



4 PAWS VET

NEWSLETTER Summer 2011/12

STAFF NEWS

- We are delighted to welcome back vet Laura Moore who has recently returned to 4 Paws after a stint in Byron Bay. It is a pleasure to have her back on our team.
- We now have 2 AQIS accredited vets on our team at 4 Paws. Both Ian and Nathan are now able to help you with your move overseas.

Special Ultrasound service is available at 4 Paws

Ultrasound provides many benefits for your pets - safety and non-invasiveness, its ability to tell us about what is going on inside an organ, and the fact that we can watch motion of those organs in 2-dimensional cross-section without using a scalpel!

Do ultrasounds hurt or cause stress?

On the contrary, pets often enjoy being scanned – they get to lie on the table with a nurse patting them and the lights dimmed – so much so that most do not need to be sedated! The probe only requires light contact on the skin with ultrasound gel so it is a pain-free exercise (if your pet already has a sore abdomen we would provide pain relief and possibly sedation before the scan)

Why do I have to fast my pet before a scan? The liver, pancreas, kidneys and top of the spleen, to mention a few, are near the stomach – if the stomach is full,

it obscures the image due to food from the stomach.

Why do you have to shave my pet's abdominal skin? The ultrasound probe needs to contact skin in order for the ultrasonic wave to pass through – fur harbours tiny air pockets that disrupt the image.

Is ultrasound dangerous? Definitely not! Ultrasound waves are just high frequency waves. Unlike radioactive waves, they pass through the body tissue with no interaction between the waves and the cells apart from a little heat. In fact, the waves hardly produce any heat at all in the body so it is even safe to scan a foetus.

I thought the ultrasound was all you needed to diagnose what type of tumour my pet has. Why are you doing more tests? Ultrasound is great at seeing detail in the architecture of the body, but it can't see the type of cells in the problem area. For this, we sometimes take a sample via a needle or we will need to do surgery to take a sample of tissue to examine. Ultrasound helps guide the tests in the correct direction so we can hopefully have a speedier resolution to your pet's condition.

If ultrasound is so good, why use x-rays at all? Both have their place: we use xrays for detail in very dense areas like the skeleton and air-filled areas such as the lungs, and ultrasound for detail in "soft" areas like the abdomen and inside the heart.

HOW DO YOU PROTECT YOUR PETS FROM THE HARSH AUSTRALIAN SUN?

It's that time of year when we all get excited about getting outside and making the most of our glorious summer time weather. Whilst most of us look forward to the hot time of the year and all the fun activities that are associated with warm weather, our four-legged companions might not feel the same way. In fact, the Australian summer can be quite a distressing time of year for some of our pets, especially the Northern Hemisphere breeds with thick, hairy and abundant coats.

Whilst you and I have the luxury of going to the ocean to cool off or grab a nice cool drink to wet the mouth, some of our pets can't do this or can't tell us if they are getting too hot and bothered under the collar. For the most part, this can be a little distressing for them, but at times this can turn fatal if we don't keep an eye on our little mates.

How can you tell if your pet is getting too hot?

Dogs - look out for excessive panting, difficulty in settling, dark red gums, seeking out cold tiles/floor space in the house and excessive drooling and frothing.

Leave ice cubes out for your pets to play with when you leave the house...

Cats - tolerate hotter weather more readily than dogs but some of the signs that your cat may be getting too hot include, leaving sweat marks from their paws over the floor, excessive grooming (the evaporation of their saliva actively cools them) and panting excessively.

What can you do to make sure your pet is not at risk of heatstroke this summer?

- *Always provide a suitable place to shelter away from the sun*
- *Always provide plenty of water (you will need more than in winter)*
- *Keep longer-haired breeds more regularly clipped during the hotter months*
- *Keep your pets indoors for the hotter part of the day (10am-3pm)*
- *Do not exercise your dog in the middle of the day.*
- *As a general rule, avoid taking your dog in the car for trips to the supermarket and short errands. If you absolutely must, make sure the windows are down for ventilation and provide plenty of water. Do not leave your pet unattended for extended periods of time under any circumstance.*
- *Leave ice cubes out for your pets to play with when you leave the house. This is a fun way for them to cool down and keep hydrated.*
- *Water fountains are a great idea for cats, they like the interaction with the running water and it allows them to keep well hydrated.*

If your pet is showing a combination of the following signs: heavy panting; profuse salivation; a rapid pulse; very red gums/tongue; lethargy; lack of coordination; reluctance or inability to rise or vomiting and diarrhoea, please contact us here at 4 Paws urgently.