

the latest

news from maven veterinary care



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. Dogs in particular can easily sniff out hidden treats such as chocolate or hot cross buns! 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 stronger the chocolate (plain being the strongest), the more dangerous it can be and it may 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 bought and home baked cakes 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.

The good news is that there are a variety of **veterinary licenced** treatments to prevent worm infections which are easy to administer and suitable for dogs and cats. Please contact us to find out how we can help you best protect your pets.

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.

Easter Opening Times!

We hope your furry friends stay happy and healthy this Easter, but if they do need a helping paw, we've got you covered! Just call us on **0208 337 2214**. During our opening hours you'll reach one of our lovely Maven team members, and if we're closed, our brilliant out-of-hours partners at Vets Now will be there to help.

Easter Opening Hours:

Good Friday, Friday 3rd April ... We are **CLOSED** for the day

Saturday 4th April ... We are **OPEN** as usual 9am – 4pm

Easter Sunday, Sunday 5th April ... **OPEN** 10am – 2pm for urgent and emergency appointments only

Easter Monday, Monday 6th April ... We are **CLOSED** for the day

Don't worry – Vets Now will be running an emergency service whenever we're closed.

We'll be back bright and early with our normal opening hours from 8am on Tuesday 7th April.



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

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609-613 London Road, North Cheam, Surrey, SM3 9DF

SPRINGTIME SAFETY TIPS FOR YOUR CAT

Keeping your feline friends happy, healthy, and safe this season

Spring has finally arrived! The lighter mornings and evenings are a welcome change, and many cats will be eager to explore the outdoors again as the weather warms. As you and your cat enjoy the new season, here are some important reminders to help keep them safe.

Microchipping: Now a Legal Requirement

Since 2024, it has become a legal requirement for all cats in the UK to be microchipped. If your cat isn't yet microchipped, now is the perfect time to get this vital identification in place.

A microchip is a tiny chip inserted just under the skin, containing a unique code. When scanned, this code links to your contact details on a national database – allowing you to be quickly reunited with your cat should they ever go missing.

Please contact the practice if your cat needs a microchip implanted or if you need help updating your details.

SPRING PLANTS TO AVOID

Spring brings many beautiful blooms, but some seasonal plants can be highly toxic to cats. Please take extra care with the following:

LILIES (EXTREMELY POISONOUS)

Every part of a lily – flowers, leaves, pollen, even the water in a vase – can be fatal to cats. Merely brushing against the plant can transfer pollen to their coat, which may then be ingested during grooming.

DAFFODILS

These spring favourites contain toxic crystals inside their bulbs, which can be very dangerous if chewed or eaten.

OTHER HARMFUL PLANTS INCLUDE:

- Tulips
- Begonias
- Amaryllis
- Chrysanthemums

Before bringing new plants into your home or garden, it's always worth checking if they are cat-safe.

Parasites: Spring Is Peak Season

Ticks, fleas, and other parasites become more active as the weather warms. Ensure your cat is up to date with their routine parasite prevention treatments to keep them protected throughout the season.

Spring Cleaning Safety

If spring cleaning is on your to-do list, please be aware that some household cleaning products can be hazardous to cats.

Disinfectants containing **benzalkonium chloride** can be harmful if licked from paws or fur.

- To keep your cat safe:
- Use non-toxic cleaning products where possible
- Keep your cat out of areas until surfaces are completely dry
- Store cleaning products securely

We're Here to Help

If you need guidance about microchipping, parasite protection, or plant safety – or if you are worried your cat may have ingested something harmful – please contact the practice straight away. We are always here to support you and your feline family members.

By Gemma Hewitt RVN



Spring parasites!

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. Tablet and spot-on treatments are ideal for treating your pets, whilst household sprays are great for treating your home.

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!



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