



# Pet News

Winter 2017

## What's Involved in a Vet Consult For My Pet?

Bringing your pet in to see the vet can be a big deal. The moment you arrive in our clinic, are greeted by our staff and take a seat, only half the story has actually unfolded. We know that you have had to hide the cat cage so the cat doesn't 'sniff' out your cunning plan and escape out the partially open toilet window.

You have juggled wiping sticky jam from kids faces, found the missing gumboot, and stopped the dog licking the cornflakes that have dropped and splattered all over the floor. You managed to wrestle all necessary creatures (human and otherwise) into your chosen mode of transport to make it down to us.



On the trip in you tried to tune out the howling of discontent, by listening to morning radio while planning

what to cook for dinner that night as well as the logistics of getting to ballet and soccer at the same time.

Does this sound at all familiar?

Now you've made it to the clinic our team is here to help. You've booked your face to face consultation to see our skilled and personable vet professional – but what is involved and what can you expect?

A vet consultation will usually take 15-20 minutes. During this time, the vet will ask you many questions to take a thorough history. This is to gain as much information about your pet, their health and other relevant information that may contribute towards a diagnosis and treatment plan, suitable for your pet and situation.

Our vets will perform a complete and thorough physical exam of your pet. They do this by touch, sight, sound and sometimes even smell! This exam is head to tail and sometimes may appear like the vet is just petting, fussing and

### In this issue

- ✦ What's Involved in a Vet Consult For My Pet?
- ✦ Animal Rehabilitation
- ✦ Twisted Stomach's in Dogs

*Continued On The Next Page...*

www.vetent.co.nz  
info@vetent.co.nz

**Continued...**

stroking your pet, - but they are actually gathering information the whole time.

Feel free to ask what the vet is doing, looking for and what they find. The only time they need some quiet is when they are listening to heart, lungs or gut sounds with their stethoscope. Certain physical parameters (heart rate, breathing rate, temperature, dental score, gum colour and weight) are recorded at every examination. These create a comprehensive picture over time on what is considered normal for your pet and can be valuable to identify trends over time.

The vet will discuss their findings, their thoughts on possible causes, problems or diagnosis and a proposed treatment plan. This is an open conversation, your input, questions and discussion are valuable to help create the best plan for you and your pet. Further procedures or tests may be needed and these will be discussed with you before commencing. If appropriate, medication will be dispensed, and a follow up visit may be booked.

So what may have been perceived as a quick 'check over' of your pet and casual chat, is actually a thorough and comprehensive health check,

discussion and treatment plan process that we strive to provide each and every time. We make it look seamless because we have a professional understanding on what is required and can recognize what is needed to tailor an individual plan for all of our patients.

Sometimes all the information in a consult can be overwhelming. It's not until you get home that you may think of things you don't understand or want to know more about. In this instance please do not hesitate to give your local VetEnt a call.



## Animal Rehabilitation:



Just as humans need to rehabilitate after surgery or injury, so do our pets. We are all (people and pets) made up of very similar bones, tendons, muscles and joints and we are all prone to similar injuries, and the effects of surgery. People can rupture ligaments around the knee in a very similar way to pets, and they can also develop arthritis following these injuries which is essentially the same disease process in both species.

Our working dogs could be viewed in a similar way to athletes who are prone to stress and overuse type injuries. Our older pets are prone to age related

arthritis and joint deterioration just as we are as we get older.

Surgery involves disruption of muscle, tendon, ligament, and joints with changes in functionality. Scarring can develop, and pain can reduce the use of the limb or other area of the body. Pain is nature's way of limiting movement and allowing the area to heal. In some cases this can be detrimental, and it is important that we encourage early use of the limb or affected area to retain function as much as possible.

Injuries can also result in scarring, tearing, bleeding and fractures which are all painful and result in changed mobility and function. If left untreated, injuries can lead to permanent alterations in mobility long term pain.

Massage, movement, extension and flexion all encourage blood flow, improve oxygenation, reduce swelling and promote strength and mobility. This physiotherapy encourages a quicker return to normal function, reduces pain and provides strength to tissues. Leaving damaged tissues to heal on their own after surgery or injury may lead to scarring

and shrinkage of the tissues- a process called atrophy. Once atrophy has set in it is very hard to regain normality.

Being able to safely rehabilitate animals using physiotherapy requires a thorough knowledge of anatomy (structure) but also knowledge of tissue function and the likely effects of surgery and injury. Suitably trained veterinarians are able to provide this service because they have this detailed knowledge of structure and function. However many veterinary nurses are now being trained to provide animal rehabilitation services in practices where vets are actively working in this area.

At VetEnt we aim to provide our animal patients with pain free surgery, injury management and a speedy recovery. We aim to care for our aged patients, who may have painful arthritis or other debilitating locomotion conditions. We do this by using safe, pain control medications and in some clinics our vets create rehabilitation /physiotherapy programs designed to provide surrounding tissues with strength and mobility to support affected joints.

For help and assistance or more information about rehabilitation after surgery or injury concerning your pet please do not hesitate to call your nearest VetEnt clinic.

## Twisted Stomach's in Dogs:

Twisted stomachs in dogs, known as gastric dilation volvulus or GDV, is a dangerous disease of dogs where the stomach fills with air and then twists on itself. The twisting process decreases blood flow to the stomach and causes a multitude of other dangerous changes particularly to the heart and the liver. The condition is therefore a surgical emergency. GDV, if left untreated, can result in 12-43% of dogs dying. Even in dogs that are treated, recurrence can occur in as much as 80% of dogs.

The cause of GDV is likely to involve many different factors including conformation (deep chested breeds), anatomy of ligaments associated with the stomach, exercise after feeding, feeding once daily and cereal based diets. The exact predisposing factors are unknown.

Dogs affected by GDV will be acutely ill. Typically their stomachs will become enlarged/ swell and they will experience vomiting and pain. If you see symptoms similar to this please call your VetEnt clinic immediately.

The treatment of GDV involves fluid therapy initially to treat the shock syndrome which will be getting more severe by the minute. Once the animal is stabilised it will be taken to surgery where the stomach will be deflated and emptied. The spleen may have to be removed if it has twisted. The spleen is very closely associated with the stomach so twisting of the stomach often also involves twisting of the spleen.

Once the stomach and spleen have been untwisted, the surgeon may decide to permanently attach a part of the stomach to the inside of the rib cage or abdominal wall. This is a process called pexy (scar or adhesion) which is very successful at preventing a second twist of the stomach in future.

Recently our veterinarians were asked to perform a pexy (gastropexy) on a dog that did not (yet) have a GDV so the process was carried out as a preventive measure. The procedure was carried out under controlled surgical conditions.

In dogs with predisposing factors dogs that may be prone to GDV, consideration of preventive surgical procedures may be an option that you might like to discuss with your veterinarian.

