

ARK VETS NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024

FEELING HOT. HOT. HOT!

All dogs are vulnerable to **heatstroke**, and every owner needs to be aware of their dogs' limits. Some brachycephalic dogs, like **Pugs** and **Bulldogs**, may be more sensitive to high heat and humidity, so owners should pay close attention to their breathing. Even dogs accustomed to exercise may overheat easily when exercising on hot days. If you think your dog is overheating, quickly move them to a cool place and immediately spray cool (not cold or icy) water on the coat, ensuring it reaches the skin. Cold water tends to constrict the surface blood vessels in the skin and this reduces, instead of increases, heat loss.

Ensure that your dog always has plenty of fresh water and shade, putting them outside only for short periods in hot weather.

SUMMER DANGERS

Here are some of the most common and most dangerous garden plants poisonous to dogs and cats to look out for this summer;

Hydrangea, Foxglove, Ragwort, Lily of the Valley, Geranium, Cotoneaster, Giant Hogweed, Oleander, Larkspur, Rhododendrons and Sweet Peas.

If you suspect your pet has ingested any of these toxic plants, please contact your vet immediately.

Don't leave your dog in the car in any weather, whether or not the windows are cracked. Even on a cool day (the mid-60s), the temperature in a closed car rises to 130 degrees Fahrenheit in minutes. The dog's own body temperature increases the heat and moisture, using up oxygen, and death can occur within 15 minutes.

Carefully observe **elderly dogs**, those that are chronically ill, or pets that have trouble breathing and consider using a variety of **dog cooling products**, such as **cooling vests** and **wraps, mats, and beds**.

Observe your dog carefully, and if you notice symptoms of overheating, don't wait until it's too late. Take precautions to prevent overheating, and know when it's time to take immediate action.

Did you know; a single ant can carry up to 50 times it's own body weight?!



Introducing a new dog to children

A new dog will need **time** to get to know your children. Help prevent your dog feeling overwhelmed by **insisting the dog approach the children** rather than the other way round. This prevents feelings of being under threat and your dog is less likely to snap in self-defence.

Children can encourage the dog to come to them by sitting down and offering titbits or toys. Ask them not to stare as this can be threatening. If the dog goes to them, they can **stroke and fuss underneath the animal's chin to begin with** rather than patting on the head. Remember a dog at face level with young children may seem quite frightening, so be prepared to move the dog away if the child becomes overwhelmed or if the dog is about to jump up.

Dogs do not always appreciate being hugged or cuddled unless familiar with it from an early age. It is a great temptation for children to do this, especially if they have been used to doing it to a previous dog. You will need to slowly find out what your new dog will accept, **supervising constantly** to ensure no unacceptable behaviour occurs on either side.

After the initial introduction, ask the children to give the dog a bit of **space and time** to find its feet. If your children have not owned a dog before, they may need to be taught to **respect** the animal and not treat their companion as a toy. High-pitched squeals can upset a dog until used to them, so try to **keep play as calm as possible**. It is important to supervise all activities and **it is not advisable to leave children under the age of ten alone with any dog**. **Be especially careful with older dogs and children**. A dog with impaired vision or hearing may be startled by sudden approaches and may bite in defence. Explain the difficulties the dog is having to the children so they learn to approach more gently.



A home away from home...



Often the hardest part of leaving town is trusting someone else to take care of your canine or feline companion. Taking the time to find a boarding option you trust and one your pet enjoys will make all the difference in the end.

Do make sure that the boarding cattery or kennel is licensed, as that means they must adhere to various regulations regarding hygiene and safety. A copy of their licence should be displayed clearly, both in the facility and on their website. As of 2018, new regulations came into place in regards to the care and welfare of animals, these new regulations are very detailed, offer a star rating and a license duration too. Good catteries/kennels should have at least a 3-star rating, so be sure to look out for this. The International Cat Care website offers some excellent advice on choosing a boarding cattery, as well as questions to ask when you visit.

If your dog hasn't been boarded before, consider a short overnight stay before an extended stay. Even an afternoon of doggie daycare can be a good test. This will help your dog get more comfortable with the experience and give the caretaker a better idea of your dog's needs. If you're planning to use catteries, try to get your cat used to them from kittenhood as older cats may struggle a bit with the change of environment.

Keep an eye out for clean, secure, and sanitary conditions. There should be adequate, securely-fenced exercise areas and sleeping areas with comfortable non-slip surfaces. Are you welcome to visit all areas of the kennel or cattery that your pet will have access to? Are they secure?

Meet the caretakers and observe how they interact with your pet. How many dogs/cats will they care for at one time? How much exercise do the dogs get, and how often are they taken out for toilet breaks? Are there proper staff on the premises 24-hours-a-day?

You will be asked to provide proof of up-to-date vaccinations before your pet can be boarded at any cattery/kennel.

Find out what happens if your pet has any healthcare needs or emergencies requiring medication and/or veterinary services. Determine if the pet care provider is certified in pet first-aid. It's also a good idea to provide the cattery/kennel with your vet's details, your pet's microchip details and a record of any relevant veterinary history. If your pet is on any medication, make sure you leave clear instructions on how and when to administer them, as well as anything you'd like them to know about dietary or behavioural issues.

To be on the safe side, don't leave your booking to the last minute, as the best catteries/kennels tend to be booked up well in advance. If you're planning to travel in the busier months, you'll want to give them plenty of advance notice!



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OPENING HOURS

We are open between
8.30am-6.30pm on Weekdays with
a late night opening to 7pm on Tuesdays
and 8:45am-midday on Saturdays.
Consultations and Nurse Clinics are by appointment.

On Monday to Friday consulting hours are:

- 8.45-10.30am
- 2.30-3.30pm
- 5.00-6.30pm (7pm Tuesdays)

On Saturdays our consulting hours are:

- 9.20-11.00am

Payment is required at the time of treatment
We provide 24 hour emergency cover, just phone the usual
telephone number



Health Care Plan update

Since starting our Health Care Plan in October 2016, the cost has remained the same. However, from 1st June 2024, there will be a small increase in our annual plan costs.

But following this price rise we will be adding - **home delivery service for your regular flea and worming products** (this will be implemented at your next veterinary appointment so will not be an immediate change for everyone). If you do not want home delivery, then you can still collect directly from the practice as usual.

We are also changing the annual nurse check to a **free of charge vet consultation** (so you will have your core vaccine appointment free and 1 extra vet consult free). We are still including the 10% off for other subsequent routine consults.

Everything else on the plan will remain the same. Please contact the practice if you have any queries.

We hope you will continue to feel the benefit of spreading the cost and saving money on our plan.