

Ear Disease In Dogs

What do ears do?

Ears are very important organs for not only hearing but for maintaining balance and expressing behaviour.

Anatomy of the ear

The ear is split into three parts:

1. External ear - ear flap (pinna) and ear canal
2. Middle ear - ear drum (as well as eustachian tube and auditory ossicles)
3. Inner ear - lies inside the skull

Symptoms of ear problems

Ear problems can be accompanied by many symptoms, including head shaking, rubbing/scratching the ears, excess wax or crusting, pain and redness of the ear, deafness, horrible smell, discharge from the ear and swelling of the ear flap (aural haematoma).

Causes of ear problems

Ear problems can be caused by many different things, the most common include:

- **Allergies** - pets may show itching and sore skin in other places, and can be allergic to many things e.g. grasses, foods and mites
- **Excess wax production** - similar to some humans, some dogs can produce too much wax and need their ears cleaned more regularly
- **Infections** - the ear is a warm and moist environment which allows bacteria and fungi to thrive
- **Grass seeds** - grass seeds can easily get stuck down a dog's ear and travel further down the canal causing irritation
- **Ear mites** - these are little parasites that live in the ear, particularly in young animals

- **Harvest mites** - noticed as little orange specks of larvae on the ears, face and feet

As a result of head shaking and scratching, dogs can also get an **aural haematoma**, which is when the ear flap fills up with blood. This needs veterinary attention as often needs drainage or surgery to fix.

What can you do at home?

Not all pets will need their ears cleaned regularly, so it is a good idea to get your vet to check the ears at the annual vaccination to ensure the ear canals are clean. It is also important to use the correct equipment - **NEVER** use cotton buds.

Step by step guide to ear cleaning:

1. Have a helping hand to restrain your pet
2. Hold the ear flap with one hand so you can see the opening of the ear canal
3. Squeeze a few drops of the cleaner down the canal, and gently massage the base until you can hear a squelching noise
4. Use small balls of cotton wool to wipe away the excess wax that comes to the surface of the ear
5. Reward your pet so they don't associate ear cleaning with a negative experience

Body Condition Score For Dogs

For guidance on how to use a Body Condition Score please see <https://royalcanin.co.uk/body-condition-score/>

BODY CONDITION SCORE TOY DOG

TOO THIN

1

- Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance
- No discernible body fat
- Obvious loss of muscle mass

2

- Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, and pelvic bones easily visible
- No palpable fat
- Some bony prominences visible from a distance
- Minimal loss of muscle mass

3

- Ribs easily palpable and may be visible with no palpable fat
- Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible, pelvic bones becoming prominent
- Obvious waist and abdominal tuck

IDEAL

4

- Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering
- Waist easily noted when viewed from above
- Abdominal tuck evident

5

- Ribs palpable without excess fat covering
- Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above
- Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side

6

- Ribs palpable with slight excess of fat covering
- Waist is discernible when viewed from above but is not prominent
- Abdominal tuck apparent

OVERWEIGHT

7

- Ribs palpable with difficulty, heavy fat cover
- Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail
- Waist absent or barely visible
- Abdominal tuck may be absent

8

- Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover or palpable only with significant pressure
- Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail
- Waist absent
- No abdominal tuck
- Obvious abdominal distension may be present

9

- Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine, and base of tail
- Waist and abdominal tuck absent
- Fat deposits on neck and limbs
- Obvious abdominal distension

TOY DOG

BODY CONDITION SCORE SMALL DOG

TOO THIN

1

- Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance
- No discernible body fat
- Obvious loss of muscle mass

2

- Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, and pelvic bones easily visible
- No palpable fat
- Some bony prominences visible from a distance
- Minimal loss of muscle mass

3

- Ribs easily palpable and may be visible with no palpable fat
- Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible, pelvic bones becoming prominent
- Obvious waist and abdominal tuck

IDEAL

4

- Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering
- Waist easily noted when viewed from above
- Abdominal tuck evident

5

- Ribs palpable without excess fat covering
- Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above
- Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side

6

- Ribs palpable with slight excess of fat covering
- Waist is discernible when viewed from above but is not prominent
- Abdominal tuck apparent

OVERWEIGHT

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- Ribs palpable with difficulty, heavy fat cover
- Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail
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- No abdominal tuck
- Obvious abdominal distension may be present

