



Your Vet



EAST PORT VETERINARY HOSPITAL

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Stacey Theofanou, Rebecca Spring, Kate Bisco, Emma Crocket, Amie Burgess, Summer Earles, Annie Thomson, Wilhelmina Ridding, Nikki Moulston, Debbie Dawson

Consultation Hours:

Consultation by appointment.

Monday to Friday: 8.00am-6.00pm

Saturday: 9.00am - 12.00 noon.

Deluxe Grooming!

East Port Veterinary Hospital now offers a full grooming service on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, with Nikki Moulston. This service includes hydrobathing, clipping and nail trims – the ultimate day spa! To book your pet in, call us on (02) 6583 5677.



Keep your cool this summer



Don't let your pet get hot under the collar this summer. Heat stroke is a devastating condition and can result in brain damage and death.

- Make sure your pet has access to shade. Shade cloth may need to be erected over kennelled areas and hutches if they cannot be moved out of sunlight. Remember the sunny areas move throughout the day and a nice cool morning spot may be a sun trap by afternoon.

- Make sure your pet has access to fresh cool water. Provide pottery or plastic water bowls and keep them in the shade - metal water bowls heat up too quickly. For the small furrries, check the spout of sipper bottles daily as although there may be water in the bottle the animal may not be able to access it if the spout is blocked. Animals such as guinea pigs are very messy drinkers and can clog up the mouth of a sipper bottle with chewed up food.



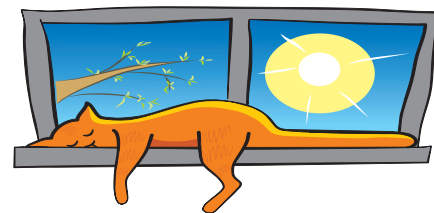
- Small furrries such as guinea pigs are exquisitely sensitive to heat and in danger of heat stroke once the temperature is over 29°C. Place large bottles of frozen water in their cage for them to stretch out alongside. Bring them indoors into air conditioning in extreme heat.

- Never exercise a dog in the heat of the day. Most dogs will not say no to a run in the sun and do not know when they need to stop and rest.

- Fine mist sprays and wetting the animal's environment can help to keep the local temperature reduced through evaporative cooling.

- Dogs die in hot cars. Without adequate ventilation the temperature inside a car quickly rises above the outside temperature. Care also needs to be taken with "Ute" dogs. It looks fun on the back of a Ute with their tongues lolling in the wind - but the metal of the tray can become hot in the sun and burn their feet. Rubber matting or a piece of carpet can help prevent this.

The symptoms of heat stress range from panting and salivating through to vomiting, diarrhoea, seizures and coma. If you suspect your pet is suffering from heat stress, spray the animal with cool water and seek veterinary assistance as quickly as possible.



On behalf of all of us,
we extend our very best wishes
to you, your family and friends,
for a safe, happy and healthy
Festive Season.

- Sun-worshipping cats
- Dog breeds Word Sleuth
- 3 Blind Mice

inside



Sun-worshipping cats

Cats love to bask in the sun with faces raised and eyes closed. This is a real problem in our sunny Australian climate as cats with little colour pigment on their faces are very vulnerable to skin cancer. Skin cancer, or *squamous cell carcinoma*, is most commonly found on the non-furry part of the nose, on the ear tips and the eyelid margins. A skin cancer often starts as a small scab or crust. At this stage it is commonly mistaken for a small scratch - but if the scab is picked off it will soon grow back. Over time, it ulcerates and becomes a deep, non-healing sore. Eventually it can spread to local lymph nodes and other parts of the body.



Small early lesions can be treated with *cryotherapy* (freezing). This needs to be performed under general anaesthetic as the lesion is frozen and thawed several times. These cancers are often slow growing so if they are detected and treated at an early stage, the prognosis is good. Larger lesions require more aggressive management and have a much poorer prognosis. There are many treatment options including surgery, localised chemotherapy injected into the cancer and radiation therapy. Some of these options will only be available from a specialist facility.



Protect your cat from sun damage by keeping it indoors between 10 am and 3 pm. Sunscreen helps on the ears tips but is impractical on noses as it is licked off. There are hats available for cats. However, not surprisingly, many cats are not compliant at keeping their hat on!

Treat my pet!

In the past, pet euthanasia was often carried out 'behind closed doors'. Clients were discouraged from attending as veterinary staff felt the pet owners would be too distressed. To some people, this gave the image of 'secret vet's business' and, as a result, many pet owners have extreme anxiety about euthanasia.

