

# VIKING NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2015  
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## Latest Gossip

The Viking staff attended the Thornbury Cat show in June where Denise helped to vet the cats prior to the show. We also had a stand so members of the public could find out more about our feline friendly practice.



We would like to wish our nurse Emma and her fiancé Toby every happiness on their wedding day in September. We hope to see a lovely photo of the happy couple in our next newsletter.

We have exciting news that two of our nurses, Eveleen and Jo, are pregnant!! Eveleen is expecting a baby girl and Jo a baby boy! We wish them all the best at this exciting time.

Maria attended the Foss Doggy Day and Companion Dog Show in August where she judged the novelty classes. This is a great day for dogs and owners with all money raised going to the Foss charity.

We have a new deputy head nurse, Emma, who will be supporting Lisa in her role. Emma is excited about this opportunity to contribute towards the team and is looking forward to the new challenges!

We are sad to say goodbye to two members of our staff Rachel and Amy.



Rachel has been with us for three years and has made a big impact on the Viking family and clients in this time. She is returning home to North Wales to further her rugby career. Amy, our veterinary student, is returning to university to complete her course. We wish them all the best in the future and they will be missed. Becky also left us in August to work closer to home so she can spend more time with her family.

Maria celebrated her 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in June with a glamorous cocktail party. Wishing Maria a very Happy Birthday and to staying fabulous at 50!





## ADVICE FOR FIREWORKS NIGHT

- 1) Provide a den or hiding place where your pet can feel safe, this can be a crate, space under the stairs or even in a wardrobe. Prepare it a few weeks before.
- 2) DAP and Feliway plug-in diffusers can be used to increase the feeling of security, also supplements such as Kalmaid and zylkene are useful to decrease anxiety but need to be started in advance. Ask one of our nurses for more information on these before the event.
- 3) Walk your dog during the daylight when fireworks are less likely to go off and startle them.
- 4) Keep cats inside, make sure windows, doors, and catflaps are closed and draw the curtains so the flashes can't be seen. Remember to provide a litter tray if your cat is not usually kept inside!
- 5) Provide distractions from the fireworks by turning the TV up, playing music, and playing with your pet. Sound therapy CDs are available which can help prepare your pet for the following year if used correctly.
- 6) Ignore any fearful behaviour! Panting, shaking, and whining should all be ignored, **any attention you give is reinforcing to the pet that they are right to be frightened!**
- 7) Cats prefer to go and hide on their own, they should be left to do this and not be disturbed, they will come out when they feel safe to do so.
- 8) If your dog is extremely frightened there are other drugs we can give, these are prescription drugs so an appointment will be needed with a vet, therefore it is best to arrange this before the event not once the fireworks have started.
- 9) There is a lot of behavioural advice we can give on this subject, both for the short term and long term to prevent the same situation each year. Please don't hesitate to ask for more information.







## Dogs and children

More and more families with young children have pet dogs, who are a part of the family, and seem to live in harmony enjoying each other's company. However, care needs to be taken with how much our beloved pets can tolerate when it comes to living with children. It is important to remember that dogs need space and they can become particularly stressed if they aren't left alone. Some important things to remember when you have children and dogs living together:

- **NEVER** leave children and dogs unsupervised.
- Allow the dog to have space. This can be done by ensuring they have a room and bed area where they can escape children.
- Never allow children to smother the dog, and ensure they keep children away from dog's faces.
- Do not allow children to tease dogs or play roughly with them.
- Do not allow children to disturb a dog when sleeping or eating.

Ensure that you watch the dog's behaviour around the child. Look out for signs of stress which can include:



- Yawning
- Licking of the air
  - Ears back
  - Tail between legs
- Showing whites of the eyes
- The dog avoiding the child.
  - Growling



If you notice any of these signs the dog needs space and you must ensure the child leaves the dog alone. Even the nicest well behaved dogs will have a tolerance level.

As parents we must also ensure our children are taught not to approach and touch dogs without the owner's permission. Not all dogs are happy with children touching them; they may be a rescue dog or have never met children before. We should explain to children dogs must be approached quietly and they must **ALWAYS** ask the owner first if they are allowed to





stroke them. It is important to teach children to stroke animals gently and to not chase the animal if it wants to move away. If a dog is frightened by a child approaching loudly and quickly it may respond by biting. We should try to protect our children and our dogs from getting in this situation.

