

Veterinary care

Visits to your veterinarian are important for the health of your pet and are a good time for a vaccination and a general check-up. These visits can also help to identify health issues that may not be obvious before they become a serious issue. Pets have a tendency to try and conceal when they are unwell so remember, you know your pet best. If you notice anything out of the ordinary, it is always best to have your pet seen by your veterinarian. Some common signs of illness include (but are not limited to):

- Change in appetite or thirst (either increased or decreased)
- Vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- Straining to urinate or defecate
- Coughing or abnormal breathing
- Discovery of any lumps or bumps
- Abnormal discharges (e.g. blood, pus)
- Unexplained weight loss



Vaccinations are used to help prevent contagious and sometimes fatal diseases in cats and dogs. They are most effective when they are given at fixed dates with booster vaccinations. Vaccinations are important for all pets but are crucial for those that spend time outside the home and/or have contact with other animals. Most kennels, catteries and daycare facilities for pets require proof of vaccination so it is a good idea to keep it up to date in the event that you may need to board your pet.

Parasites are organisms that live either on (e.g. fleas) or inside our pets (e.g. intestinal worms). The types of parasites that are most important will depend on your dog's age, lifestyle and where you live. It is important to recognise that even pets that don't leave the home or regularly interact with other animals may still need parasite prevention since there are multiple ways parasites can enter your home. Your veterinarian can recommend the most appropriate internal and external parasite preventative treatments for your pet.



There are many pet foods available for cats and dogs. A pet's nutritional needs change considerably over their life – for example puppies require a calorie dense diet with specific amounts of protein, calcium and fat for optimal growth and development. Conversely, as a dog enters its senior years, it may

require a lower calorie diet to avoid weight gain and additional joint support. Your veterinarian will be able to recommend a diet that is of good quality and appropriate for your pet's age, size and lifestyle.

Your veterinarian is a valuable source of advice and will be able to make further recommendations on many pet related matters such as suggesting shampoos to use for bathing and advice on any behavioural and training concerns.