9

- Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine, and base of tail
- Waist and abdominal tuck absent
- Fat deposits on neck and limbs
- Obvious abdominal distension

SMALL DOG

BODY CONDITION SCORE MEDIUM DOG

TOO THIN		
  <p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance No discernible body fat Obvious loss of muscle mass 	  <p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, and pelvic bones easily visible No palpable fat Some bony prominences visible from a distance Minimal loss of muscle mass 	  <p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs easily palpable and may be visible with no palpable fat Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible, pelvic bones becoming prominent Obvious waist and abdominal tuck
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  <p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering Waist easily noted when viewed from above Abdominal tuck evident 	  <p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs palpable without excess fat covering Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side 	  <p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs palpable with slight excess of fat covering Waist is discernible when viewed from above but is not prominent Abdominal tuck apparent
OVERWEIGHT	OBESE	
  <p>7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs palpable with difficulty, heavy fat cover Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail Waist absent or barely visible Abdominal tuck may be absent 	  <p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover or palpable only with significant pressure Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail Waist absent No abdominal tuck Obvious abdominal distension may be present 	  <p>9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine, and base of tail Waist and abdominal tuck absent Fat deposits on neck and limbs Obvious abdominal distension

MEDIUM DOG

BODY CONDITION SCORE LARGE DOG

TOO THIN		
  <p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance No discernible body fat Obvious loss of muscle mass 	  <p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, and pelvic bones easily visible No palpable fat Some bony prominences visible from a distance Minimal loss of muscle mass 	  <p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribs easily palpable and may be visible with no palpable fat Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible, pelvic bones becoming prominent Obvious waist and abdominal tuck
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LARGE DOG

Pyometra

What is a pyometra?

This is a potentially life threatening condition which requires immediate veterinary treatment.

Pyometra is an infection of the lining of the uterus which often occurs shortly after oestrus (heat or season). Following a normal oestrus, progesterone levels remain increased for 8-10 weeks to prepare the uterus lining for a potential pregnancy.

If pregnancy does not happen, the progesterone levels do not return to normal and the lining continues to thicken, forming cysts. These cysts produce fluid which creates the ideal environment for bacteria to develop.

The cervix, which is the entrance to the uterus, usually remains closed unless oestrus is occurring. While the cervix is open, bacteria which normally live in the vagina will enter the uterus. Normally these bacteria won't survive, but in a thickened uterus with the ideal environment created for bacteria they will thrive. Due to the thickening of the uterus it is also unable to contract fully and expel the bacteria.

Pyometra can occur in any unneutered dog or cat. It is more commonly seen in middle aged to older dogs, although young dogs are also susceptible. It occurs rarely in cats.

Older dogs which have had many oestrus cycles without a pregnancy, have the perfect uterine wall to promote this disease. It usually occurs 4-8 weeks after oestrus.

Clinical signs

These can vary considerably so you should always seek veterinary treatment.

- Lack of appetite
- Increased thirst
- Lethargic
- Temperature

If the cervix is open allowing drainage you will see a pussy, vulval discharge which is usually foul smelling. Your dog will often be continually cleaning her back end. This is called an open pyometra.

If the cervix is closed the pus continues to build up without draining causing the dog to become seriously ill, extremely quickly.

Diagnosis

A full clinical examination is performed by your veterinary surgeon. Pyometra is often suspected if the dog is not neutered, drinking more and has a vulval discharge, 4-8 weeks after oestrus. A blood sample may be collected and X-rays or an ultrasound scan may be performed to confirm the diagnosis.

Treatment

The most recommended option for treatment is surgery to remove the infected uterus and ovaries- an ovariohysterectomy or spay. Depending on the severity of the infection, your dog may need to be stabilised first using intravenous fluids and antibiotics, prior to surgery. Although the surgery being performed is a neutering operation, the surgery is much more complicated due to the enlarged and weakened uterus. It must be removed without rupturing to prevent the pus from leaking into the abdomen. Additionally there is always an increased anaesthetic risk when the patient is unwell. This is one of the reasons why veterinary surgeons always recommend spaying your dog at an early age when they are young, fit and healthy!

Medical treatment for pyometra is possible using injections containing prostaglandins which reduce the progesterone levels. This causes the cervix to open and expel the pussy contents of the uterus. Medical treatment for pyometra can be expensive especially in large dogs. It is not always effective and surgery may still be necessary.

