



# Young Veterinary Partnership

Ealing • Hounslow • Chiswick

# NEWS

[www.youngvets.co.uk](http://www.youngvets.co.uk)



SPRING 2026

## Easter alert!



Easter is often a time for indulgence, with many tempting treats around the home. While these are enjoyable for us, some can be very

dangerous for our pets. If your pet consumes something other than their usual food, do NOT wait for signs of poisoning to start. Acting fast can significantly impact the recovery process. Here we take a look at some of the toxic hazards at this time of year:



**Chocolate:** Dogs are very susceptible to chocolate toxicity. The darker the chocolate, the more dangerous it can be, consumption can cause fatal neurological signs.

**Sultanas and raisins** – found in hot cross buns, fruit cakes and the like, are also toxic for your dog. They can cause symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhoea and, in severe cases, kidney failure. Grapes are similarly a hazard for dogs.



**Xylitol** is an artificial sweetener, often used as a sugar-substitute in cakes, biscuits and also sugar-free chewing gum. Xylitol is extremely toxic to dogs causing life threateningly low blood sugar levels.



Turning to cats, **lilies** are a major hazard all year round. All parts of the plant are toxic, and even licking pollen from their coat can result in severe kidney failure, sometimes with delayed symptoms.

Another feline hazard – **permethrin flea treatments for DOGS**, is safe for *dogs*, but is extremely toxic to *cats*, so make sure it is never accidentally applied to cats.

Keep your pets safe and please contact us if you have any concerns.



## Keeping your pet worm free!

Worms are something all pet owners need to be aware of, since unlike many infectious diseases, we cannot vaccinate against them! Pets are continually exposed to worms through their environment, so regular worming

treatment is the only effective way to keep them protected. There are three main types of worms that commonly affect pets and can be treated: roundworms, tapeworms and lungworms.

**Roundworms** are most commonly found in young animals but can infect adults as well. Many puppies and kittens are born infected with roundworms because they cross the placenta and are also in the milk. Roundworms look like long strings of spaghetti but are usually only seen if there is a heavy burden or you give your pet a dewormer. Adult roundworms shed eggs which are passed out in your pets faeces and infect the environment and pets can become re-infected by unwittingly eating the eggs, often whilst grooming. Additionally the eggs can pose a risk to humans if accidentally ingested.



**Tapeworms** are long flat, segmented worms which live in the small intestines. They shed small mobile segments that pass out in the faeces and are often found around the tail areas of cats. As the segments break down they release eggs into the environment. These eggs may be eaten by 'intermediate hosts' – these include fleas and small rodents such as mice and voles. As a result, cats who are "mousers" will commonly have tapeworms. Similarly pets swallow fleas as they groom, and so re-infect themselves with tapeworms.

**Lungworm** (*Angiostrongylus vasorum*) is becoming increasingly common in dogs and can cause life-threatening disease. Slugs and snails act as 'intermediate hosts' and are commonly infected with immature lungworm larvae. If infected slugs and snails are eaten by a dog, the larvae migrate to their lungs. Here they develop into adult worms up to 2cm in size. The adults live and lay eggs inside the vessels of the lungs and the right side of the heart, causing symptoms such as coughing and exercise intolerance. Larvae migrate into lung tissue, causing blood clots, bleeding problems and even sudden death. The larvae are coughed up and pass out in the faeces where they are eaten by slugs and snails, so continuing the lifecycle.

All of our Pet healthcare Plans automatically include protection against worms. Visit [www.youngvets.co.uk](http://www.youngvets.co.uk) sign up to our Pet Healthcare Plans for free, choose the plan and payment date that suit YOU and YOUR pet.

### What to look out for!



**Typical Roundworms** – in this case *Toxocara canis*



**Tapeworm segments** – e.g. *Taenia taeniaeformis*



Both small rodents and fleas act as 'intermediate hosts' for tapeworms.

## Keyhole Surgery

### ARE YOU CONSIDERING NEUTERING YOUR FEMALE DOG?

We are pleased to add Keyhole (laparoscopic) surgery to our already extensive list of services available to you and your pet. Keyhole surgery is recommended for large or deep chested breeds such as Boxers, German Shepherds and Labradors.

### WHAT'S THE BENEFIT?

Keyhole surgery offers smaller surgical incisions, less post operative discomfort and a quicker recovery time - ideal for the more active breeds.

Your dogs age, weight, breed and date of last season will all be considered when deciding if neutering is appropriate for your family. Our team is here to guide you every step of the way.



The left ovary has been grasped and lifted away from the body wall. The suspensory ligament is on the left (cranial) and the tip of the left uterine horn is between the tips of the forceps.



Don't forget to follow us





## Caring for your senior cat

Elderly cats can seem to have the ideal life; snoozing in a cosy bed, eating when they fancy and occasionally demanding attention. They can appear so content, it is easy to assume that they are well in themselves, but their peaceful appearance can be deceiving! Regular health-checks are a good way of helping to keep your cat in top shape and pick up medical conditions early, when they are easier to treat. Here is a list of things to keep a watchful eye on:

**Weight loss:** Cat's can be masters of disguise and commonly, a range of different health problems can present with only one sign – weight loss. In senior felines, weight loss is often a sign of underlying illness, but in many cases, the gradual nature of the drop makes it difficult to spot. We are very happy to weigh your cat, and this is a great way to monitor their health if you can't weigh them at home. Weight loss can be a feature of many diseases including **diabetes mellitus**, **kidney disease** and **hyperthyroidism** (an over-active thyroid gland).

