



*"Caring for your pets
as we do our own"*

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2012

Happy New Year and welcome to your first newsletter of 2012! With lots of developments at the practice towards the end of last year, this edition is packed full of news. Perfect excuse to put your feet up with a good cuppa!

Shepton Vets Small Animal Team xx

In this issue...

- New diet range
- Lepto alert
- Brand new xray machine
- New faces

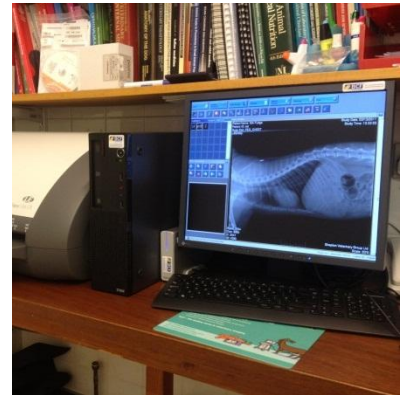
Digital radiography arrives at the practice

We all felt like Christmas had come early when our brand new X ray machine costing £25,000 arrived in the practice on the 1st of December. Our new system means that we are now equipped with up-to-the-minute digital radiography, for a better and more efficient clinical service.

Digital radiography represents a major advance on the traditional system. With no requirement for developing, images are received almost instantly and can be analysed and augmented on screen to ensure that we have all the information we need. This means that X ray procedure times are much shorter for the patient – a real benefit when you consider that most pets need sedation or anaesthesia to have their X rays taken.

Furthermore, the images produced are higher quality which will help give us much more information when we are diagnosing and assessing your pet. And should we need to send X rays externally, such as to a referral service or for BVA scoring schemes, we can do so by email rather than post, cutting down on the wait.

So far, the new equipment is living up to all our expectations, making a huge difference to the service we provide for our patients. So if your pet ever does need radiography, you can at least rest assured that they getting as much as possible from the procedure.



Don't forget to like us on Facebook!

Hello and farewell



In this newsletter we have a few new faces to welcome to the practice, and sadly, wave goodbye to some more familiar ones.



Our small animal department has recently expanded with the arrival of our new vet Greg Elliott-Moustache. Greg studied at Bristol Vet School and was really keen to settle in the Somerset area, so we were delighted to welcome him to the practice.



We also have a new little face to welcome. Our Head Nurse Georgina Vernoum had a little baby girl in November so huge congratulations to her and the new family. While Georgina is busy on her maternity leave, Emma Neal will take on Head Nurse responsibilities, Carolyn Powles will manage nurse training and new nurse Kate Edgecock joins us as maternity cover, so welcome to Kate.

Newly qualified veterinary nurse Alex Lomas has moved to a practice in Bristol to develop her skills. We would like to thank Alex for her hard work during her time with us and wish her the very best for her new role. Filling Alex's shoes is our new student veterinary nurse Laura Pickford who will be training with us and has already fitted well into the team.

*From top: Laura,
Greg and Kate*

Call us: 01749 343955

Email: vet@sheptonvet.com

Surf: www.sheptonvet.com

Or simply pop in: SVG, Allyn
Saxon Drive, Shepton Mallet
BA4 5QH

Food for thought – are your pets what they eat?

We all know nowadays how much our diet can influence our health. So it is no surprise that we are just starting to learn that diet can help support optimum health in dogs and cats too. The most advanced canine and feline diets on the market now offer a concept known as tailored health nutrition – not only meeting basic nutritional requirements but incorporating health nutrients selected for individual specificities, to help maintain dogs and cats in the very best health and condition.

At the practice, we feel that helping you keep your pets healthy is just as important as being there when they are ill, and providing the best possible nutritional advice is just one part of this. So we now offer the Royal Canin Vet Care Nutrition range of lifestage diets for healthy dogs and cats.

Royal Canin is a globally successful brand but have their UK base just down the road in Castle Cary. They produce super-premium diets for dogs and cats, formulated to the best standards of quality, and specialise in tailored health nutrition.

The entire Vet Care Nutrition range is highly digestible, supporting digestive health and good stool quality, and has superior palatability, to ensure that your pet loves it. In fact, they offer a full palatability guarantee! Royal Canin's patented complex of antioxidant nutrients, included in all the diets, helps to support natural defences and cellular health.

The ranges are centred around the nutritional specificities of dogs and cats during each of their lifestages, from growth through to senior years, and particularly focuses on the changes brought about by neutering.

Although neutering is widely recommended for any dog or cat which will not be bred from, it does result in some metabolic changes which should be accounted for through diet.



In both species, neutering increases the risk of obesity, doubling the chances that a dog will become overweight. So it is vital that energy intake is reduced, by around 30% in dogs, as soon as neutering takes place, to help avoid excess weight gain and its detrimental effects on health and wellbeing. But this can be really difficult to achieve, especially as a neutered pet is likely to have a bigger appetite. So a diet formulated especially for a neutered pet can really help to reduce energy consumption whilst satisfying appetite.

What is more, the canine range accounts for the nutritional needs of different sizes of dogs – considering the differences in growth rate, life expectancy, energy needs, digestive capacity and health sensitivities.

In the feline range you will find a diet tailored to your cat's needs, but regardless of which is right for your cat, all adult diets benefit from a formulation to help support urinary health, dental hygiene and control of hairballs.

For more information about the Vet Care Nutrition range, or to make an appointment to speak to one of our nurses about your pet's nutrition, contact the practice.

For further information or advice on any of the subjects covered in this newsletter please contact the practice



** LEPTO ALERT **

We have recently seen a case of Leptospirosis in an unvaccinated dog at the practice. The dog was very poorly and, despite intensive treatment, did not survive the condition.

Leptospirosis is a highly contagious bacterial infection which causes severe gastroenteritis, kidney disease or liver failure. It is carried by rats and spread via their urine and contaminated water. Affected dogs develop symptoms suddenly, and become severely ill. Hospitalisation with aggressive supportive therapy is required for any chance of recovery.

Dogs with leptospirosis must be isolated from other dogs to help prevent the spread of infection. The condition is also transmissible to humans.

The good news is that Leptospirosis is one of the conditions against which we routinely vaccinate dogs, and widespread vaccination has dramatically reduced the incidence of the disease over the years. However, this unfortunate recent case serves to remind us that the condition is still seen in unprotected dogs.

The very best way to protect your dog from catching Leptospirosis, and other serious diseases, is to ensure their vaccinations are up to date.

In the current financial climate, it can be tempting to skip your dog's annual vaccination in order to make a saving until things pick up. However, it is important to remember that this leaves your dog at risk, increases the chance of these diseases becoming more prevalent, and may therefore prove to be a false economy. Budgeting for those regular and expected costs, just as in so many other areas of life, is most likely to pay off in the longer term, as you will be helping your dog to stay fit and well.