Medical treatment can be considered for young bitches from whom the owner would like to consider breeding from at subsequent seasons. It can also be considered for older bitches where general anaesthesia and surgery is considered inadvisable.

Your veterinary surgeon will discuss the best course of treatment for your pet. If you do not seek any treatment for your pet suffering from a pyometra the outcome will potentially be fatal.

Poisons

Antifreeze (Ethylene Glycol)

During the winter months antifreeze is often used during the cold weather along with screen washes and de-icers. These products contain ethylene glycol or methanol which are poisonous but unfortunately appear quite palatable to our pets.

Pet owners and people who use these products should ensure that they are stored well out of the reach of pets and in secure sealed containers. Numerous poisoning cases especially in cats occur because antifreeze has been left outside for cats to drink in people's gardens.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Loss of balance/unable to walk properly
- Vomiting
- Depression
- Breathing difficulties
- Convulsions/severe twitching
- Kidney damage

You should seek immediate veterinary treatment if you suspect your cat has been exposed to ethylene glycol. Symptoms can start within 30 minutes of ingesting ethylene glycol but it can take a couple of days before kidney failure is seen. Unfortunately treatment is not always successful and euthanasia can be the kindest option.

Useful Links:

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Ethylene Glycol Poisoning](#)

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Household Products](#)

Chocolate (Theobromine)

Chocolate is one of the most common causes of poisoning in dogs. Generally the higher the percentage of cocoa or the darker the chocolate is the more poisonous it is to dogs. Chocolate contains a stimulant called theobromine and in large quantities this can cause problems with their heart and central nervous system. Dogs should never be given chocolate as a treat and all chocolate should be kept well out of the way from inquisitive dogs.

Signs of poisoning include:

- An increase in thirst
- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Hyperactivity
- High temperature and blood pressure
- Abnormal heart rhythm and tremors
- Seizures
- Coma and death

If you suspect that your dog has eaten chocolate and you are concerned please contact your vet immediately. Make sure you have the details of the chocolate consumed to hand as this will help your vet calculate whether the amount that has been consumed is toxic or not.

Useful Links:

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet -Chocolate](#)

Grapes and Raisins

It is not very well known among pet owners that these fruits can be poisonous and many people do give them routinely as treats. It is not known why grapes and raisins can be poisonous to some dogs but it has been found that in certain quantities dogs developed acute kidney failure.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Vomiting and diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain
- Anorexia (not eating)
- Depression
- Acute renal failure

You should seek immediate veterinary advice if you suspect your dog has ingested a quantity of grapes or raisins and you are concerned.

Useful Links:

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Grapes and Dried Fruit](#)

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Harmful Foods](#)

Human Pain Relief Medications

Pet owners often give human painkilling medication to their pets in an attempt to relieve pain without seeking advice from a veterinary surgeon. Human preparations should not be given to animals as this is highly dangerous, especially for cats as just one paracetamol tablet is enough to cause severe illness or death. On occasion dogs have been poisoned by ingesting Ibuprofen and other pain relief tablets that have been left within their reach.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Depression
- Vomiting
- Swelling
- Bleeding from the gut
- Severe stomach ulceration
- Kidney and liver failure

You should seek immediate veterinary treatment if you have administered or your pet has ingested any human medical preparations.

Useful Links:

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Ibuprofen](#)

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Paracetamol Poisoning In Dogs](#)

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Paracetamol Poisoning In Cats](#)

[Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Human Medicines](#)

Lillies

Although lilies are very pretty flowers to look at and have in our gardens and homes, they are extremely toxic to our pets, especially cats. This can include the Easter, Stargazer, Tiger and Asiatic lilies. Kittens can be prone to being poisoned by them due to their naturally inquisitive behaviour and habit of eating things. Older cats are at just as much risk from lilly poisoning when they brush against the flowers causing pollen to rub off on their coats. This is then ingested when they groom themselves. As little as one leaf can cause kidney failure in a cat.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Vomiting
- Anorexia (not eating)
- Depression
- Respiratory problems
- Paralysis
- Seizures
- Kidney damage

You should seek immediate veterinary treatment if you suspect your cat has ingested any part of a lilly. Check the labels on the flowers for warnings of toxicity to animals.

