

# the latest

news from maven veterinary care

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## CAT'S CORNER: Hyperthyroidism

**Hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid gland) is one of the most common conditions that we see in older cats.**

The thyroid gland is responsible for controlling the body's metabolism and when it becomes overactive the typical signs seen include a ravenous appetite accompanied with weight loss, an increase in activity, and increased thirst.



It is very common for cats who suffer from an overactive thyroid to appear very needy, constantly meowing for food and attention.

In examination of cats with an overactive thyroid the heart rate is elevated, weight loss is noted, the coat may look unkempt and in most cases a goitre (enlarged thyroid gland) is felt.

Diagnosis is achieved via a blood test and treatment is often very rewarding for the cat, the owner and the vet.

The gold standard treatment is to administer radioactive iodine therapy. This is performed at external specialist centres.

Other options include administering anti thyroid medications either by tablet or as a gel applied to the inner ear, surgery to remove the enlarged gland, or by feeding exclusively an iodine depleted diet.

If your cat is diagnosed hyperthyroid, at Maven Vets we will discuss which treatment option is most suitable for you and your cat.

Routine checks are also required to ensure that the thyroid levels have normalised following treatment.

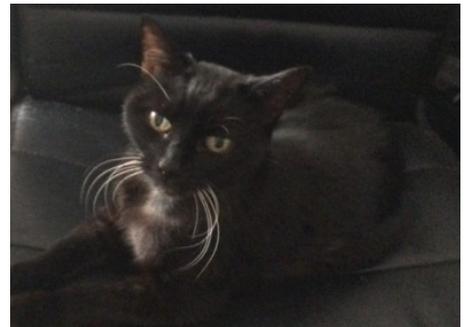
The International Cat Care Organisation also provides further information about this condition.

## Vote for Maven's Pet of the Year 2018!

It is nearly time once again to help us find our **Maven Pet of the Year!** As before, we have 12 nominees. Each of the 12 pets who are nominated for this prestigious award have won the title of Pet of the Month during 2018. Winners of the Pet of the Month award are decided by our team and are featured on our website. But the winner of the Pet of the year 2018 title must be determined by YOU!



Voting will begin in December 2018 and the competition will be featured on our facebook page [www.facebook.com/mavenvets](http://www.facebook.com/mavenvets). To have a sneak preview of our 12 finalists and their stories, visit our website [www.mavenvets.co.uk/news/pet-of-the-month](http://www.mavenvets.co.uk/news/pet-of-the-month) and see who you will vote for!



The Winner will be announced in early January 2019 and will feature in our Spring Newsletter.

## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all at Maven Vets!

We hope you don't need to visit the vet over this festive period but if you do, we are here. Contact us as normal on **0208 337 2214** and you will be able to speak either to one of the Maven team or, if we are closed, to our out-of-hours emergency provider, **Vets Now**. Our opening hours over the festive period are:

### Saturday 22nd December:

Open as normal 9am – 4pm

### Sunday 23rd December:

Open as normal 10am – 2pm

### Monday 24th December:

We will close at 5pm for Christmas Eve

### Christmas Day, Tuesday 25th December:

We are closed\*



### Boxing Day, Wednesday 26th December:

We are closed\*

### Thursday 27th December to Friday 28th

December: Open as normal 8am – 8pm

### Saturday 29th December:

Open as normal 9am – 4pm

### Sunday 30th December:

Open as normal 10am – 2pm

### New Year's Eve, Monday 31st December:

We will close at 6pm

### Tuesday 1st January 2019: We are closed\*

### Wednesday 2nd January:

Normal opening hours resume at 8am.

\*An emergency service with **Vets Now** will be running.



### Our opening hours

Monday – Friday 8am-8pm

Saturday 9am-4pm

Sunday 10am-2pm

In an Emergency day or night – call us on 0208 337 2214

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

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## Brrr – it’s cold out there!

With the colder weather setting in, it’s a good idea to start making plans to avoid some Christmas calamities and keep our pets healthy throughout the festive season.

**Winter walks:** In order to avoid pets expanding their waistline, getting out and about as the weather cools is essential. However make sure that your pets are adequately prepared; when outside they may need to wear waterproof and warm jackets, especially if they are older or have thin coats. Some salt mixtures on paths, and also snow building up between the paws, can cause limping and pain. So, do check your pet’s feet regularly and make sure they are washed and clean on return from a walk. Whilst out and about, make sure you play some games to give your pet mental as well as physical exercise.

