



# HALL VET SURGERY

## SPRING NEWSLETTER

Welcome Ella, Eliza and Corinne!



*Vet Nurses Ella and Corrine love caring for pets in hospital. Corinne has many years of nursing experience to pass on to trainee Ella.*

*Welcome our new receptionist Eliza when you next visit Hall Vet Surgery.*

### Drinkwell Pet Fountain

*Pets love drinking running water.*

How often have you found your cat in the shower recess or your dog lapping from a dripping tap?



Dogs and cats with kidney problems or bladder infections need to drink more water and more often. Pets prone to crystal and stone formation in the kidneys and bladder also benefit from drinking more water.

Water fountains provide a continual stream of water that encourages pets to drink more water.

The Drinkwell pet fountain also filters the water through charcoal to remove bad tastes and odours and further encourage water consumption.

**Win a Drinkwell pet fountain for your dog or cat!**

*Tell us what type of filter is in the Drinkwell fountain.*

Email your answer to [reception@hallvet.com.au](mailto:reception@hallvet.com.au) before **Friday, 1st October, 2010** to go in the draw to win a Drinkwell pet fountain.

*Please put Drinkwell in the subject line and your contact details and answer in the body of the email.*

**Good luck!**

### Pet Dentist in Hall

**Pet dentist Dr Christine Hawke enthralled the crowd at Hall Veterinary Surgery's annual information evening at Hall Pavilion.**

She demonstrated how to clean a dog's teeth, introduced pet foods and chews that keep teeth clean, and convinced us that annual dental checks for our pets are essential.

Bad 'dog' breath is not normal. It is caused by plaque that builds up on teeth and hardens into tartar.

Tartar is rough and makes gums sore and inflamed. Every time a pet with tartar and gingivitis chews, bacteria are shed into the bloodstream and damage organs like the kidneys and heart. Eventually the gums and jawbone recede and the teeth fall out.

Tartar and loose teeth make chewing painful, although most pets hide the pain. In the wild the pack would leave dogs in pain to die so most animals will continue to eat despite advanced disease. They would rather eat, even though it's painful, than go hungry.



Owners are often unaware of their pets' dental problems, not because they don't care, but because these problems are hidden away in the mouth. Bad breath and subtle behavioural changes are the only hints of dental disease until the pain becomes unbearable. Drooling, dropping food, reluctance to eat and facial pain are obvious signs that something is wrong.

"Healthy teeth and gums are crucial to an animal's quality of life," Dr Christine said. Imagine how your mouth would feel and smell if you never brushed your teeth. Suffering a bad toothache in silence is no fun.

**Hall Veterinary Surgery is now open for desexing and dental work on Saturdays. Please book at least a week ahead to secure a place. Admissions are between 8-8.30am.**

## Maggie's Diary



*Life's a ball...*

*A bit of a scare this morning when the family found a lump on my side. It's been bulging out on my belly for ages so I wasn't sure what the fuss was about. They rushed me into the surgery and I had to sit very quietly while Dr Helen took a little sample from the lump using a fine needle and syringe. Afterward Dr Helen and Nurse Emma showered me with liver treats for sitting so still. Wow! The treats and cuddles were so good I sat still for more!*

*Dr Helen came back from the microscope with a smile on her face. The lump was just a fatty tumour - she called it a lipoma. As it's benign and not worrying me Dr Helen will just monitor it for now. If it interferes with the movement of my leg or gets uncomfortably big I might have to go into hospital and have it removed. I hope they remember the liver treats.*

*The family were relieved that it's nothing nasty. My cousin Cedric the Staffie had a Mast Cell Tumour removed last year - twice. Mast Cell Tumours can look like anything from dry skin to raised red itchy areas to lumps. They send out fingers into the surrounding tissue and even a large incision may fail to remove the entire tumour. Mast Cell Tumours are common in dogs and very dangerous, Dr Helen says.*