Useful Links:

Onions and Garlic

These ingredients regularly feature in our own food but can be toxic to dogs and cats. They contain a chemical compounds which provide the odour and taste we associate with these foods. If your pet absorbs these chemicals it can cause damage to their red blood cells resulting in a life threatening condition called haemolytic anaemia. Any type of onion or garlic product can cause a problem for pets, cooked or not. Poisoning usually occurs after a large quantity is ingested or if repeatedly eaten at regular intervals. Symptoms can be seen within 24 hours but it is more common to occur over a few days.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Depression
- Weakness
- Anorexia (not eating)
- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal pain

You should seek immediate veterinary treatment if you suspect your dog has ingested onions or garlic and you are concerned.

Rat Bait

This is a relatively common type of poisoning. Typical ingredients include warfarin and bromadiolone. These anticoagulant rodenticides do not produce signs of poisoning for several days after it has been ingested and they cause internal bleeding which can be fatal. The rat bait interferes with the body's ability to produce clotting factors.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Weakness
- Pale gums and lips
- Nose bleeds
- Bloody urine and faeces
- Bruising on their body

You should seek immediate veterinary treatment if you suspect your pet has ingested rat bait. Remember to ensure you take the container or details of the ingredients in the bait as this is vital information for your veterinary surgeon.

Useful Links:

Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Rat Bait

Slug/Snail Bait (Metaldehyde)

Metaldehyde, the common ingredient in some slug baits is an extremely serious type of poisoning and is usually fatal without urgent emergency treatment. Pets are attracted to the bait due to the resemblance to kibble.

Signs of poisoning include:

- Salivation
- Twitching
- Convulsions
- Loss of balance
- Fever
- Fast heart rate
- Respiratory failure

You should seek immediate veterinary treatment if you suspect your pet has ingested slug bait. Remember to ensure you take the container or details of the ingredients in the bait as this is vital information for your veterinary surgeon. You should never use slug bait containing Metaldehyde if you have pets.

Useful Links:

Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Slug Bait

Veterinary Poisons Information Leaflet - Pesticides and Garden Products

Pet Insurance

People tend to think it's only older pets that get ill and therefore younger pets don't need pet insurance but we know from the patients we see each day that that is not the case.

In fact, the younger your pet is when you insure them the better as it means you are less likely to have any existing conditions, which may not be covered by the policy and you can then receive more help covering the cost of any future treatment your pet needs.

It is important to note that not all pet insurance is the same. There are many different types of policy available and the level of cover provided can vary considerably. The four main types of policy are as follows:

Accident: provides cover for accidents only and no cover for illness

Time-Limited: provides cover for a set amount of time (usually 12 months) and after this period the condition is excluded

Maximum Benefit: provides cover up to a maximum amount of money per condition and once this limit is reached the condition is excluded

Lifetime: provides a set amount of money each year which is refreshed each time you renew your policy allowing you to continue to claim for ongoing conditions

As you can see from the information above, the type of policy you choose can have implications for the veterinary care of your pet and the costs you will face so it's important to choose the right cover. Sometimes, the cheapest insurance can cost you more in the long run. When shopping around for a policy, we suggest that you ask the following questions to allow you to compare the overall value you are getting, not just the price:

1. Does this policy cover congenital, hereditary, hip-related, dental and behavioral conditions?

2. Is there a time or monetary limit on how long this policy will cover ongoing conditions for?
3. If I claim, will my premium increase?

Unlike other forms of insurance it is not easy to switch pet insurance in the future as any pre-existing conditions your pet has are likely to be excluded so it's important to do your research and choose the right cover from the start.

Dog And Cat Pre Operative Castration Advice

Once you have made an appointment for your pet to be castrated, please offer a small meal at 10pm the night before the anaesthetic and then withhold any further food. Access to water should be allowed until they are ready to come into the surgery.

Once admitted they will be examined by your vet and given a health check. If your pet is fit and healthy a premedication injection will be given. This helps calm the body and prepare him for the general anaesthetic. The premedication can take 20 - 45 minutes to take effect and they will be slightly sleepy and relaxed.

Once your pet is ready, he will then be taken through to the Prep room. A small area of hair is clipped from his leg, an intravenous catheter is placed and a general anaesthetic is injected into the vein.

