



Cat's Whiskers

Veterinary Clinic NEWS

Welcome....

Welcome to the first edition of our Newsletter. A huge "Thank You" to all our clients for all the support you have shown since we opened in March.

*Amanda Kelly
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The Cat's Whiskers Team



Check out our Cat Care videos on our website!



www.cwvet.co.uk/care_wellbeing.htm

PAY MONTHLY AND SAVE UP TO 20% ON ROUTINE PREVENTATIVE HEALTH CARE

Ask us about joining our **Pet Health Plan VIP Club** which is tailored to your cat's age and lifestyle. You can spread the cost over the year and benefit from exclusive discounts.

Should I have my cat neutered?

ONE OF the many decisions facing pet owners is that of neutering. The good news is that apart from preventing unwanted pregnancies, there are several *other* benefits to having cats neutered as outlined below.

Cats are incredibly efficient reproducers and during the breeding season (in the warmer Spring and Summer months), unneutered females may come into heat as often as every 2-3 weeks and will endlessly try to escape and mate with a local male (tom) cat. Unneutered tom cats will mark their territory by "spraying" objects with urine and are frequently involved in fights. Sexual contact and fighting also risks transmission of fatal viruses.



In females, neutering (or spaying) involves the removal of the ovaries and uterus under a general anaesthetic. The primary benefit of being spayed is that seasons are eliminated and unplanned pregnancies avoided! Spaying also removes the possibility of life threatening

uterine infections (pyometras) and reduces the risk of developing potentially fatal mammary tumours later in life.

Neutering male cats involves removal of both testes under a general anaesthetic. Neutering makes your male pets less likely to stray and neutered male cats are far less likely to urine spray and also fight (reducing the risk of acquiring fatal viruses), than entire males.

As you can see, there are many benefits to having your pets neutered. Kittens can be neutered from 4 months old. Please contact us for further information or to book your cat in for an operation.

Could my cat have tooth ache?



HAVE YOU flipped up your cat's lip recently and had a look at his teeth?

Did you know that gum disease is probably the single most common long term disease that our pets will suffer from in their lives? Recent surveys have shown that as many as 70% of cats over the age of three may have some form of dental disease.

A healthy mouth usually has pale pink gums, and bright white teeth. However, over time, accumulation of plaque bacteria on the surface of the teeth can lead to *inflammation* of the gums – a condition called **gingivitis**. This is frequently accompanied by the accumulation of calculus (tartar) on the surface of the teeth, and also very bad breath! Worse still, if gingivitis is allowed to continue unchecked, the inflammation will eventually spread down *below* gum level, destroying the tooth supporting structures, leading to tooth loosening and eventual tooth loss.

Another fairly common condition are **tooth resorptive lesions**. These are seen exclusively in cats and are usually found on or below the gum line. They are usually very painful when touched.

If you would like any further information, or a dental check-up for your cat, please contact us to arrange a suitable time.

Is your cat affected? Does your cat's mouth look like this?



Gum disease with red-dened gum margins. If left untreated, this frequently results in tooth loss.



Tooth resorptive lesion (arrowed). Despite being painful, many cats show no obvious outward signs.

Cat photo (top left): Jane Burton

Meal deal – choosing the ideal diet!

CHOOSING a diet for your pet can sometimes seem a daunting task with such a huge range to select from! To make matters more complicated – and just as with ourselves – our pet's dietary requirements *alter* as they grow from tiny kittens, into adulthood and eventually old age. However, the good news is that with *life-stage diets*, we are able to feed our pets a correctly balanced diet for every stage of their lives.

Kittens, because of their rapid rate of growth, need *higher* levels of energy, protein, fatty acids and other nutrients. Specifically formulated junior/growth diets ensure controlled growth (avoiding obesity) and healthy joint development.

Adult cats, with their major growth phase now complete, require a balanced diet to keep them fit and healthy, but with *lower* levels of many of the nutrients mentioned above. To achieve this, adult cats require carefully balanced adult/maintenance diets.

Older cats also benefit from specifically formulated geriatric/senior diets. These have a reduced calorie content to help prevent weight gain in older age, higher fibre content to reduce constipation and changes in protein and mineral levels to reduce the workload of internal organs such as the kidney, liver and heart.

Whether healthy or poorly, your cat will benefit most from a high quality diet that suits their needs. If you have any queries on the most suitable diet for your cat – we would be delighted to help you.



Prescription Diets

Pets with particular disease problems may also benefit from specific “*prescription diets*”. These are specifically formulated diets that can help greatly in the treatment of a variety of conditions including diseases of the kidneys, heart, joints, skin and teeth.

Kidney disease Is my cat affected?



THANKFULLY most of our pets lead healthy active lives. However for some, kidney disease can be a problem and it is particularly prevalent in older pets (especially cats).

Cats have two kidneys and each kidney has several hundred thousand tiny filters called **nephrons**. These filter the blood, removing toxic waste products, salts and water which are then concentrated to form urine.

Over time a proportion of the nephrons will disappear with age and not be replaced. Other factors such as toxins, infections or cancer may also destroy nephrons.

However, the kidneys have *excess* filtering capacity with the result that *visible* symptoms of kidney disease are not usually seen until roughly two thirds of the nephrons have been lost. If this stage is reached the filtering capacity falls and toxic wastes begin to accumulate in the blood. Common symptoms include **increased drinking and increased urination, weight loss, muscle wastage, lack of appetite and lethargy**.

With regular veterinary check-ups the symptoms of kidney disease can often be detected at an earlier stage – *before* they become outwardly noticeable. So don't delay – if your cat is showing *any* symptoms of kidney problems, please see us for a check-up. Whilst kidney disease cannot be cured, a combination of specially formulated diets that reduce the workload of the kidneys, together with novel forms of medication, can often significantly improve the quality of life for affected cats.

Sun Alert!

Although cats are great sunbathers, cats with white ear tips and noses are particularly at risk from sunburn which often leads to **localised skin cancer** of these areas. This risk can be reduced by applying high factor waterproof sunblock, applied daily, to reduce sunburn and the development of skin cancer.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you would like further information on preventing or treating this serious condition.



Ear tip of a cat showing cancerous changes

Parasites: Spring into action!

THE warmer months are peak season for pesky parasites and two of the most annoying are fleas and ticks!

Fleas need little introduction to most pet owners! Adult fleas are 2-3mm in length and can be seen without magnification. These tiny

wingless insects survive by feeding on your pet's blood, causing very intense irritation and sometimes allergic skin disease. Fleas also play a major role in transmitting tapeworms in cats.

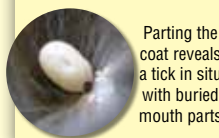
Ticks tend to be a problem in the warmer months and commonly live in areas of heathland, moorland and woodland, waiting to attach themselves to passing animals. Ticks feed on your pet's blood and can cause problems in two ways – firstly they can cause a tissue reaction at their site of attachment and secondly they can transmit serious diseases such as Lyme disease and Babesiosis.

Don't let fleas and ticks make your life a misery – Please let us advise you on the best form of flea and tick control for *your* cat!

What to look for when you groom your pet's coat



Specks of flea “dirt” (flea faeces) in the coat are easy to find



Parting the coat reveals a tick in situ with buried mouth parts

