



VACCINATIONS—WHAT ARE THEY AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

Vaccinations are an important part of preventative health. They have been used in humans to eradicate diseases like Polio and Small Pox. In the animal world vaccines have limited the spread of diseases such as Rabies and Parvovirus.

Vaccinations are an important part of the care and well being of our pets. The obvious benefit of vaccinations include protecting our pets from diseases such as Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Kennel Cough in dogs and Feline Enteritis, AIDS and Cat Flu in cats. Each year our hospital treats a number of Parvovirus cases in young puppies and unfortunately more often than not this disease is fatal. In cats, Feline Aids (FIV) can be prevalent and is fatal to all cats. These disease are easily preventable with simple vaccination programs.

The Vaccination Schedule is as follows:

- Puppies— C3 at 6-8 weeks and a C5 at 12 & 16 weeks

- Adult Dogs—C5 annually

- Kittens—F3 at 6-8, 12 & 16 weeks with FIV vaccination at 12, 14 & 16 weeks.

- Adult Cats—F3 & FIV annually

Any pet that is boarded in a Cattery or Boarding Kennel needs an up-to-date "C5" for dogs or an "F3" for cats.

As well as receiving an annual vaccination, your pet also gets a complete health check that can help pick up any hidden ailments.

As we all know, animals cant communicate their problems easily to us and more often than not problems are generally picked up in advanced stages of disease, making treatment less effective. With annual health checks and a

vaccination any health problems that your pet may have, may be diagnosed earlier, thus giving your pet the greatest possible chance of overcoming his or her illness.

Recently there have been some changes in regards to vaccinations and how often they need to be given. A new "C3" vaccination that is given every 3 years instead of every year has arrived. There is limited data on its use in general practice in Australia and so it is hard to say whether this vaccine will be appropriate in our circumstances. Our recommendation is to still give an annual "C5" vaccination which includes the "C3" component. This vaccination regime is the most appropriate for the general dog population at this stage. Certainly you can discuss whether this new vaccination is appropriate for your dog when you next visit.

DESEXING DEBATE!

Recent media articles have indicated a hardening of attitude by authorities, to people that do not desex their animals and have proposed restrictions on movement and dollar penalties for people choosing to keep entire animals (and certain breeds) at home. The majority of people have a high regard for the well being of their animal friend and so will have their animals surgically desexed at about 5-6 months of age just prior to puberty. They are well aware of the reasons for doing so and the consequences of not getting them desexed. Newer "pet parents" may not be so well informed. For this reasons we outline very briefly the rationale.

Why?

- **Male cats**—post pubertal hor-

mone influence leads to behavioural changes leading to territorial behaviour, urine marking, increased straying and fighting with other cats of similar mind. In turn this leads to a more common incidence of abscesses, Feline AIDS, feline infectious anaemia, road traffic encounters etc.

- **Female cats** cycle (on heat) most commonly (but not only) in Spring, which leads to quite bizarre and unsociable behaviour and "calling" until she is mated, and if so, unwanted litters are produced. Her scent will attract tom cats from far and wide and neighbourhood sleep patterns will be greatly disrupted.

- **Male dogs** do not necessarily become fat and lazy (Guide Dogs and Dogs Assisting the Disable are all desexed), nor does the dog "lose character". That character is un-

complicated by "steroid influence" later on in life and the instinctive desire to respond to distinct air hormones released by bitches on heat is markedly reduced. Reduced occurrence of prostate problems and some tumours is also seen.

- Desexing in **female dogs** prevents both oestrus and breeding. She will not "cycle" and can exercise and have normal companionship throughout the year instead of being confined during the usual two heat periods per year, each of about a three week duration.

- The incidence of mammary tumours is greatly reduced especially if done before her first heat period. The idea that it is beneficial to let her have "one litter" has been proven in worldwide →

THOMAS' TAILS!

Cheerio to the felines and canines out there. Winter have left us and the warmth of summer is well upon us. Christmas is not that far away and the thought of Christmas presents is on our minds. Finding Christmas presents for the furry members of the family can be exhausting given the range of toys and gifts out there. There are the usual raw hide treats and plastic and rubber toys as well as gifts for the fashion conscious like a sparkling diamante collar (hint hint hospital staff!). It is important when purchasing a gift for your animal friend that it is appropriate for him/her. Toys that are easily chewed into bite-sized pieces are not appropriate for animals that like to chew and swallow

items. Some of the treat type presents are not appropriate for animals with sensitive digestive sys-



tems because of the colourings and additives. The staff at Crown St Vet Hospital are more than happy to advise on suitable presents for your pets.

In keeping with the Christmas theme pets and Christmas dinner do not go hand in hand. Countless pets are treated at the hospital each Christmas and New Year period for ailments ranging from gastroenteritis through to pancreatitis. The rich foods prepared for Christmas lunch can wreak havoc on the digestive system, so it is advisable to avoid feeding your pets rich fatty foods and as they say, everything in moderation.

Well that's my two cents worth



Meow for Now!

The Staff at Crown Street Veterinary Hospital would like to wish all our clients a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year

Desexing Debate continued.....

....studies to be false.

- About 1 in 4 non-desexed, non-breeding bitches will develop a potentially life-threatening infection of the uterus (Pyometron) by 8 years of age.

When: we recommend that all companion cats and dogs, not intended for breeding purposes, benefit from surgical desexing at 5-6 months of age.

The greatest benefit and the minimum risk from the procedure is to be gained at this time. It also satisfies the time frame for a reduced registration fee to Council.

Chemical castration in Male Dogs is available but is expensive and is of short term duration. "The Pill" in bitches has been used in times past but can cause major health problems and so is not often recommended.

Christmas Opening Hours!

Saturday 23rd December: 8.00am—6.00pm

Sunday 24th December: 9.00am—1.00pm

Monday 25th December: Closed

(Emergency after hours service available)

Tuesday 26th December: 9.00am—1.00pm

Monday 1st January 2007: 9.00am—1.00pm

Friday 26th January 2007 : 9.00am—1.00pm

Receive a Hill's Loyalty Card with every purchase or Hill's Science Diet or Prescription Diet Foods which entitles you to 1 free bag after you purchase 10!



Don't Forget about our Hydrobath for Dogs!

Every Saturday Morning from 8.30-12.00pm

Great for Christmas!

Getting a new puppy from Santa??

Ask us about Puppy Preschool Classes to get your puppy off to a great start—4 week course, \$70.00 per pup!, Classes starting early in the new year.

STAFF PETS!

Riley is a Jack Russell Terrier x belonging to Belinda. Riley was hit by a car last Christmas and was rushed to a 24 hour Emergency Veterinary Hospital in Sydney where Belinda does some part time work. Riley was treated for shock on arrival and given intravenous fluids and oxygen. He sustained a dislocated leg and a few cuts and bruises but made a full recovery in a short space of time.

Riley had no microchip or collar at the time of the accident, so locating his owners was impossible. All the local vets and pounds were phoned and ads placed in local papers but no

owner was found. After a number of weeks Belinda caved in and home he came!

Riley now shares the house with Belinda's two lovely cats Henry and Lenny. Henry is still coming to terms with having to share his house but is getting there slowly. Lenny and Riley are best friends and spend many hours playing chase around the house. Riley is a bundle of energy and never slows down. His favorite past time is playing catch with his favorite ball. He loves to fetch but hates to give it back!



Monday—Friday 8.00am—7.00pm Saturdays 8.00am -6.00pm Sundays and Most Public Holidays 9.00am – 1.00pm