



Ultrasound explained

“... a part of the evolution in veterinary medicine”



Ultrasonography has become the mainstay as a diagnostic tool in confirming and/or identifying many medical conditions that may affect pets. Tygerberg Animal Hospital has had an ultrasound machine at their Bellville Hospital for several years now and specialist veterinarian Dr Frank Kettner is highly proficient in conducting ultrasound examinations. Dr Izak van der Vyver also does ultrasound scanning on companion animals at the Durbanville Hospital while Drs John Adam and Bradley Hodgson do scans on dairy cows.

It works thus: high-frequency sound waves are sent into the tissue and the machine then listens for echoes that bounce back. The machine's computer determines the timing and strength of the returning echoes and constructs a two-dimensional image of the tissue being studied. By updating the image several times a second the computer can provide a television-like moving picture of the particular area.

No short- or long-term problems associated with the use of diagnostic ultrasound have been seen. But, like any medical procedure, it's not a magic wand. The image and the information gained are only as good as the machine being used and its operator. Experience and study are needed to interpret the ultrasound images. Often, ultrasound won't achieve the final diagnosis, but instead must be looked at as a large piece of the entire puzzle.

Internal organs

Ultrasound is extremely useful in studying the heart and major blood vessels leaving it, as well as the liver, spleen, kidneys, pancreas, adrenal glands, urinary bladder, prostate gland and other internal organs. It's a non-invasive option in cases where the next step often would have been exploratory surgery.

Cancers

Cancers, abscesses and other abnormal tissues also are often easily seen with ultrasound. Sometimes the exact nature of the problem can't be determined without a biopsy, but in these cases ultrasound can help guide the veterinarian to the exact location of the problem. Ultrasound also may be used to help guide a biopsy instrument to allow a portion of the tissue to be removed for disease diagnosis without having to do actual surgery. Many ultrasound-guided biopsies can be done with a local anaesthetic.

Pregnancy

A pregnancy diagnosis is often done with ultrasound. Early and accurate diagnosis can help guide breeding programmes. The recommended time should be 25 to 30 days post-breeding. However, ultrasound can't accurately determine the number of pups a bitch is carrying.

Ultrasound is a part of the evolution in veterinary medicine.

Reference: Daniel Joffe, DVM, www.petstyle.com

Avid readers



Samantha Flugel eagerly awaits every issue of *TAH News*. And so do her two six-month-old cats, Siamese Poncho and black cat Ninja. They literally read it from cover to cover!

Thorny survivor

“The start of my life was what you'd call a thorny issue. I was born in a thorn bush and when my mom tried taking me out the next day, I became horribly tangled in the thorns. Two kind people came to my rescue and brought me to TAH with my umbilical cord still attached. I had a large wound on the inner thigh – big enough to see my knee.

Dr Kathryn Knipe anaesthetised me and sutured the wound. She and her husband hand-reared me at home, but when the wound opened, I was under the knife again. Thereafter my wounds had to be cleaned and dressed twice daily. I was named Spike – after my thorny birthplace. Sadly, Dr Knipe couldn't keep me and after a day on display at TAH Bellville at eight weeks old, Marina van Wyk and Peet Blom adopted me.

Now four months old, I simply love my new home and family.”

Sincerely, Spike



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Polly says

Sometimes, no matter how nice you are to your parrot, or what delicious treats you offer him, you would have noticed that he still doesn't seem to want you to pick him up or pet him. Or worse still, he bites you. Parrots usually bite for one reason only: fear. They're either afraid of you, someone in your family, someone entering their territory or a hundred other things. And when parrots are afraid, the only thing they can do is 'fight or flight'. So, because his wings are probably clipped, biting is the best option.

Parrot training is about building trust - coaxing your parrot to slowly overcome his fear of you, your fingers, your hands, your pet dog, your spouse, etc. And to build that trust, you have to stop forcing your parrot to do things like step up when he doesn't want to, or not pet him when he wants to be left alone.

By giving a parrot what he wants you can train it to do anything! Slowly build up trust with your parrot, then just push him a little way into his 'fear zone', wait for him to behave and then reward him. In this way you can get close enough to your parrot so that you can start training him more advanced skills and tolerances.

Reference: <http://www.birdtricks.com>

In today's fast-paced world most people suffer from stress and anxiety. Question is: do dogs and cats suffer from stress? Yes, yes, yes.

Therefore, it's the owners' responsibility to be in tune with their animal companions to detect changes that might indicate a struggle with stress. Pets experience anxiety because of psychological, physical and environmental struggles. Without intervention, the results of a dog or cat's stress may have detrimental effects on your home, family and the animal's health.

Signs of dog or cat anxiety are: changes in appetite or weight, excessive vocalising, changes in elimination habits, self-mutilation, disobedience, aggression, health changes, lethargy, depression, new destructive behaviours such as chewing, trembling, restlessness and excessive panting (dogs). If your pet displays any of these signs, it's important to see your veterinarian to rule out medical problems. If your pet is physically healthy, your vet will help you take the next step in treating his stress.

Should you think your dog or cat has a psychological problem, relate it to your own emotions and work to help your pet through his problem. As with human anxiety, your pet's

immune system can become compromised, he may become severely depressed, and/or develop behaviour problems, without intervention. Key to relieving anxiety is eliminating the cause of stress.

The stress factor

To determine the cause of a pet's anxiety evaluate his daily life. Could any of these be a problem?

