



April 2018

Meet Matt Foad Practice Manager

I wish to say a warm hello and welcome to all of our clients. I have taken over the very secure and well-handled reins from Helen, who is currently enjoying warmer weather than us on the other side of the world.

My background is mixed and varied and this is my first foray into the veterinary world, although I do have considerable experience of being a customer. I have small animal pets at home and a family farm with a suckler herd in Somerset; as well as the many horses that my wife breeds and competes.

I have come from the world of sport being fortunate enough to work with both The RFU in a coaching capacity and England Athletics where I led a large team looking at all areas of the sport. Prior to that I had a short career in HM Armed Forces. There are many crossovers in managing a large and diverse team and organisation and I intend to help Vale Vets to deliver the very best service that it can for our customers.

Coming from a team background I am passionate about everyone wanting to deliver the very best and working to achieve common goals. I believe in integrity and a sound operating ethos. I feel that my beliefs and those of my new colleagues are very much aligned and I have been made to feel very welcome here.

If you should have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. As we move forward I am going to be looking to hold customer events to learn what you think we should be doing and I will also shortly be sending out a customer survey to get your thoughts.

Thank you for your continued custom and loyalty, it is recognised and appreciated by all of us here.



Spring dangers!

Flowers, Plants and the Garden

As spring approaches, we should be aware of the potential dangers in the garden and home. Dogs are most at risk after digging in the garden and investigating newly planted bulbs, whereas cats are more prone to indoor poisonings.

Daffodil: Although the entire plant is considered poisonous to dogs, it is the bulb that is the most toxic. Ingestion can cause vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, heart problems, fitting and a serious drop in blood pressure.

Lilies: All parts of the plant, including POLLEN and vase water can cause Acute Kidney Injury in cats. 1 to 2 leaves or petals are considered toxic.

They cause salivation and sudden onset vomiting followed, as the kidney injury worsens, by depression, loss of appetite, bad breath and abdominal pain.

Tulip: Although the entire plant of a tulip is considered toxic, it is the bulb that is the most poisonous to dogs. Ingestion can cause significant oral irritation, excessive drooling and nausea.

Amaryllis: Especially popular around Easter, the lovely Amaryllis is also poisonous to dogs. Its toxins can cause vomiting, depression, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, hyper salivation, loss of appetite, and tremors

Kalanchoe: contains a similar drug to foxgloves. When mistakenly chewed or eaten, as well as the usual gut signs, it can cause severe heart problems and fitting.

Slug Pellets: Different pellets contain different chemicals, but the most common of these is the blue pellet containing Metaldehyde. Typical symptoms of poisoning include uncontrollable shaking and twitching which appear like a fit even though the dog is conscious, but can lead to, coma and death. So, when using slug pellets, obtain a pet friendly variety, or make sure that they are used in an area that can't be reached. Don't forget it's not only your dogs and cats at risk, tortoises and also wildlife can be too.

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Its nearly Easter which means CHOCOLATE!!

Dogs are well known for eating things when they are not supposed to and have an excellent sense of smell, making it easy for them to find your secret stash of chocolate!

Chocolate is derived from the roasted seeds of Theobroma cacao, which contains certain constituents that can be toxic to dogs: caffeine and theobromine. If eaten these can lead to medical complications and can be fatal for your dog. Darker chocolate has a higher cocoa content and is particularly dangerous. If your dog eats any chocolate (even if just a small amount) please contact the surgery immediately.

It will be useful if you can tell us how much they have eaten and the type of chocolate including cocoa solids % This information is available on the packet or wrapper.

WHAT CAN I DO?

In cases of poisoning there is no specific antidote. Treatment is symptomatic and supportive.

1. Act promptly. Phone immediately for advice. The sooner we see you the sooner we can help. It will probably mean making your pet sick but DO NOT try to do this at home. You will probably cause more harm than good.
2. If you can, bring a sample with you.
3. Consider carefully before introducing new plants to the garden or house.
4. Eat the chocolate yourself.



Taking care of older pets - Creaky Clinic

Do you own a dog or a cat that is over 9 years old?

Like us, as dogs and cats grow older, they are at an increased risk of developing common age-related diseases, such as:

- Cancer
- Kidney Disease
- Diabetes mellitus
- Dental disease
- Arthritis
- Heart disease
- Mental confusion
- Hyperthyroidism (cats)

For example, animals that are developing arthritis may be more reluctant to jump or run and you may see changes in their normal behaviour, such as sleeping in unusual positions and uncharacteristic grumpiness!

Other signs of illness can be a change of appetite or drinking, or a change in weight. Signs of disease can develop slowly over a period of time and sometimes go unnoticed. Early detection of these diseases mean steps can be taken to slow their progression and promote a good quality of life in old age. When diabetes and hyperthyroidism are caught early, they can be managed effectively for many years. Signs of kidney failure only start to show when 75% of the animal's kidneys have been affected. Early detection can slow the progression of this disease.

If you feel that your older pet would benefit from a check up, call your veterinary practice. Most practices will offer a **'Free Creaky clinic' with a nurse**, when your pet can be examined for signs of disease, including urine test and blood pressure measurements.

Other therapies such as Physiotherapy and Hydrotherapy are often used to help our Oldies lead happier and more comfortable lives.



Are your dog's vaccinations up to date?

Following a recent case of Parvovirus, we are asking all owners to check their vaccination records; If you believe that your dogs may not be currently covered you should contact your usual surgery.

Cullompton

College Road
Cullompton
Devon
EX15 1TG

t: 01884 32228

Tiverton

The Laurels
Station Road
Tiverton
EX16 4LF

t: 01884 258585

Honiton

2 Duchy Road
Heathpark Industrial Estate
Honiton
EX14 1YD

t: 01404 44095

Uffculme

7 Fore Street
Uffculme
Devon
EX15 3AN

t: 01884 841317

