

Fleas

Many clients have been struggling with flea control over the summer months. But with heating throughout the cooler months, fleas are a constant problem for dogs, cats and their owners!

The flea **life cycle** includes the egg, larva, pupa and adult—this process, if conditions are optimal, from egg to adult can take as little as 21 days. Eggs are deposited from the animal particularly when they are lying down - so in bedding and carpet before they then hatch into larvae. These larvae crave darkness eg between floorboards and develop into pupae which are covered in a hard shell (cocoon) which is very resistant to treatment and can lay dormant for up to 6 months. These pupae then hatch into adults when stimulated by heat, vibration and carbon dioxide (i.e from you or your pet) and can hatch in as little as 8 days.

A flea infestation can be extremely frustrating to deal with - only 5% of the total population is actually adult fleas on your pet whereas the other **95%** is made up of the other life stages in the **environment**. This means that pet treatment alone is NOT sufficient to eliminate and prevent a flea problem. Environmental treatment of fleas is paramount and achieved using regular vacuuming and use of a **household flea spray**.

There are **many different products** to protect your pet from fleas and each have their own merits depending on duration of activity and other parasites protected against.

Please speak to us about the products available.



Recent Cases

Recently, we have seen a few cases of a condition in female dogs called **Pyometra**. This condition is seen in typically older, entire bitches associated with the change in hormones following oestrus or heat. The womb or uterus of the bitch becomes full of pus-like fluid and toxins are released which can enter the blood stream which can then become potentially fatal.

Signs include; drinking or urinating more than normal, anorexia (off food), vomiting, vaginal discharge and generally having an altered demeanour.

Medical **treatment** by means of antibiotics and supportive therapy can be used but is largely unsuccessful. The gold standard treatment of this condition is **surgery**, whereby the ovaries and uterus are removed. Because of the potential toxæmia (toxins in the blood), it is normally recommended that intravenous fluids are used.

Prevention - this condition is easily avoided by neutering at an appropriate age, involving the removal of the bitches reproductive organs. This is ideally performed 3 months after a bitches last heat, to minimise surgical complications.

This surgery is performed routinely so please enquire about booking.

Fireworks

We are coming up to the time of year when firework displays become commonplace. Although a great time is had by most of us - cats, dogs and small animals can be significantly **stressed** and affected by the noises associated. There are a number of easy solutions that can be used in the household including; providing a **den** or safe place that the pet is able to hide in, playing an **audio** of firework noises in the background aiming to desensitise your pet to the noise, making sure you are in and all windows and doors are all shut when fireworks are known to be happening. There are a few different medications that can be used to reduce stress and anxiety if your pet is seriously affected, but some of these need to be started for some time prior to events to have full effect. Please enquire.

Start Thinking About Fluke

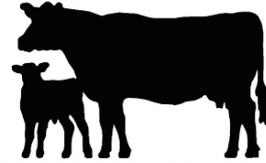
Liver Fluke (Fascioliasis) is caused by the parasite *Fasciola Hepatica*. It causes disease by immature flukes migrating through the liver and/or adults present in the bile ducts – creating a lot of damage. Liver fluke can affect any grazing animal but most commonly cattle and sheep, with sheep being more seriously affected.

The life-cycle is complicated and involved an intermediate host, the **snail**, which obviously is found in higher number in wetter areas with poor drainage.

The incidence of disease is highest when there is rainfall above average in May-July. The severity of disease depends on the number of immature fluke which are ingested by the animal. **Acute, subacute and chronic forms** of the disease exist with sudden death being associated with acute infection and more progressive weight loss associated with the chronic form.

Prevention is largely based on reducing exposure to snails in the late summer, autumn and winter so avoiding the grazing of the wettest pastures at this time helps reduce the potential for disease.

There are **different treatments** for the treatment of immature and adult flukes as well as fluke and worm combination drugs. The choice of drug and time of year administered should be **discussed** with a vet, based on the farm's individual circumstances and the parasite forecast for the time of year.



BVD Testing

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea is a devastating, highly contagious disease being one of the biggest issues to face the UK's current cattle industry. The majority of infections occur after birth but infection of a pregnant cow in her first 120 days of gestation, the calf may be born **persistently infected (PI)**. A PI will maintain disease in a herd by shedding very high quantities of virus for the entirety of the animal's life, infecting others.

BVD **costs** to a farm can be subtle but significant: reproductive issues including abortion, failure to conceive, pneumonia and scour in calves as well as poor production both in terms of growth and milk yield.

Vaccination helps to control the disease within a herd but will **not** eradicate disease altogether - farms vaccinating currently may still have BVD in their animals.

Blood testing a small group of young animals gives an initial indication of the BVD status of the herd and is a good starting point. Farms in Wales are now being **funded** to blood test during their annual TB test.

Please enquire about BVD.

Enzootic Abortion vaccine

Important to remember is that when using the vaccine for Enzootic abortion (*C. Abortus*) antibiotics should NOT be used **7 days prior** to and up to **4 weeks after** the date of vaccination.

Free Cushing's Testing

PPID or Cushing's as previously known, is a disorder of horses involving an area of the brain responsible for the release of hormones. The disease typically affects **middle-aged to older** horses (12y +) and **signs include**; abnormal weight distribution, abnormal coat shedding, a curly appearance to the coat, excessive sweating, urinating and drinking more than normal, repeat episodes of foot abscesses and laminitis. It is proven that 80% of laminitis cases have an underlying disorder, one of which is PPID. The condition can be diagnosed using a simple blood test which until the end of November is **free** (excluding blood sample and visit charge). **Treatment** is aimed at reducing the effects of the condition and is lifelong after the point of diagnosis. Speak to us about booking a blood test or for more information.