*Dr Helen sent Cedric's lump to the pathologist to make sure she had it all and to see if it was likely to have spread internally. Because he had lots of microscopic tumours she had to give him injections that sometimes made him sick - but not for long. Like me he couldn't bear to miss dinner.*

*Although he's fine now, lucky Cedric visits Dr Helen for skin checks (and treats) every few months.*

*I wonder when I can visit Dr Helen again...*



## Dogs are not Wolves...

Dog owners, trainers and professionals used to believe that wolf and dog packs were hierarchical. Behaviour studies on captive wolves in the 1940's were incorrectly extrapolated to domestic dogs in the 1970's. They thought that the alpha dog dominated the others by force and the weakest in the pack lost out on food, the best resting places and social status.

These old theories about hierarchical social structures don't help us understand our dog's behaviour and relationship to us. A dog does not behave badly because of its rank or because it is challenging its rank within its human pack. Lack of good communication, poor training techniques and inadvertent reinforcement of bad behaviour are now recognised as the more likely causes of problem behaviours.

Currently we believe that domestic dogs are only distantly related to wolves. Unlike wolves, dogs have evolved as companions to humans and have been socialised to live in a loose social structure with supportive, consistent and predictable behaviours.



Training techniques have changed because of this new understanding of human - dog relationships. It is easy to be confused by the many training methods and so-called experts in the popular media. Ask your vet to help you understand your dog's behaviour and point you to good quality trainers and dog professionals.

If your dog has a difficult or unusual behaviour problem we can refer you to a vet who is registered as a pet behavioural specialist.

Correct advice about your dog's behaviour is vital. In the next edition we'll learn to distinguish between "problem behaviours" and "behaviour problems", whether they are major or minor problems, and what to do about them.

### Cool links to understanding your dog's behaviour:

[www.4pawsu.com/dogpsychology.htm](http://www.4pawsu.com/dogpsychology.htm)

[www.ddfl.org/tips\\_dogs.htm](http://www.ddfl.org/tips_dogs.htm)

Check out our website at [www.hallvet.com.au](http://www.hallvet.com.au) for more r

## Cats and FORLS



Dental disease in cats is common and causes much hidden pain and discomfort. In nature cats conceal pain so that predators and rivals cannot better them. In our homes this is a huge disadvantage. We don't often look in our cats' mouths so we don't realise that they are hiding holes in their teeth, loose teeth, tartar on their molars and gum disease.

Cats' teeth are prone to a type of decay at the gumline, called Feline Oral Resorptive Lesions or FORLS. They are actually erosions of the teeth and occur at the base of the tooth near the gum. The cause of these lesions is unknown.

FORLS are very painful even in the early stages. They cause roughness on the tooth's surface that gathers plaque and tartar. This rubs against the gum and causes inflammation and infection and eventually results in broken and loose teeth. Up to 67 percent of cats are afflicted with FORLS.

FORLS are very painful even in the early stages. Some cats lose their appetite. Others prefer softer foods or chew on one side of the mouth. Swollen cheeks or drooling are characteristic of advanced FORLS. Most cats hide pain and discomfort very successfully and we often only discover the problem on the consultation table.

Cat owners are often surprised when we recommend dental work for their cats. They are even more surprised - and delighted! - at how happy and playful their cats are after bad teeth are removed and the remainder scaled and polished.

### A useful Australian pet dentistry site is:

Sydney Pet Dentistry

<http://www.sydneypetdentistry.com.au/>

**STAR  
PET  
B**



Bella's owner despaired of ever getting her into shape until she enrolled her in the Hills PetFit weight loss programme (<http://petfit.hillspet.com.au>) at the beginning of May.

She weighed a hefty 8.3kg before she started on Hills R/D and by 24th August she was half way to her target weight.

### WOW!

Bella was always a skittish cat but now she is more gregarious and has heaps of energy.

Her favourite game is fetching "springies" (twisted up twist-ties), which she pushes under the toilet door, or brings into bed demanding a game.

Once upon a time she would bring them back a few times and then lie down. Now her owner can't keep up with the demand!