An endotracheal tube is then placed into his trachea to maintain a clear airway for us to administer an oxygen/gaseous anaesthetic mix to keep him under anaesthetic.

Once asleep under anaesthetic he will be prepared for theatre. His veterinary nurse monitors the anaesthetic while shaving an area of hair from his testicles. Once the hair has been shaved the area is then cleaned using an antiseptic soap. When all the dirt and hair has been removed a surgical spirit/antiseptic preparation is then applied to the operation site. This procedure is carried out to reduce any bacteria on the skin and provide a sterile operation site. All the hair will grow back in time. They are then transferred to theatre.

The nurse will carefully monitor the anaesthetic during the surgery. Your vet will perform the castration by firstly making an incision in front of the scrotum. Each testicle is then clamped, tied off with suture material and then removed. The skin is then sutured with dissolvable stitches. This is a **permanent and irreversible** procedure. Once your vet has completed the surgery the gaseous anaesthetic is switched off and your pet will be maintained on pure oxygen for a short period of time.

Once the veterinary nurse is happy, we will then disconnect the anaesthetic circuit and transport your pet to the Hospital Ward where the endotracheal tube is removed when ready. He is placed into a warm kennel and his recovery carefully monitored by the Hospital nurse (a qualified veterinary nurse). Once he is sitting up and alert, his intravenous catheter is removed and the Hospital nurse will contact you to update you on their progress and arrange a collection time. On discharge a veterinary nurse will explain all necessary post-operative care.

We will only discharge a patient when we feel they are fully awake and able to walk. Some pets take longer to fully recover than others and are treated on a case by case situation, so don't panic if a late

time is requested for collection.

The benefits of having your pet castrated:

- May improve unwanted behaviour (if castrated early)
- Decreases risk of prostatic disease
- Testicular tumours are prevented
- Reduced incidence of perianal tumours
- Reduced incidence of perianal hernia
- Stops dogs from running away after bitches in season

Dog And Cat Pre Operative Spay Advice

Once you have made an appointment for your pet to be spayed, please offer a small meal at 10pm the night before the procedure and then withhold any further food. Access to the drinking water should be allowed until they are ready to come into the surgery.

Once admitted they will be examined by your vet and given a health check. If your pet is fit and healthy a premedication injection will be given. This helps calm the body and prepare her for the general anaesthetic. The premedication can take 20 - 45 minutes to take effect and they will be slightly sleepy and relaxed.

Once your pet is ready she will then be taken through to the Prep room. A small area of hair is clipped from her leg, an intravenous catheter is placed and a general anaesthetic is injected into the vein.

An endotracheal tube is then placed into her trachea to maintain a clear airway for us to administer an oxygen/gaseous anaesthetic mix to maintain the correct level of anaesthesia.

Once asleep under anaesthetic she will be prepared for theatre. Her veterinary nurse monitors her anaesthetic while shaving an area of hair from her abdomen (dogs are shaved on their tummy). Once the hair has been shaved the area is then cleaned using an antiseptic soap. Once all the dirt and hair has been removed a surgical spirit/antiseptic preparation is then applied to the operation site. This procedure is carried out to reduce any bacteria on the skin and provide a sterile operation site. All the hair will grow back in time. They are then transferred to theatre.

The nurse will carefully monitor the anaesthetic during the surgery. Your vet will perform an ovariohysterectomy where the uterus and ovaries are removed. This is a **permanent and irreversible** procedure. Once your vet has completed the surgery the gaseous anaesthetic is switched off and your pet will be maintained on oxygen for a short period of time.

Once the veterinary nurse is happy, we will then disconnect the anaesthetic circuit and transport your pet to the Hospital Ward where the endotracheal tube is removed when ready. She is placed into a warm kennel and her recovery is carefully monitored by the Hospital nurse (a qualified veterinary nurse). Once she is sitting up and alert, her intravenous catheter is removed and the

Hospital nurse will contact you to update you on their progress and arrange a collection time. On discharge a veterinary nurse will explain all the necessary post-operative care.

We will only discharge a patient when we feel they are fully awake and are able to walk. Some pets take longer to fully recover than others and are treated on a case by case situation, so don't panic if a late time is requested for collection.

