



# Primrose Hill Vet Hospital

## NEWS

### Booster alert!

#### Kennel Cough – is your dog vaccinated?



As the weather warms up and dogs go out and about more, so the risk of Kennel Cough rises. This very infectious cough is most commonly caused by a bacterium – *Bordetella* – and a mixture of viruses.

Affected pets typically show signs of a very harsh, hacking cough which usually develops over 24 hours and can often last for weeks. Other symptoms may include loss of appetite and breathlessness.

Only intra-nasal Kennel Cough vaccine drops will give your dog protection against *Bordetella* and we strongly recommend that dogs are vaccinated before going into boarding kennels, or at other times when the disease is rife.

#### Don't forget rabbits!



Did you know that mosquitoes and biting flies can spread the deadly Myxomatosis virus from the wild rabbit population (where it is endemic) to pet rabbits in your back garden?

However the good news is that we can vaccinate rabbits against **Myxomatosis** and **Viral Haemorrhagic Disease**, both of which can be deadly for rabbits.

If you would like more information on which vaccinations are available for your dog, cat or rabbit, please give us a call! Vaccinations against deadly diseases have made a huge contribution to the health and wellbeing of our pets, but over time the protection will wane, so DO make sure to keep your pets up to date with their boosters!

Rabbit photo: Warren Photographic



### Meet Pip!

Pip is a five year old crossbred, who was fostered from Drogheda Animal Rescue by Niamh. Poor Pip was completely blind and was seen by our ophthalmologist, Mike. It was found that Pip had cataracts. After running some tests on her retinas and performing an ultrasound on the eyes, it was decided that Pip would be eligible for cataract surgery. Surgery was performed and Pip went home with sight on the very same day! She is back chasing balls and birds and generally just enjoying life. Niamh fell head over heels in love with Pip and we are delighted to say that Pip has finally found her forever home!

### Staff Member of the Month

Primrose Hill Veterinary Clinic is delighted to welcome Mary Geary to our team. Mary joins us from Anicare Veterinary Group where responding to emergencies, performing surgeries and diagnosing tricky cases were part of her challenging yet satisfying work. An experienced surgeon, she enjoys all aspects of veterinary practice, especially soft tissue surgery, internal medicine and care of geriatric patients.

Mary's love for animals began at an early age. While studying Computer Science in Trinity College Dublin, she inherited an ageing border collie and an elderly white tom cat. Her beloved border collie Tess was diagnosed with diabetes mellitus and developed cataracts. It was then that Mary first met Michael Woods. Through Michael's skill and dedication her border collie's vision was restored. Mary worked for a short time in computers in the USA before returning to Ireland to study Veterinary Medicine.

While still at college Mary spent a summer in an externship program in Small Animal Emergency Medicine and Orthopaedics at The University of Pennsylvania, laying the foundation for her interest in small animal practice. Upon graduating from UCD in 1999, Mary was Junior Clinical Training Scholar at the University of Edinburgh 1999-2000 where she studied a wide range of small animal specialities, including soft tissue surgery, orthopaedic surgery, anaesthesia, emergency medicine and surgery, feline medicine, internal medicine, dermatology and ophthalmology.

Mary worked in small animal practices in the UK, at Sheriff's Highway Veterinary Hospital in Gateshead, and at Alder Veterinary Hospital in Liverpool, a 24 hour veterinary hospital. She returned to Dublin to work at Botanic Veterinary Hospital in 2006.

Completing her training as a Veterinary Acupuncturist with the Association of British Veterinary Acupuncturists in 2007, she practices veterinary acupuncture, using a western scientific approach for the management of pain, degenerative disease, soft tissue injuries, and post-operative rehabilitation, with the goals of maintaining quality of life and improving survival times in her patients.

In 2010 she was awarded a Graduate Certificate in Canine Sports Medicine from UCD. She is experienced in the diagnosis and management of lameness in working breeds.

Mary provides optimal surgical and medical care tailored for each patient. She involves pet owners in her compassionate and comprehensive treatment planning, by carefully listening to their needs and concerns. Her clinical decision making is based upon the most appropriate approach for each individual pet and life stage.