**Toxic alert:** Anti-freeze poisonings increase at this time of year because we use it more in our cars. Although it is highly toxic, it tastes very sweet and pets, in particular cats, will drink it readily. Make sure your car isn’t leaking any fluid and keep cans or bottles of it well out of reach and cleaned on the outside. Even a few licks can be fatal.



**Outdoor pets:** Rabbits and guinea pigs are ideally brought into a heated garage or shed, or moved inside. Make sure they have plenty of bedding and that their water supply is fresh twice daily. Check your small furries at least once a day to make sure they are bright, eating and well. If you have a rabbit or guinea pig who lives alone, now is the ideal time to think about getting a friend of the same species so they have someone to cuddle up with!



**Foliage alert:** Some plants such as ivy, poinsettia, holly berries and mistletoe can also cause stomach upsets. Lily petals and pollen are very toxic to cats. They may brush against the pollen and lick it off their fur, which can cause kidney failure.

**Festive alert:** Pieces of string, tinsel and bones from turkeys should be kept well out of reach to avoid an intestinal blockage and the possible need for life saving surgery. Baubles and lights, if broken and eaten, will cause serious damage to your pet. Similarly we see lots of problems at this time of year from pets eating things like chocolate, christmas cake and mince pies.



So – enjoy the festive season and follow these tips to keep your pets safe and healthy. As always, if you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to get in touch!

## Cold weather aches and pains



Cold winters can make your pet’s joints feel stiff and painful. This can manifest as a reluctance to go on long walks, a stiffening when getting up after lying down or a specific lameness.

The joints most susceptible to arthritis are those permitting limb movements – called synovial joints. The ends of the bones which meet at these joints are covered by smooth articular cartilage. In pets with arthritis, this protective cartilage is damaged, resulting in exposure of the underlying bone, causing pain and inflammation. Secondary new bone is commonly deposited around the joint and may be seen on x-ray (see lower right image).



In many cases, arthritis causes a low grade, constant discomfort. Whilst some pets will develop an obvious limp, many pets, especially cats, will simply slow down, be stiffer getting up and generally rest more; all of which is easy to put down to ‘old age’.

Although arthritis cannot usually be cured, the good news is that we now have an expanding range of treatments to help your pet.

First of all, **weight reduction** is absolutely vital. Often sore joints lead to reduced exercise causing an increased waist line! However, even a small loss will make a massive difference to mobility. Have a chat to us about how to help your pet slim down!

**Exercise:** Many arthritic pets struggle on long walks, so little and often is the key. Vary where you go so they always have somewhere new to explore; mental stimulation is as important as physical, especially for older animals. Try swimming as well, pools for dogs are now very common and it is a great way to strengthen muscles and burn calories while not stressing out sore joints. Simple changes at home can make such a difference: putting mats on slippery floors, providing a super supportive bed and using ramps will all really help.

Many pets also benefit from anti-inflammatory **pain relief** and also increased dietary intake of **glucosamine and chondroitin sulphate** either as a supplement or in the way of prescription food. If you are worried that your pet may have arthritis, please come and see us for a check-up!

### X-rays and arthritis

Radiography is commonly used to investigate joint problems.



X-ray of a **normal elbow joint**



**Arthritic elbow joint** in a dog with lots of “fluffy” new bone (yellow arrows) around the joint, indicative of marked arthritis.

## Where do fleas go in the winter?

**Answer: Your Home!** Did you know that the worst time for flea infestations is actually the Autumn and Winter months? Fleas thrive in warm conditions and thanks to central heating, they don’t need to hop south for the winter, they just need to move into your living room.



Fleas can make their way into our homes in all sorts of ways; on our pets, on us, or just hopping in by themselves. Did you know that fleas can jump 20cm into the air – so your front step is no barrier to them! They lay their eggs in protected places like under furniture or in the cracks of laminate floors and those eggs can survive for months, waiting to be activated by your central heating and the presence of pets spending more time inside. This is why flea infestations can appear to come out of nowhere!

**So, it is vital to protect against fleas all year round!** Come and have a chat to us about the best ways to do this and you can stop your home from being a flea’s winter paradise!