**Drinking more:** **diabetes mellitus** and **kidney disease** are common in older cats and both will cause them to drink more than usual. In fact, cats naturally drink very little, so often a cat who drinks 'well', is actually drinking to excess and should have a check-up.

**Eating less:** **Dental problems** and **kidney disease** are two of the most likely causes of a reduced or changed appetite in a cat. If their mouth is painful, they won't stop eating, but they may start to prefer wet food or, if watched carefully, not actually chew properly. It can be difficult to fully check their mouths at home, so if you are worried, just bring them down! Kidney disease is also a very common cause of appetite loss in older cats.

**Eating more:** An over-active thyroid gland (**hyperthyroidism**) and **diabetes mellitus** will both make cats eat more and while this is often taken as a sign of good health, it can be the opposite, especially if they are losing weight *despite* their increased appetite. The good news is that thyroid disease can be diagnosed from a simple blood test and there are a range of treatment options to manage this condition.

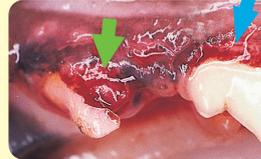
**Sore Joints:** Arthritis is another condition we see, but seemingly is less well recognised in cats versus dogs, since cats don't always limp or vocalise pain. The most common signs are reduced mobility, reduced activity, altered grooming and maybe the cat becoming more grumpy or avoiding people. Although you might perceive this as ageing changes, it might indicate your cat is actually in pain.

**Cognitive dysfunction:** Older cats can also suffer with cognitive dysfunction, a form of senile dementia, and exhibit behaviours such as confusion, withdrawing from the family, meowing aimlessly or wandering around the house.

Our feline OAPs will benefit from regular check-ups to monitor for early signs of the many of the conditions mentioned in this article. We can also keep a close eye on their body weight and notice any small changes that might indicate a problem developing. There are often very effective treatments for the management of age-related conditions, so if you have any concerns about your senior cat, please discuss them with us and don't just put changes down to old age itself.

### Dental disease in cats

**Gum disease** is a common cause of tooth loss in cats. In addition to this, cats may also suffer from one or more **tooth resorptive lesions**. Here the enamel is lost, exposing the very sensitive underlying dentine of the tooth. There is often an area of bright red gum overlying the affected area which usually hide a painful cavity in the underlying tooth, although cats will frequently show no obvious outward signs of toothache.



**Tooth resorptive lesion in a cat:** Typical lesion (green arrow). The tooth is progressively destroyed and is usually very painful. There is also generalised gum disease (blue arrow).



As we approach the warmer Spring weather it's a good idea to keep up your guard against pesky parasites. Here we look at two of the main offenders – fleas and ticks:

**Fleas** thrive very well, both in your home and outside in parks and gardens. Here, any flea eggs laying dormant will rapidly hatch into adult fleas, hopping onto passing pets.

The best way to prevent fleas is year-round treatment for all your pets with **veterinary licensed** flea products. Join our Healthcare Club and spread the cost of parasite protection for your pets.

**Ticks** are most active through March to October; they live in long grass and woodland and attach themselves to passing pets and also humans. Unlike fleas, ticks are not itchy, but can spread a range of serious tick-borne diseases:

**Lyme disease** is carried by a small percentage of *Ixodes* ticks in the UK. Affected pets (and also humans) can develop swollen joints and stiffness. They can also develop a fever, anorexia and lethargy.

**Babesiosis** is a tick-borne disease that can affect dogs travelling to mainland Europe. It is caused by a blood borne parasite (*B. canis*) which destroys red cells, leading to anaemia and also dark red urine.

**Ehrlichiosis** is another common tick-borne disease in mainland Europe and can cause fatal anaemia.

We recommend checking your pets every day (especially after walks) to remove any ticks before they can attach. Ticks that have attached can be removed

with a special tick removal tool. For added protection, we recommend using **veterinary licensed** products that work either by repelling the tick from attaching or killing them when they bite.

We are happy to help and advise you on the best form of flea and tick prevention for your pets!



## Pet Healthcare Club

**All your pet's essential vet care - in one simple monthly payment on a date that suits YOU.**

For the dog's - We offer **Dog Monthly Spot On Plan** - Choose the spot on plan for back of the neck, monthly liquid pipettes.

OR **Dog Monthly Chew Plan** if you prefer to give your dog a monthly parasite protection via a chewy tablet.

Speak to our team if you aren't sure which is best for your dog.

For the Cat's we have **Cat Monthly Plan** which includes a monthly back of the neck pipette for parasite protection and worming tablet

OR **Cat All In One** which includes **one pipette** every **THREE months** to cover all your cats parasite protection needs.

**All of our plans automatically include:** Your pets Annual booster vaccination, A six month health examination, Two nail clips per year, Two anal gland expressions per year **PLUS A 10 % discount** off all other products and services we offer.

Pay NO joining fee and start saving as soon as your first direct debit has been collected.

[www.youngvets.co.uk/services/pet-healthcare-club](http://www.youngvets.co.uk/services/pet-healthcare-club)