These days, veterinarians see euthanasia as a gift that we can offer a suffering animal. Euthanasia, done well, is often the best death possible for an animal. It may seem the most difficult for the owner *before* the event but *afterwards*, many are 'pleasantly' surprised - their fears having been much worse than the reality. There are many ways in which vets try to make the whole process easier for the owner, and several ways to improve this final experience for the pet. Every vet has preferred protocols and it is important that you are comfortable with them before you commit to the decision.

Before proceeding, your vet may ask if you have seen euthanasia before and, if so, whether you had a good or bad experience. Specific fears and concerns can be addressed. Your vet will describe the processes used and the drug/s involved. You will be advised of the clinic's protocols for euthanasia - whether they use a needle in the vein (traditional) which requires that your pet be held by an assistant, or whether (increasingly these days) they prefer to use an intravenous catheter and extension set - to allow you to nurse your pet unimpeded as they drift away from consciousness. Vets may offer home euthanasia, or direct you to someone who is able to provide this service.

Your vet may discuss with you what to expect from your pet as they pass away and what to expect from your own grief response. Your preferences for the handling of your pet's mortal remains will also be tactfully explored. There are many options for professional burial and cremation available, and many owners now choose these options to help honour their pet's memory. Your vet may ask if there is anything

Euthanasia

that will make this experience more meaningful for you. Being able to hold your pet while they pass, have a home euthanasia performed, receive a fur sample or paw print as a memento or even take a photo, are things that some clients take great solace in.

After euthanasia, you may be offered time with your pet's body. If this is not offered but you would like to do so, do not be shy about asking for this time. Sometimes staff might make suggestions about ways that you or your family (especially children) can memorialise your pet. This might include creating a small shrine, writing poems or letters, starting a scrapbook or planting trees.

Many people are scared of euthanasia, adding fear to the unbearable sadness it brings. While the extreme sorrow is unavoidable, fear certainly is not. Demystifying the process of euthanasia is not always comfortable, but can be reassuring. If your vet does not spontaneously provide the information you need, then make sure to ask any questions you have. It is very important that you feel confident and comfortable with the procedures and protocols described to you. This day, this saddest day, is in some ways the most important day of your pet's life.





Emergency! Plan for the Worst...

....and hope for the best! Any veterinarian will tell you of caring owners faced with heartbreak - euthanasing a much-loved pet because the cost of treating them in an emergency is beyond their means. In times gone by, veterinarians occasionally offered short-term credit to selected clients. However this is now so much harder to do. Vets are run as small businesses and, with bad-debt accumulation and the increasing costs of providing quality veterinary care, many find themselves in the position of having to decline a request for a payment plan.

While it is relatively easy to budget for our pets' annual vaccinations and preventative treatments (which include desexing, worming and vaccinations plus heartworm protection and tick prevention – depending on where you live), how many of us really plan ahead for the worst case-scenario? A veterinarian at Murdoch University's Pet Emergency Centre (MPEC) provided an estimate of some initial costs with a typical trauma case. Using an example of a small to medium sized dog hit by a car (at midnight), sustaining minor chest injuries and a 'simple' limb fracture; the costs were estimated as follows (figures in \$AUD):

- Initial examination - \$202
- First 12hrs pain relief - \$30
- First 12hrs oxygen support - \$200
- Chest drainage (*thoracocentesis*) - \$75
- First 12hrs intensive care - \$275
- X-rays of chest and limb - \$260
- Intravenous fluid therapy - \$185

The immediate overnight expense with this 24-hour care facility would be in the region of \$1225.00. Assuming a simple limb fracture was located on x-ray, requiring 'internal fixation', one could estimate at least another \$1200 for surgery with the pet's regular veterinarian.

Although there are some lenders who specialise in offering short-term finance for veterinary care, many pet owners are now turning to pet insurance to give them peace of mind. With 'trauma only' insurance from around \$25/month, and 'full' coverage from \$35/month, pet health insurance begins to look like a sensible precaution for the average family with an adored pet. Increasingly, owners are making this investment in order to guarantee their pet receives the veterinary TLC they need, when they need it, without compromising the family budget.

If you fear a traumatic decision based on finances, it may be worth considering pet insurance as an alternative. While vets are not legally allowed to recommend a specific brand of pet insurance, we can supply you with a number of brochures from different companies, allowing you to research and choose the plan that best accommodates your pet's needs and your peace of mind.



