

EARL SOHAM

Veterinary Surgery

Business Centre, The Street,
Earl Soham, Woodbridge,
Suffolk, IP13 7SA

Tel: (01728) 685185 (24hrs)



Autumn Newsletter 2010

FRAMLINGHAM

Veterinary Surgery

Framlingham Farmers Building,
New Road, Framlingham, Woodbridge,
Suffolk, IP13 9AT

Tel: (01728) 621666 (24hrs)

Promotions

September –

Pet Smile Month,

This month we are promoting good dental care for your pet and are giving 10% off on all our dental work, excluding drugs

October –

Microchip Month,

get £10 off the usual price of a microchip if you have it done with a consultation or procedure.

Our website is finally up and running. Please visit www.earlsohamvets.com to check it out. Our aim is to make it more user friendly and constantly updating it.



We welcome Jessica Scoffield, VN, in our midst. She joined our nursing team at Earl Soham in June. Go to our website to learn more about her.

Also in this issue:

- Ear disease – an earie tale!
- Arthritis – new life for affected pets
- Autumn Alarm!

Changes to our Out of Hours Emergency Procedures

Providing the best care to our clients at all times is our priority and in order to ensure this is what we deliver both now and in the future we have recently reviewed our methods for providing care for your pet Out Of Hours. After careful consideration we have decided to partner with Vets Now, who specialises in providing dedicated emergency care at nights and weekends. Vets Now have opened a dedicated emergency clinic in Melton, nr. Woodbridge and we trust they will provide you with an excellent service.

As you will be aware at present all of our Out of Hours emergency cover, including weekday nights and most weekends, is provided by Innis here at the practice on an "on call" basis. This solution has allowed us to ensure that you, our clients, receive a consistently high standard of care at all times from our own vets. However, providing on call means that Veterinary Surgeons can easily work 70+ hours a week and still be on call after a long and busy day. I am sure you will appreciate if a Vet has had to deal with a middle-of-the-night emergency it may impact on their ability to provide you and your pet with the best care during the day, due to lack of sleep.

We strongly believe that working with Vets Now will allow us to raise the quality of service that we provide to you and your pet even higher. The clinic is fully staffed by dedicated emergency vets and nurses who only work Out of Hours and therefore they are fresh and ready to deal with emergencies at night, weekends or on public holidays. Vets Now have suggested that you think of them as the pet equivalent of the Accident and Emergency department of a hospital!

Using the Vets Now service is easy. If you require Out of Hours assistance simply do the same as you are doing now. Call us on the usual number, (01728) 685185 or 621666, and listen to the message, which will give you the emergency contact number. When you call the

Vets Now clinic, their trained Receptionists, Veterinary Nurses or Surgeons will be waiting to help. If required, you will be advised to visit the clinic where you will be seen by the emergency team. The clinic is located in an easy-to-find location and is around 11 miles from our Earl Soham Surgery and 8 miles from our Framlingham surgery.

Vets Now will begin providing our Out of Hours cover on **26 July 2010**. Specific details of the times when Vets Now will be providing Out of Hours cover on our behalf are:

Monday	7pm – Tuesday 8am
Tuesday	7pm – Wednesday 8am
Wednesday	7pm – Thursday 8am
Thursday	7pm – Friday 8am
Friday	7pm – Saturday 8am
Saturday	12pm – Monday 8am

And all public holidays including Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's day!

We have further information from Vets Now about their services available here at the practice, however if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

P.S. Don't forget our new out of hours cover comes into service on Monday 26 July 2010 at 7pm.

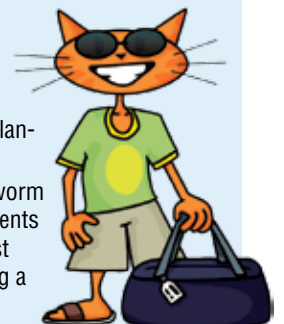


Holiday time – taking your pet abroad!

DO YOU fancy taking your pet on holiday with you next summer? With the Pet Travel Scheme in place, many more owners are taking their dogs and cats on holiday and to live in other countries with no need for a stay in quarantine on the way back.

Your pet will need to be **microchipped**, **vaccinated against rabies**, and have a **blood test** done to prove that sufficient immunity has developed. They may then enter the UK a *minimum* of six months after the blood test which confirms rabies immunity. This means that you may need to start planning now for next summer!

Additionally, your pet may re-enter the UK only after certain tick and tapeworm treatments have been carried out and certified before arrival. Other treatments are also advisable to help to protect your pet against exotic diseases whilst abroad. Please ask us for more details – but don't delay if you are planning a trip for next year!



Photos: Jane Burton

www.earlsohamvets.com • email: reception@earlsohamvets.com

24 HOURS EMERGENCY SERVICE



Ear disease – an earie tale!

