



THE VET CLUB THE PET CLUB



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www.thevetclub.co.nz

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Vets

Dr Rachael Anderson

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Louise Hill

Welcome to our 4th edition of The Pet Club small animal newsletter. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the new members of our fully qualified small animal Nursing Team.



Our Head Nurse Paulette Brownlee is flanked on the left by Patricia Gleason and on the right by Isabella Felber. Patricia Gleason joined us in January 2009 having just completed her 2 year Diploma of Veterinary Nursing at Massey University. Originally from the USA, Patricia has spent 15 years working in animal conservation in the UK and Cameroon. Out of work she can be found biking or hiking on the many tracks around Rotorua. Isabella is also a Massey University Diploma graduate qualifying in 2007. She joined us in March 2009 after spending 2 years working at a busy mixed Opotiki Vet Practice. Isabella enjoys dirt biking with the lads or relaxing at the beach.

The clinic has recently purchased a second **IV INFUSION PUMP**. This pump allows us to accurately give intravenous fluids to our patients, which is especially important in our smaller patients such as cats and puppies. It also gives us more control of fluid rates during surgical procedures ensuring that a sufficient blood pressure is maintained while your pet is under anaesthesia.



IS YOUR CAT STRESSED?

Stress may occur when your cat is subjected to

- multi cat households
- aggressive neighbourhood cats
- moving house
- new person or pet in household.

A product called Feliway may help. It contains a natural pheromone that creates a feeling of calm and acceptance in cats. So if your cat is urine spraying, scratching, reluctant to play or showing other any other signs of stress why not give it a try.



WHAT'S NEW

CONVENIA INJECTABLE ANTIBIOTIC

Do you have a pet difficult to tablet or medicate?

A new injectable antibiotic has just arrived in NZ. Amazingly just one injection will last **14 DAYS**.

CONVENIA is most suitable for skin, soft tissue and bladder/urinary tract infections.

So next time your pet needs a course of antibiotics, ask the vet whether a **CONVENIA** injection would be suitable for your pet.





CASE OF THE MONTH

Meet Ollie, a 7 year old male dog shown here in the hospital receiving intravenous fluid through a catheter in his left foreleg. He presented with vomiting, lethargy and dehydration. X-rays of his abdomen caused concern that Ollie had eaten something that was upsetting and possibly blocking his gut.

Following a night's treatment of IV fluids, Ollie passed a large plum stone and started to feel much better! Luckily for Ollie he managed to pass his intestinal foreign body but a lot of our patients don't and require surgical removal under general anaesthetic. At the clinic we have surgically removed stones, corn cobs, balls, fishing hooks and sinkers, socks, plastic bags, milk bottle tops, cow ear tag and even pink batts! Just to name a few!

ARTHRITIS IN OUR PETS

Degenerative joint disease (DJD) or osteoarthritis is the number one cause of chronic pain in our pets. The condition occurs as the result of long term stresses on a previously injured or a poorly conformed joint. The early symptoms of osteoarthritis can be subtle and easy to miss.

They include

- reluctance to take walks of usual length
- difficulty rising, climbing stairs or jumping into the car or on to the sofa
- stiffness (that may disappear once the pet has warmed up)
- limping and an abnormal gait

More severe symptoms include pain or even aggression when touched, licking of a single joint, acting withdrawn and spending less time playing with the family.

The vet may be able to diagnose osteoarthritis on physical examination by finding thickened joints with reduced range of motion and pain on manipulation. Often X-rays are recommended to confirm the diagnosis and to allow assessment of the severity of the disease.

Unfortunately there is no cure for arthritis and the degenerative changes in the joint cannot be reversed. Treatment focuses on preventing and slowing the progression of the joint arthritis and cartilage damage. A multimodal approach to treatment is recommended, meaning that several different treatments combined, yield better results than any single treatment.

So what can we do to help our pets with arthritis?

1 – **Weight reduction.** If your pet is overweight, losing weight will help to reduce the stresses on affected joints and therefore will improve patient comfort

2 – **Controlled exercise.** Low impact, regular exercise is best, swimming and leash walking are ideal.

3 – **Neutraceuticals.** Glucosamine/chondroitin daily supplementation has been shown to be very beneficial in our arthritic pets. Various preparations are available such as powders, tablets and liquids. These products are safe dietary supplements that help to support cartilage structure as well as reducing joint inflammation. Most of these products such as Sashas blend, Mobilise and Amproflex also contain other

beneficial ingredients such as anti-oxidants, free radical scavengers and omega three fatty acids.

4 – **Injectable Chondroprotective Agent.** Your vet may recommend a course of injections containing glycosaminoglycans to treat your pet's arthritis. These injections, initially repeated weekly then every 3 to 6 months, have numerous beneficial effects, including stimulating cartilage repair and improving joint lubrication which helps to prevent further joint damage

5 – **Anti-inflammatory drugs.** Most commonly non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) are used to provide pain relief by reducing joint inflammation. Not all NSAIDs are safe in cats and dogs, so using one recommended by your vet is very important.

6 – **Acupuncture and massage therapy.** May provide additional non-drug pain control in some cases.



Here is a nice comparison of hip joints. The x-ray below is a normal hip. You can see how smooth and round the head of the femur is and how nicely the "ball" fits into the "socket". A hip with this structure is very unlikely to ever develop arthritis...unlike the abnormal hips above. Here you can see the result of years of irritation resulting from a poor fit, almost absent "socket", and a short neck attaching the disfigured "ball" to the shaft of the femur. This severe arthritis is a result of HIP DYSPLASIA