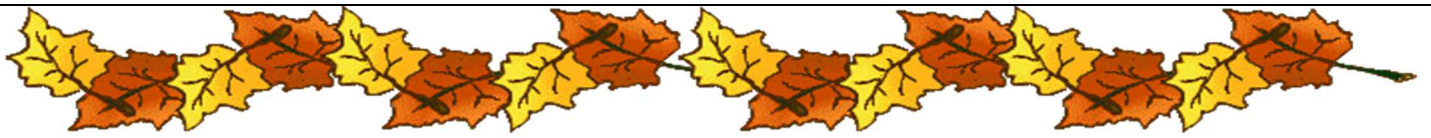


The highest instances for dog bites in children are for those under the age of 10. Children that get severe dog bites are usually to the face and head areas and could require plastic surgery. Children that get bitten by dogs could develop PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder) this is a severe anxiety disorder. Some of the signs include children being frightened of being left alone, being shy or aggressive and lack of interest in activities.

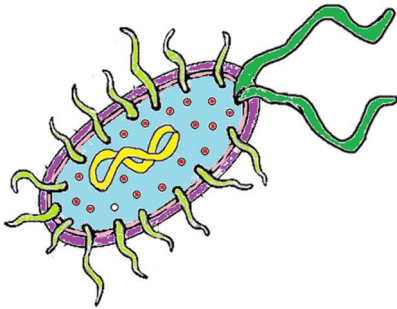
### The yellow campaign

The yellow campaign is for dogs that may need space. Dogs that might need space are dogs that are older, young dogs, nervous dogs, rescue dogs or dogs in season. The dog would have a yellow ribbon, bandana or a yellow coat so that people can see this clearly when they approach the dog. For more information go to the website: [www.yellowdoguk.co.uk](http://www.yellowdoguk.co.uk)





## Antibiotic Awareness



Many of us have heard of **antibiotic resistance** – MRSA has been in the news countless times – but few of us appreciate what it really means and the implications that it could have for ourselves and our pets in the future.

**Antibiotic medications are used to attack bacterial infections. They are ineffective against viruses.** Different classes of antibiotics attack bacteria via different mechanisms – some stop the bacterium being able to make essential nutrients for survival, others punch holes in the bacterial wall. **In order to be effective, the amount of antibiotic in the body needs to be at a certain concentration for a sufficient period of time.** If concentration or time are insufficient infections may remain unresolved and antibiotic resistant bacteria can arise.

**So what are antibiotic resistant bacteria?** Just like any other organism, bacteria will evolve in response to external pressure. Mammalian evolution is relatively slow because we reproduce quite slowly, and evolution only becomes apparent over successive generations. Bacteria, however, reproduce extremely fast with some species doubling in numbers every 15 minutes. Each generation potentially has new genetic strengths and weaknesses. The bacterium may have genes for resistance mechanisms to either stop the antibiotics getting into itself, develop pumps to pump the drug back out again, develop enzymes to break the drug down inside or just find a way to bypass whatever the antibiotic disrupts. As evolution dictates, only the fittest will survive given any external pressure (eg. blubbery seals in cold seas, fast antelope in the lion filled savannah or camouflaged caterpillars on trees full of birds). **In an antibiotic filled environment, those with resistance genes will survive and reproduce and those without will die.** To make matters worse, different species of bacteria can swap resistance genes between each other.

This all sounds very scary. **In under 100 years we have gone from discovering antibiotics to running out of options.** There have been no new classes of antibiotics released in 30 years, meaning that we need to protect the ones we have. Vets and doctors are careful now to prescribe and dose antibiotics appropriately. **In the veterinary world we face the threat of being disallowed to prescribe certain antibiotics in order to reserve them for human use only.**







Your vet may recommend that a swab of an infected site on your pet is sent for 'culture and sensitivity testing'. We call this **THE RIGHT DRUG FOR THE RIGHT BUG!** This means that the laboratory will grow and identify the organism present on the swab and test a panel of antibiotics on it to find out what the bacteria is resistant or susceptible to. We do this so that we can target the infection with the appropriate type and dose of antibiotic to get rid of it quickly and effectively. We already see a lot of these tests come back with resistance to multiple antibiotics.

Here are the British Veterinary Association's top tips for owners:

- Antibiotics are not always the answer – your vet will be happy to discuss whether they are required to treat your pet.
- A healthy animal will be more able to fight infections with its own immune system – appropriate food, regular exercise, vaccinations and healthy teeth all contribute to pet health.
- Do not share antibiotics between your pets or use antibiotics from a previous illness. They may not be the right type or dose and may be out of date or contaminated. Remember **THE RIGHT DRUG FOR THE RIGHT BUG!** Please be aware that antibiotics prescribed for human use may be toxic to animals.
- Follow dosage instructions from your vet – we will determine an appropriate strength and course length (depending on your pet's weight) to make sure that it's not just killing the weaker members of the bacterial colony.

Taken from 'Antibiotics – your role as a pet owner' BVA Client Leaflet No.5, November 13.

