



Hunters Lodge

Veterinary Practice

Winter Wisdom



This time of year can be great for your pets with warm fires to laze in front of and crisp snowy walks. Here are a few things to think about

this season to keep your pets safe and warm.

Most dogs will love going out for a walk whatever the weather. Most love the frost and snow. Bear in mind slim dogs with fine coats such as whippets and lurchers. They really struggle to conserve their body heat and can become cold very quickly. Think about getting them a coat for the cold weather. Frozen ponds and lakes are always a hazard at this time of year so it's best to avoid them.

Antifreeze is highly toxic to dogs it causes acute kidney failure and often death, despite rapid treatment. It tastes very sweet and they love it so be very careful not to spill any or leave any within reach.



Spare a thought for pets kept outdoors such as guinea pigs and rabbits.



Make sure their hutch is in a sheltered area out of the wind and that

they have plenty of warm clean bedding. Clean out the bedding daily to avoid it becoming wet and cold. Also keep an eye on their water bottle as they will often freeze leaving them without any

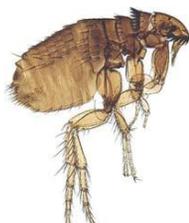


water. Consider some sort of insulated covering to keep the water from freezing.

If cats are not going out as much they will often amuse themselves with chewing house plants. Be aware of lilies which are very toxic to cats causing kidney failure. If you are bought any, cut off the stamens holding the pollen as these are the poisonous bits.



Pets often get less exercise in the colder weather and are prone to gaining weight. With dogs and cats their weight is ideal if you can easily feel their ribs. There should be no layer of fat between the skin and the ribs. Cats often put weight on their tummies. We have all seen the cat with a saggy undercarriage! When you are seeing your pet every day it is not easy to notice this gain in weight. You can always come in to see us for a free weight check and advice on how to lose any excess pounds.



Remember fleas don't take a holiday in the winter so keep up regular treatment throughout the winter months.

Hyperthyroidism in cats – Not just Old and Thin



As your cat gets older you may expect him to lose a bit of weight just as old people do. It's true to a certain extent but there may be a common underlying reason for it.

Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid) is a very common problem that we see in cats over the age of about ten years. The signs are usually a cat that eats a lot, drinks a lot but is still losing weight.

Sometimes they may be bad tempered, have a scruffy coat and in



some cases may be off their food or vomiting. These signs usually come on gradually so may not be easy to spot. The thyroid gland controls the metabolic rate so if you have too much thyroid hormone everything in the body is working at 100 miles an hour. The heart beats far too quickly, the kidneys and liver are working much harder than normal.

As all the organs are working very hard the cat is not able to eat enough food to maintain their body weight so the cat becomes thin.

The good news is that this usually an easy condition to diagnose and treat. A simple blood test to measure thyroid levels will tell us if

your cat has this condition. We also run a blood test to look at the kidneys and liver as they can also be affected. If the diagnosis is positive the condition can be treated with medication, surgery or radioactive iodine treatment. Patients usually respond well to treatment and start to gain weight, eat less and become more of a pussy cat again rather than a tiger!

So if you think this picture fits your cat get them checked out as soon as possible.



Rule Changes for Pet Travel

Taking your pet abroad is about to get a whole lot easier. From January 2012 all you need to do is get your pet vaccinated against rabies and microchipped. You will be given a passport and after 21 days you are able to take your pet on holiday. No blood test is required and no 6 month wait after vaccination before taking your pet abroad.



Your pet will still need tapeworm treatment 1-5 days before travelling back to the UK. Tick treatment when coming back to the UK is no longer required. We would still highly recommend treating for fleas and ticks with **Advantix** whilst abroad to protect your pet against exotic horrible diseases such as

Heartworm and Leishmaniasis which are common in Europe.

CASE BOOK: Zac

Zac is a lovely 12 year old male cat. He came in to see Grant on Boxing Day having not



eaten for several days. He was not ill as such but didn't want to eat anything. Grant examined Zac and could not find any major problems so he decided to do some tests. He ran some blood tests, took some x rays and did an ultrasound of Zac's abdomen. All the tests were negative. He admitted Zac and put him on a drip as he was dehydrated.

Over the next few days he was given lots of treatment to try and get him to eat without success. Eventually it was decided to fit Zac with a feeding tube into his throat so we could feed him liquidised food. After he was round from the anaesthetic the nurses started feeding him every 4 hours with high energy food. The following day Zac was feeling quite hungry and though he might eat a bit for himself. Over the next 2 days he continued to eat everything he was given. On New Years Eve Zac was eating well enough by himself to go home.

So what do we think the underlying cause was? Zac has a nemesis at home, the cat from next door. This cat used to come into the house and steal Zac's food much to his alarm. His owners had fitted a microchip cat flap to stop the other cat from coming in but obviously Zac didn't understand this and was constantly watching the cat flap in case the other cat decided to pop in for lunch. This is a common cause of stress in cats and it can often cause them to stop eating with no obvious cause.

We advised the owners to temporarily block up the cat flap and use **Feliway pheromone** diffusers in the house to reduce Zac's stress levels. Zac is currently doing well.

Practice News

Recommend us to a friend and as a thank you receive £15 off your next visit.

This is how it works - pick up some vouchers from reception and write your name and address on the back. When your friend comes in for their first visit they will get 20% off and you will get £15 credited to your account per new customer. So the more people that come in, the more you get back to spend on any treatments, products or food.

Puppy Parties

Puppy parties are going strong. We have been running them since September and they have proved to be a great success. The most rewarding thing is seeing how the pups come back to practice on other occasions. They can't wait to get through the door! It's a great formative experience for your puppy. Take a look at the puppy party movie on our website.



We run a course of two evenings, on two consecutive Wednesdays, starting at 7.30pm and lasting for an hour. Parties are also available to non registered clients so if you have a friend with a puppy ask them to come along too. Just let us know they are coming. All puppies must have had their first vaccination.

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About Us

Hunters Lodge is a well-established, independent mixed practice offering a high quality service for all small animals, farm animals and horses.

We understand that clients appreciate continuity of care and always endeavour to arrange an appointment with the vet you request. Our team consists of three veterinary surgeons and five veterinary nurses who aim to provide a caring and individual service to achieve the needs of you and your pet.

We have two fully equipped practices in Guildford and Ewhurst where we can perform all routine and more involved surgical operations.

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