DID you know that ear problems are surprisingly common in pets? However unlike the condition in people, where “earaches” frequently involve the middle and inner ear, most ear problems in pets occur in the outer or *external* ear canals.

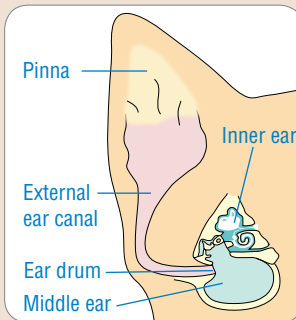
Anatomically, the ear is protected externally by a pinna (or flap). A narrow external ear canal carries sound down to the ear drum, where it passes onto the middle and inner ear.

In the healthy ear – see middle picture, the opening to the external ear canal is lined with smooth pink (or pigmented) skin with no evidence of any redness or discharge.

As mentioned above, most of the ear problems seen in pets occur in the *external* ear canal – a condition called **otitis externa** (sometimes called canker). Signs of otitis externa commonly include ear rubbing, head shaking, and red-dened, irritated skin lining the external ear canal. Additionally there is often a discharge which may be foul smelling.

There are several underlying causes of otitis externa. These include ear mites (*Otodectes cynotis*) – see lower right photo, and trapped foreign bodies such as grass awns. Localised allergies affecting the skin lining the external ear canal are another cause, leading to scratching, which allows opportunistic bacterial and fungal infections to infect the external ear canal.

In common with many conditions, the key to success with otitis externa is *early diagnosis and treatment*. If your pet is showing any of the symptoms described above, please bring him in for a thorough examination since the sooner we can start treatment the better!



The ear in cross section. Most ear problems occur in the external ear canal



Healthy ear in a dog: view of the pinna and opening to the external ear canal.



Otitis externa in a cat with ear mites (*Otodectes cynotis*) with a characteristic crusty brown discharge in the external ear canal.

Inset: *Otodectes cynotis* (x 30), photographed down a microscope



Grass awn



Otitis externa in a cat with ear mites (*Otodectes cynotis*) with a characteristic crusty brown discharge in the external ear canal.

Inset: *Otodectes cynotis* (x 30), photographed down a microscope



Autumn Alarm!

IT'S HARD to believe that the Summer is over and Autumn is upon us again. Although this time of year has a beauty of its own, it also holds many hazards for our pets:

Fleas are an ever present problem, so now is not the time to lower your guard against these little pests!

Ticks are another Autumn hazard, living in long grass and woodland areas. Ticks clamber onto pets, firmly attaching themselves and feeding on their blood. Worse still they can also spread a range of diseases including Lyme disease and Babesiosis.

Harvest mites are active in long grass at this time of year, swarming onto passing pets where they tend to congregate on the ears, eyelids, feet and the underside of the abdomen. They are easily identified as bright orange dots adhering tightly to the skin and are usually a cause of great irritation.

Fireworks are another hazard. It is always advisable to keep pets indoors on firework night, and this is especially important for those pets that are phobic about noise. These pets may benefit from medication to reduce anxiety; habituation to loud noises over a long period of time can also be helpful.

As the weather cools down **bees** and **wasps** become dozy and are easily caught by dogs and cats, but can still give your pets a nasty sting!

Keep your pets safe this Autumn! Let us advise you on keeping your pets parasite free, and fit and well during the firework season. Please contact us for further information.



Tick in situ



Microscopic view of a Harvest mite

Arthritis – new life for affected pets



MANY of our pets lead very active lives in their early years and thankfully take normal joint function for granted. However arthritis is a relatively common problem in older pets, and in the majority of cases occurs secondary to a lifetime of wear and tear on the joints. It may also occur as a result of joint trauma, or secondary to a malformation of the joint (for example hip dysplasia).

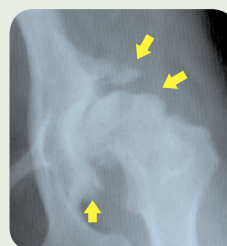
Arthritis is characterised by a breakdown of the joint cartilage and formation of secondary new bone around the joint. On an x-ray the fluffy new bone can often be clearly seen (see lower right x-ray). Arthritic joints are typically stiff, swollen and painful.

The signs of arthritic change are usually fairly obvious – pets show difficulty in getting to their feet after rest, dogs may show problems getting in and out of cars, and possibly a reluctance to go on walks.

The good news is that new forms of **medication**, together with **weight control**, can make a huge difference to the lives of affected pets. If you suspect your pet may have arthritis, come and see us for a check-up today – it really can make a difference!



Normal hip joint



Arthritic hip joint (in a dog with hip dysplasia). Note the fluffy new bone (arrowed) around the joint