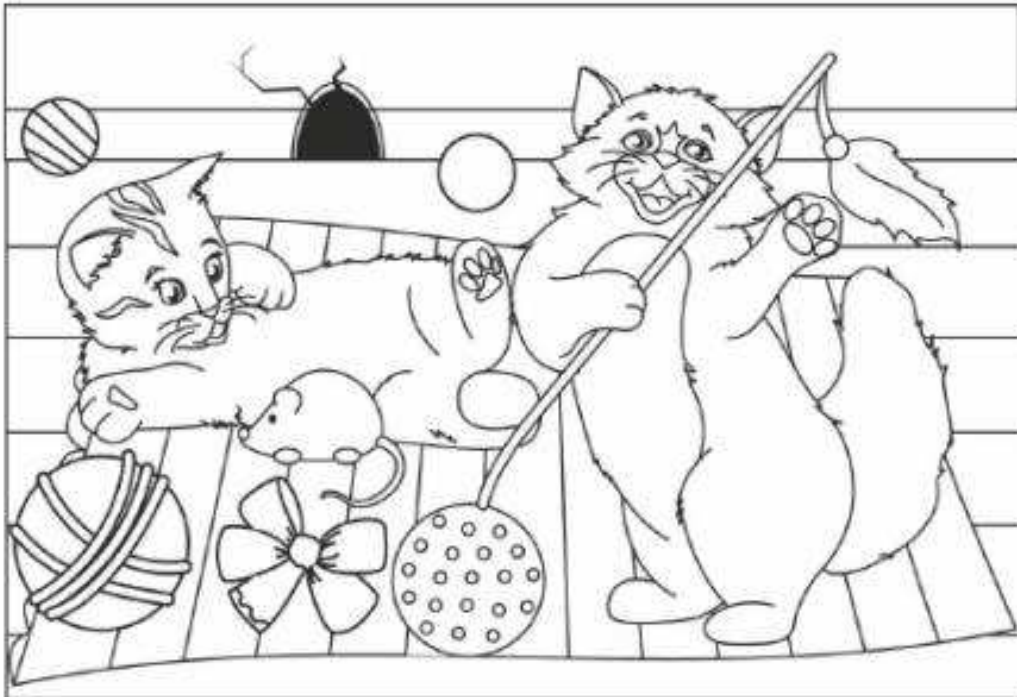
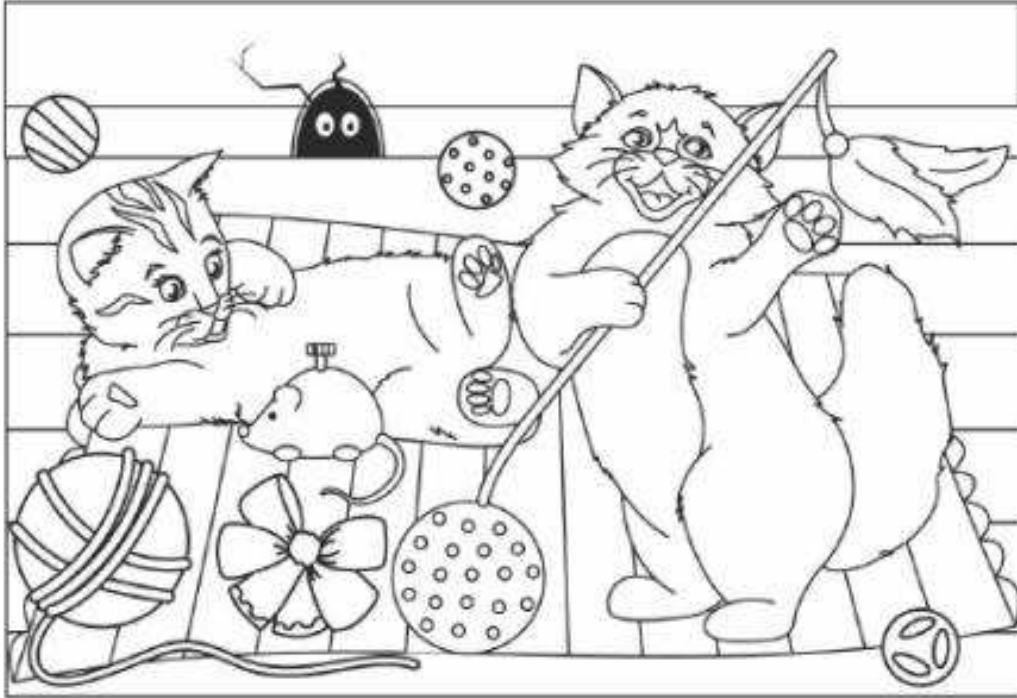
We hope that this information highlights why antibiotic use is such an important issue – we hope that people and animals will be able to benefit from these life saving medications for generations to come.





## SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

There are 10 differences between these two pictures of cats enjoying themselves in the house. Can you find them all?



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