Advances in veterinary medical care are ongoing. Pets that in the past would have been euthanased on humane grounds can now be treated intensively and usually with great success. What price peace of mind?

3 Blind Mice



Rats and mice have beady eyes that give the impression they can spot a lump of cheese from 50 metres. They are, however, quite visually impaired and rely on other well-developed senses such as hearing, touch and smell to assist their poor eyesight. Albino rats and mice, with their white coats and pink eyes, are particularly badly affected due to degeneration of the retina at the back of the eye.

In rats and mice, the eyes are positioned on the sides of their head. This gives them a 360-degree visual field apart from a small blind spot at the tip of their nose. When picking up a white rat or mouse, bear in mind that they may not see you coming. In order to avoid startling them, make sure they can hear and smell you.

DOG BREEDS WORD SLEUTH

B	U	L	L	D	O	G	W	O	H	C	W	O	H	C
O	S	P	Z	A	I	U	L	K	E	L	P	I	E	Q
R	H	Q	W	C	K	P	J	E	G	N	B	R	T	U
D	I	T	H	H	E	H	M	F	O	P	O	F	S	G
E	H	S	I	S	K	Y	E	T	E	R	R	I	E	R
R	T	R	P	H	H	A	G	Y	B	C	Z	D	G	E
C	Z	E	P	U	A	Y	Q	X	T	K	O	A	O	Y
O	U	X	E	N	C	V	D	B	N	M	I	J	D	H
L	W	O	T	D	O	B	E	R	M	A	N	S	E	O
L	A	B	R	A	D	O	R	T	G	S	D	A	L	U
I	T	V	J	B	C	X	K	T	F	I	K	L	T	N
E	W	E	I	M	A	R	A	N	E	R	S	U	T	D
D	A	L	M	A	T	I	O	N	Y	F	I	K	A	P
R	E	L	I	E	W	T	T	O	R	G	E	I	C	X

Find the following dog breeds in the Word Sleuth:

Border Collie, Borzoi, Boxer, Bulldog, Cattle dog, Chow Chow, Dachshund, Doberman, Greyhound, Kelpie, Labrador, Poodle, Pug, Rottweiler, Saluki, Shih Tzu, Skye Terrier, Weimaraner, Whippet.

1. Which one of the above dog breeds has a blue tongue?
2. Which one of the above dog breeds was used in Russia for wolf- hunting?
3. Which one of the above dog breeds comes in three sizes (toy, miniature and standard) ?
4. Which one of the above dog breeds has been nicknamed the "silver ghost" because of its distinct silvery grey colour?
5. Which one of the above dog breeds is commonly used as a guide dog for the blind?
6. Which one of the above dog breeds is a spotty movie star?

Answers on bottom of back page.



Symptoms of disease

Fleas!

Aaargh, fleas! Just knowing our pet has fleas is enough to set us off in a frenzy of scratching!

Small, nimble, hard to see, (and even harder to get your thumbnail on when you do find them), while adult fleas cause the physical problems we all know about, it is actually the juvenile forms of the flea that make up the bulk of the population!

Once an adult flea is on your pet, it will stay there until it dies, is removed by grooming or killed by insecticides. Fleas don't jump from pet to pet, only from environment to pet. Why would they, when there's enough blood in a dog for everyone! Like an iceberg, what you see is the very tip - in this case 'under the surface' means everywhere that your pet goes.

If your dog or cat has fleas, then eggs will end up in its environment. Your environment! Eggs may be damaged, swept away by brooms or sucked up by vacuums but the majority will fall deep into carpets, pet bedding, your bedding, fabric furnishings and cracks between floorboards, making them almost impossible to remove manually.

After mating, the female has a blood meal then lays her eggs. One female may lay as many as 50 eggs per day on your pet, or up to 2000 eggs in her lifetime!



The eggs are not sticky but designed to fall from your pet's coat to the ground wherever it goes. Once the eggs hatch (the larvae inside use a hard 'tooth' made of a substance called *chitin*), the larvae actively head towards dark, damp, safe places. They will feed on the 'flea dirt' (digested blood) that fell from

your pet at the same time as the eggs! As the larvae grow, they moult twice then form a cocoon. The flea larvae pupate in these cocoons until conditions are right - this can include the presence of heat, vibrations or exhaled carbon dioxide...all the signs of a nearby host in fact! Fleas can, however, stay in the cocooned pupal phase for months, which explains why they can suddenly attack you and your pet when the weather warms up. This also explains why fleas can suddenly bombard people moving into a house that has been empty for some time.