The benefits of having your pet spayed:

- No more seasons - therefore no unwanted male visitors
- No more smelly / bloody discharge
- No unwanted puppies/kittens
- Reduced incidence of mammary tumours
- No ovarian tumours
- Will not suffer from a pyometra (infection in the uterus where it fills with pus and can be life threatening)

Dog And Cat Neutering Post Operative Care

These instructions have been prepared to help you with your pet's recovery.

They will have had a general anaesthetic and hair may have been clipped from one or more of their legs. If a pre- anaesthetic blood test was performed, hair may have also been clipped in their neck region. The operation site will also have been clipped to enable us to prepare the site with maximum sterility.

Modern anaesthetics normally wear off within a few hours of a procedure, however you may notice that their eyes appear red or that they shun the light. This effect can last for up to 48 hours and is due to the pre-medication injections. They may also seem a little unsteady or drowsy and have a slight cough. This is because a tube is passed into their throat to maintain their anaesthetic and airway.

We recommend keeping them warm and quiet overnight and allow them to toilet in the garden on a lead. Following an anaesthetic they will require a light meal in the evening with water offered as normal.

During the procedure your pet will have received a pain killer injection and/or an antibiotic injection where required. Further medication may have been prescribed to give at home and it is extremely important that you follow the instructions on the medication label. If you believe they are uncomfortable or have any questions regarding the medication, please contact us to discuss the situation.

It is extremely important that your pet does not lick or interfere with the surgical wound. This can cause an infection or their wound to break down and a Buster Collar may be required to prevent this. A period of lead exercise or confinement indoors will be required for up to 10 days following the procedure.

Following a neutering procedure, weight gain can be a common side effect. Your veterinary nurse

will be able to advise on your pet's diet and the best way to prevent this.

Please feel free to ask if you have any questions at your post operative appointment.

If you are at all concerned about your pet please contact us as soon as possible.

Microchipping

Why microchip?

This is an extremely important way of identifying your pet should they ever go missing. We regularly have pets brought in to the surgery who have either strayed or been injured in a road traffic accident with no way of being able to find out who their owner might be. If these pets had been microchipped we would have been able to reunite them with their owner immediately.

Every year more than 300,000 pets are reported missing. They may go missing for a variety of reasons especially if they are particularly inquisitive! During the firework season, if pets are not kept inside they often become scared and disorientated due to the noise and easily become lost. Other pets may run off during thunderstorms or if they have recently moved areas they may wander too far from their new home. Some pets may even be stolen. Unfortunately in recent years there has been an increase in the number of pets especially dogs which are stolen, usually to breed from or to sell on in an attempt to make money. Because the microchip is a permanent form of identification it enables your pet to be returned to their rightful owner much more easily even after a long period of time.

It is a legal requirement to have your dog microchipped by 8 weeks of age and keep their contact details up to date with the database.

Implanting a microchip is quick, simple and very cost effective. It will give you the peace of mind that if your pet does become lost they have a form of identification which means you will be reunited much faster and may avoid the possibility of your pet being kept in a shelter or even rehomed.

How does it work?

A microchip is a small electronic device which is the size of a grain of rice. The chip is inserted in the loose skin of your pet's neck generally in between their shoulder blades. Depending on the species of your pet the area may be different. For example tortoises are microchipped in their hindlimb.

The chip contains a unique number which is read using a scanner. This number is registered to the national database. Once the chip has been inserted we will log all of your details via a registration form. This means that the number will be linked to your home address and contact numbers were your pet ever to go missing.

It is extremely important that you keep your contact details up to date with the database. If you move house or change your telephone number you must let them know in case they ever need to contact you if your pet goes missing.

Should your pet ever go missing and is found away from home all veterinary practices, animal charities and local authorities will have a scanner and be able to check your pet for a microchip. Once the number has been read, the database would be contacted to retrieve your details and you would then receive a call informing you of the whereabouts of your pet. Without this form of identification your pet may never be reunited with you.

Another benefit of having a microchip is that there are now cat flaps which read your pet's own unique number only allowing your pet to enter and leave the house. This is especially useful in preventing unwanted visitors!

If you would like any more information on the benefits of microchipping or to book an appointment please contact your local branch of Cinque Ports Vets.

Useful links:

www.tracer-microchips.co.uk

www.petlog.org.uk

www.petlog.org.uk/pet-owners/compulsory-microchipping-faqs-for-pet-owners/