



## In this edition!

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### Kennel Cough

Kennel cough, also known as canine infectious cough, can be caused by several different viruses and bacteria. It doesn't tend to cause serious illness for most dogs but can cause a nasty, honking cough and is very contagious.

We offer vaccination against the main causes of kennel cough in addition to your dog's core, annual vaccinations. We strongly recommend that your dog receives the kennel cough vaccination. The name "kennel cough" is misleading as your dog can catch it anywhere where they are around a lot of other dogs, and not just in kennels, such as at the park, day care, shows or competitions.

To minimise the risk, yearly vaccination is required, and vaccines should be given at least three weeks before your dog goes into kennels.



### Summer Heat

Summer heat is always welcome, but it does present potential problems for your dog! Here's some quick tips on how to prevent them from getting heatstroke:



- Avoid exercise during the hottest parts of the day - go out in the early morning or late evening.
- Don't walk on hot surfaces such as sand and tarmac paths - if a surface is too hot to hold your hand against, it's too hot to walk on! Keep dogs cool by soaking their underside from chin to tail with water which is cool but not cold.
- Ensure your dog always has access to water and make sure to take enough with you- a large breed dog could need several litres to stay hydrated in warm weather.
- Choose outdoor activities where there is access to shade.
- Use a pet safe sunscreen on thinly haired areas such as the ears and bridge of the nose, try to avoid using on areas which the pet can lick it off, and remember those sneaky cat paws can reach most areas.
- Never leave your dog in a car during warm weather under any circumstances!

### Microchipping

Microchipping is the best way to ensure that your pet can be returned to you if they are lost or stolen - provided your details are up to date with the microchip company. While collars and tags can be lost or removed, microchips are both safe and permanent.

Many pets can be microchipped, including dogs, cats, rabbits and a variety of other species. It is a legal requirement for all dogs over the age of eight weeks old to be microchipped and for their details to be kept up to date, and you can be fined if you do not ensure this is done, with the same regulations being planned for cats.

Microchipping is a quick and simple process, and once the chip is implanted it is painless and your pet will not know it is there. We will help you to register the microchip with the correct database to ensure your contact details are linked to the chip number for future use.

If your pet is found by anyone, a professional such as a vet or a dog warden will scan the microchip and be given a 15-digit code, which can then be searched on the microchip database. Providing you have kept your contact details up to date, this will enable you to be reunited with your pet!





## Travelling with Pets



Travelling with your pet can be stressful at the best of times, but in the summer, with the added heat and dehydration concerns, it's vital that you have a plan before you set off.

**Here's a few things to think about which could make your life easier:**

Get your pet used to travelling before taking long journeys, from sitting in the car with the engine off, to turning the engine on, through to smaller journeys – with lots of praise and treats throughout!

Speaking of which, a good supply of treats is always a good idea. Even more important, make sure you have plenty of water with you to avoid dehydration. If your pet is a nervous traveller, pheromone sprays or familiar blankets from home can help to keep them calm. Providing a comfortable bed which offers grip, will make your pet feel more secure when you are on the move.

Make sure their carrier, cage or harness is secure. Not only will this keep your pet safe, but if you are found not following this guidance by the police, you may be fined, while your insurance may also be invalidated in the event of an accident.

Remember that hot weather will make the car more unpleasant for your pet. Keep windows open, bring lots of water and take lots of breaks. Never leave your pet alone in a hot car for any length of time.

## Flystrike

Flystrike is a life-threatening condition, caused by blue and green bottles (blow-fly) laying eggs on rabbits, which hatch into maggots and begin to feed on the rabbit's flesh. This can rapidly cause severe injury to our rabbits, and if the damage becomes too bad to treat, sadly euthanasia may be the kindest option.

Both indoor and outdoor rabbits are at risk, while rabbits who are overweight, have an underlying illness, stiff and painful joints, are unable to clean themselves or eat the softer stools as nature intended are at increased risk. This causes faeces to build up around the rabbit's back end and attracts flies.

Faeces, urine and blood all attract flies so it is crucial that you keep your rabbit clean, and that any wounds are treated immediately. Any urine or faeces seen on the back end or underside of a rabbit are abnormal and usually have an underlying cause, reach out to the practice if you notice these conditions. Their housing should be cleaned regularly, and any fresh, uneaten food should be cleaned up to discourage flies.

Flystrike can happen at any time of the year, but we do see cases most frequently during the summer. Therefore, during warm weather, you should check your rabbits all over twice daily for signs of wet patches, urine, faeces, eggs or maggots. Pay special attention to their bottom, above the tail and around the face.

Other than actually spotting maggots, symptoms can include your rabbit being quiet or withdrawn, eating less, wet or patchy hair loss sometimes with open wounds, and eventually collapse.

If you suspect that your rabbit has flystrike you need to contact us immediately. Thankfully, we are able to prevent flystrike with a treatment which will last for eight weeks- get in touch with us for more information. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask as it is crucial that we keep our bunnies safe!