Bella's target weight is 6.5 kg. Her owner and her slimming advisors at Hall Vet Surgery are proud that she is a front runner for

**Hill's Pet Slimmer  
of the Year!**



## Reflections

*"Any glimpse into the life of an animal quickens our own and makes it so much the larger and better in every way."*

-- John Muir

Source: Dog House Visitor Heather Rose



news, fun stuff and plenty of information about pet care.



## Home Dental Care

Keep your pet's teeth and gums clean and healthy with a combination of dental care options.

Raw meaty bones are nature's toothbrush. Chewing cleans food debris from the teeth and prevents it from hardening into tartar. The gnawing action also strengthens jaws and gums.

Offer bones that are raw and too large to swallow whole so your pet has to work at them. Chicken wings and necks, and small veal or lamb bones are suitable for smaller dogs and cats. Soup or brisket bones are better for larger dogs.

Kangaroo bones, which are naturally lean, are better for obese pets and dogs prone to pancreatitis.

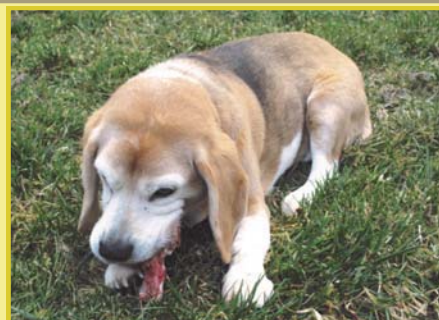
If your cat refuses bones try chunks of meat like gravy beef, rabbit legs or chicken thighs.

Pet toothbrushes and toothpaste are the most effective way of keeping teeth clean and breath fresh. Train pups with a finger wrapped in gauze or a finger brush and work up to a brush. Brush the outer surface of the tooth only.

Chewable treats and toys are another great way to keep teeth and gums healthy. Dentabones, Greenies, rawhides, pigs' ears and veggie chews are less messy and smelly than bones, and still provide a good clean. Cat Greenies come in a range of gourmet flavours. Chewy toys like Dental Kongs have special grooves and dents that mechanically clean teeth and some can be used with flavoured pet toothpaste.

Pets who won't chew may accept a special dental dry food. These foods abrade the teeth and reduce the accumulation of plaque and tartar. They are highly palatable.

Advance, Royal Canin and Hills produce dental care kibbles for both cats and dogs and all are available at Hall Veterinary Surgery.



*"Enough to drive me quackers....."*

"Friends" assist Russell The Pig attack 2009 Christmas Dinner



## SUPER SPECIAL

Advance Dental dog and cat biscuits keep teeth clean and sparkling. The shaped kibble mechanically abrades the teeth removing plaque and tartar. A cleaner on the kibble removes the plaque before it has a chance to harden into tartar and calculus. Advance Dental also contains green tea, which helps reduce the bacterial load in the mouth, prevents plaque and freshens the breath.



***During September ADVANCE 3kg dental range for dogs and cats will be discounted by \$10!***

## Our CAT Blog

***Have you checked out our cat blog yet?***

Dr Kate updates it at least once a week with photos of patients and friends, stories, articles on cat care and disease, links to reputable cat sites and the latest research updates on all things feline.

Search the blog for information in past posts on anything worrying you or your cat.

Subscribe to receive updates on your Google page or reader, **or** click on 'Follow' for updates to your email.

Have a laugh at the cat quotes or at "Wilson's Life and Times" on his linked blog.

[Hallcatvet.blogspot.com](http://Hallcatvet.blogspot.com)

## HALL VET SURGERY

33 Victoria St, Hall ACT

Ph: 6230 2223

Consultation hours:

8.30am-6pm Mon to Fri

8.30am-2.30pm Saturdays

By appointment only

[www.hallvet.com.au](http://www.hallvet.com.au)

**We prefer to email reminders for checkups and vaccinations. To help us save trees, time and postie's tyres, give your email address to our receptionist next time you are in.**