## Things are hotting up!

Woo hoo – the summer is here! But when the heat turns up, the dangers to pets increase too. To keep your dog, cat and other furry friends safe, make sure you are prepared. To help you we've put together some top summer survival tips:

**Summer walks:** When walking your dogs, do try to avoid the hottest times of the day. Heat stroke is a real risk for many breeds but particularly those with shorter noses or who are overweight. However, this doesn't mean they can't enjoy the great weather – just make use of the light evenings and go out when it is cooler.



**UV Alert!** Just like us, sunburn can cause problems for our pets. Cats are natural sun bathers, but cats with white noses and ear tips are particularly vulnerable to sun burn and subsequent skin cancer.

This risk can be reduced by keeping them out of the sun, or by applying sunblock to these areas during the summer months.



Ear tip of a cat showing early (reddened) cancerous changes. If your pet is showing signs of skin changes, please call us at once.

**Summer shade:** Guinea pigs and rabbits need an area of shade so that they do not overheat – guinea pigs in particular are unable to regulate their body temperature and both they and rabbits are vulnerable to sunburn.



**Flystrike** is a very serious problem at this time of year. Rabbit rear ends often become damp and this moist area attracts flies, which lay their eggs there. These eggs hatch out into maggots which can cause life threatening infections. Rabbit rear ends should be inspected daily for fly eggs and maggots, and soiled bedding should be cleaned out daily. Call us immediately if you are worried.



**Bee and wasp stings** are another seasonal problem. Some pets are allergic to their stings and may need prompt veterinary attention.

So – do enjoy the summer and remember to check your pets' coats for pesky **grass seeds** which can get trapped and cause problems. And finally – **NEVER leave pets in cars. Even on dull days, they can heat up and become ovens.**

## Brushing up on dental care!

Did you know that poor dental hygiene can be a source of long term pain and discomfort for many pets? Worse still, without regular check-ups, dental problems in pets are frequently overlooked as pets usually tolerate the pain – suffering in silence.

In order to prevent dental problems in our pets, it is helpful to understand how and why they arise.

Pets are usually born with healthy mouths, with shiny white teeth and pink (or pigmented) gums. However, over time the accumulation of plaque bacteria on the surface of the teeth leads to inflammation of the gums – termed **gingivitis** (or gum disease). This is often accompanied by very bad breath and also the accumulation of calculus (tartar) on the tooth surface.

If the gingivitis is not treated at this stage, the plaque will start attacking the underlying tooth supporting structures, resulting in gum and bone loss, dental pain, marked bad breath and eventually leading to tooth loss. This condition is termed **periodontitis**.



As well as gum disease, cats may also suffer from one or more **tooth resorptive lesions** usually found at or below gum level. These are unique to cats and still not fully understood.

They are very painful, however, and again most cats will not show obvious pain.

Regular dental check-ups (as part of the booster visit) are a key part of monitoring for dental disease. The good news is that if gum problems are identified at an early stage (where there are signs of gingivitis), a combination of a Scale and Polish and ongoing Home Care can make a real difference to your pet's oral health.

Please contact us today for a dental check-up and to find out more about caring for your pet's teeth.



Gingivitis with inflamed gums



Periodontitis with gum loss



**Tooth resorptive lesions**  
Typical lesion (arrowed). The tooth is progressively destroyed and is usually very painful.



**Scale and Polish:** Removing the calculus using an ultrasonic scaler, followed by polishing, is a very effective form of treatment

Terrier photo: Warren Photographic

## Stick to balls!



If you have a dog who loves to play fetch, but you forgot to take a ball with you on a walk (or you threw it and they lost it!), it is tempting to use a stick instead. After all, there are always plenty lying around and who hasn't seen a dog with one in their

mouth's, looking very pleased with themselves?!

However, throwing sticks can be extremely dangerous and they have the potential to cause some very nasty injuries. If your dog runs onto it while it is pointing upwards or catches it by one end rather than the middle, it can easily rip into the soft skin and tissue of the throat, leading to massive damage and bleeding. Less dramatically, splinters can dig into the gums and lips, causing pain and abscesses, some of which aren't always obvious and our dogs end up suffering in silence.



This is a typical stick injury – in this case the stick has become lodged in the dog's throat.

Photos: courtesy Bath Veterinary Referrals

Most vets and veterinary nurses have seen 'stick injuries', the most serious of which can be extremely difficult to fix or potentially even be fatal. Certainly it is far safer and also cheaper to buy a new ball for every walk – rather than resort to a stick!