisonous!

**Mistletoe and berries**, fresh or dried, contain substances that are toxic. **If ingested, this can cause severe intestinal upset, a sudden drop in blood pressure and breathing difficulties.** Sadly in some cases this can be fatal.

**Holly and berries** are also toxic, so either avoid having holly and mistletoe in your home, or keep these plants well out of reach from cats and dogs!

**If you notice any of these signs** or suspect ingestion of either plant, please contact your vet immediately.

**Excessive Drooling - Vomiting - Diarrhoea  
Stomach Pain - Seizures**

**Poinsettias** can also cause problems, but the level of toxicity is milder. However, extra care is required if these plants are in your home. The white sap found in Poinsettias irritates the skin, mouth and throat, causing redness, itching and swelling. Puppies, kittens, and smaller breeds are more at risk, as their size and the amount of plant ingested, will determine the seriousness of poisoning.

**If ingested it may cause:  
vomiting, diarrhoea, drooling and lip licking.**

Again, always contact your vet immediately if your pet shows any of these signs.



## Buster Collars

If your pet has stitches, a wound, skin problem, bandage or even a plaster cast, we may recommend that your cat or dog wears a buster collar. Without one, they could reach the area, especially when you are not looking, which needs to be protected against scratching feet, licking tongues and nibbling teeth. It has been known for stitches to be removed, plaster casts demolished, skin licked raw and bacteria spread to cause infection. It is important to keep the area as dry and germ free as possible to aid speedy recovery, and that is where the buster collar helps! Some pets cope reasonably well with the plastic cone, while for others it can be a stressful, disorientating time, and for the owner too! Recently though, friendlier options have become available.

*Lucy was admitted for two small lump removals, which involved stitches to her elbow area and back, both easily reached to lick and nibble! She is a little nervous at times, so it was decided that an inflatable neck collar might be more beneficial to her temperament, and it certainly was! Lucy was happy to wear the collar all day and actually used it as a pillow at night!*

Please ask a member of our nurse team to discuss a suitable collar for your pet.



## Five Top Tips for Firework Fright

1. Create a safe haven for your dog or cat in one room of your house.
2. Keep your pets indoors.
3. Do not comfort your pet. A hard one we know, but it can reinforce their worry.
4. NEVER punish or scold a fearful pet. Playing a game during the whizzes and bangs can encourage confidence.
5. Use a pheromone diffuser or spray.

Preparing in advance to combat Firework Fright is best. We are here with plenty of help for nervous pets and advice for owners, so please call us now to discuss the appropriate therapy for your pet.