The whole life cycle of the flea can take as long as two years or as little as two weeks so it is easy to see that a small beginning can develop into a big problem very quickly indeed. While the array of different flea products can be variable and confusing, using the right approach for your individual situation can mean the difference between success and failure. Ask our staff for their treatment recommendations, and why they recommend the products they do.

Seeking professional advice, and using high quality products will, in the end, see you beating the 'flea'. Then, itch free, you can sit back and admire from afar their versatility and ability to survive!

ENJOY AN OUTING WITH YOUR DOG

A to B... Carsick Free!

With canine motion sickness the leading reason pet owners are not able to take their dogs on day trips or vacation, East Port Veterinary Hospital is encouraging more people to talk with us about managing travel with their dog.

Traveling with pets as members of the family is becoming more opportune. The number of holiday destinations that accept pets is on the increase and there are opportunities to take dogs to pet friendly parks, beaches etc. Still, one in four dogs will suffer from vomiting caused by motion sickness¹. It can prevent your whole family from taking a trip, causing you to miss out on adventures together. If you do leave your dog behind, it may be stressful and costly.

There is a new canine medication for the prevention of vomiting from a wide range of causes, including motion sickness. Worldwide, this treatment has seen thousands of dogs successfully treated for vomiting. This treatment option is now available in Australia from East Port Veterinary Hospital and we are sharing tips on managing motion sickness while traveling.

More families will now be able to enjoy the company of their dog as they take day trips or longer vacations. With a little pre-trip planning, and with the benefits of this new treatment option, motion sickness no longer needs to be a reason to leave the family dog behind.

About the new treatment option

When dogs travel, their balance can be affected by the movement. Motion can affect the inner ear which sends signals to the vomiting centre in the brain. Or, they may just feel anxious about the traveling itself and this can initiate a vomiting reflex.

Now your pet can travel from A to B... carsick free, and distress free. A solution is now available from East Port Veterinary Hospital in an easy-to-give, once-daily tablet. The new product is a first in class medicine developed specifically for dogs.

As the medication does not cause drowsiness, dogs will be alert during travel and upon arrival, and will thus be able to enjoy the destination, resulting in a more positive experience for the entire family.

Don't Leave Your Dog Behind on your next Outing

Tips for short outings with your dog:

- Dose the new medication at least 1 hour prior to travel
- Avoid feeding your dog less than 1 hour prior to travelling
- Allow your dog to relieve itself before departing
- Take a water bowl and some water for your dog particularly if it is going to be active in a park or on the beach.
- Take a dog leash
- Remember a collar with identification and your contact number
- Don't forget the dog tidy bags
- Never leave your dog alone in the car or on a boat. Even if the windows or entrances are slightly open, the temperature can rise quickly and can cause severe health problems such as hyperthermia or heat stroke.

Tips for going on vacation with your dog:

- Before you leave, visit East Port Veterinary Hospital to address any travel concerns, refill necessary prescriptions, and make sure your dog is up-to-date on all vaccinations
- Plan extra stops. This gives you and your dog a chance to exercise and take a break
- Check the internet for pet-friendly hotels and cafes
- Have the contact details of a local veterinarian at the destination
- If there are any times when you will be away from your dog, make sure that there is a place where he or she can stay or that someone is able to dog-sit
- If you are staying at someone's home, make sure there are no potential problems (e.g. allergies, aggressive animals)
- Make sure your dog has enough room to lie down. Consider a large crate or carrier. If your dog is nervous or excited, this can be a quiet place to rest.
- When flying, remember that each airline has slightly different rules and services for dogs including requirements regarding crate size and how to reserve a spot for your pet. Consult the airline in advance to avoid surprises at the last minute.

For additional travel advice for your dog, speak to us East Port Veterinary Hospital today.

The language of alpacas

Alpacas are fascinating animals kept for their strong yet soft fleece. There is a wonderful collection of names for the various types and life-cycle stages. Alpacas begin life as a *cria*. Once a baby cria reaches adolescence, it is termed a *tui*. An adult male alpaca is called a *macho*, while an adult female alpaca is termed a *hembra*.



The two main types of alpacas are distinguished by their fleece. *Huacaya* alpacas, the most common type in Australia, have a dense fibre growing straight out from the body - just like a merino sheep. *Suri* alpacas have dreadlock ringlets of softer, longer fleece, which hang straight down from the body.

Word Sleuth answers: 1. Chow Chow; 2. Borzoi; 3. Poodle; 4. Weimaraner; 5. Labrador (retriever); 6. Dalmation.