- Separation from the family
- Boredom
- Lack of exercise/play
- Fear
- Inadequate or poor nutrition
- Health problems/pain
- Inadequate sleeping/living quarters
- Daily routine changes
- Loss or addition of family member or another pet



The first step in preventing anxiety is to make your pet's well-being a priority. For example, stimulate your pet mentally with toys, games, as well as obedience and trick training. Exercise your pet with walks and playtime. Offer emotional support by giving him your time and love. Nurture his body with high-quality, nutritious food, fresh water and the shelter of your home.

Treating your pet's anxiety can be a long process, but with persistence you'll help your animal companion find relief. Bottom line is that animals do experience emotional stress and it should be taken seriously.

So true

because she's too stupid to learn how but because she's too smart to bother." - Rick Horowitz

"The average dog is a nicer person than the average person." - Andrew A Rooney

"After scolding one's cat one looks into its face and is seized by the ugly suspicion that it understood every word. And has filed it for reference." - Charlotte Gray

"Money will buy a pretty good dog but it won't buy the wag of his tail." - Josh Billings

"Cats are intended to teach us that not everything in nature has a purpose." - Garrison Keillor

"You may have a dog that won't sit up, roll over or even cook breakfast, not

Pampered Pets



Cat compliance

The key to training a cat is to ensure that whatever you want your cat to do is fun and exceptionally rewarding. Those things you don't want your cat to do must never be rewarding. We unintentionally reward our cats for obnoxious behaviour. Just think about the pouncing and meowing at five in the morning when we dutifully get up to feed the cat. Thus he's learnt that this undesirable behaviour gets him what he wants.

When a cat has misbehaved, owners often grab the cat and show him the evidence: shredded plants, wet spot and so forth. What the cat is learning is that being reached for by the owner is a bad experience. It's usually difficult, if not impossible, to catch a cat in the act because most cats have already learned that being caught is bad news. Reprimands definitely are ineffective when training your cat. If you catch your cat in the act and reprimand him, he'll simply misbehave when you're not around. If you reprimand the cat later, he won't associate it with the crime. In any event, the misbehaviour continues.

Some cats misbehave purely for attention and the attention is enough of a reward to cause him to continue his bad, bad ways. This three-point training plan is said to be highly effective:

- Stop all reprimands and punishment no matter what your cat does
- Make it possible for your cat to succeed in performing those behaviours you want him to learn
- Arrange your cat's environment so that the behaviour you don't want him to learn isn't rewarding

Concentrate on making your relationship fun, rewarding, playful and interesting. Sometimes this change alone will solve your problem. Cats are known to become overly active and destructive when bored. Daily play sessions and relaxing massages help to calm cats. Felines who feel neglected will often stop using their litter box. If you schedule regular sessions to give your cat your undivided attention and play games with him, even litter box problems can disappear almost overnight.

We start with litter box training as an example. A cat's physical system is very regular. If you control the input, you also control the output. Your cat should be on a regular feeding schedule to enable a corresponding regular output schedule. Adjust his feeding time so you can be present when he needs to go. About 15 minutes before he'll need to go, take him to his litter box room. Because you and the cat are locked in the litter box room, he doesn't have the option of going on the carpet or your bed. His only choice is the litter box. When he uses it, praise him effusively.



Concentrate on making your relationship fun, rewarding, playful and interesting.

Give him a juicy piece of salmon or another treat reserved for this good behaviour. Until you're sure that litter box training is successful, don't give him free access to the rest of your home when you know his bladder and bowels are full.

Next we look at furniture scratching. While making your cat's scratching post rewarding and exciting, the training process also requires you to make the furniture unattractive as a clawing item. Find something your cat doesn't like. Each cat is different. However, most cats don't like to snag their claws when scratching, so you might try draping some netting or tulle over the furniture. Some cats don't like the feel of aluminium foil or two-sided sticky tape. A mild menthol or citrus scent also may repel some cats. Once your cat realises that these places aren't fun to scratch or sit on, while the scratching post is just such a hoot, the

problem of inappropriate scratching will disappear.

Now you're ready to start more challenging training tricks – with the appropriate rewards. Try training your cat to jump through a hoop – excellent exercise! Plus it's jolly good for bonding with your cat.

Grass fetish

Vets aren't too sure why dogs like grass, but many theories abound. Dogs are descended from wolves that ate the entire kill when they hunted for food. Because they ate mainly herbivores, they wound up eating many plants found in the stomach and intestines of their prey.

The mystery is whether dogs eat grass to make themselves vomit. Or do they vomit because they eat the grass? Most veterinarians believe that dogs eat grass simply because they like it and vomiting follows because the grass acts as an irritant. Other vets believe that dogs eat grass because their diets are lacking in greens. In support of this contention, you would have noticed that dogs often seek out a particular variety of grass to nibble on.

Rest assured, your dog's grass habit is normal behaviour. But if he eats the grass in your garden, don't use fertiliser, pesticides or herbicides. This could cause a stomach upset or even worse problems for your dog.



CAT BREEDS:

Docile beauties

One of the largest domesticated cat breeds, the Ragdoll has a sturdy body, large frame and proportionate legs. A fully-grown female weighs from 3.6 kg to 6.8 kg, while males range from 5.4 kg to 9.1 kg or more. Though the breed has a plush coat, this coat consists mainly of long guard hairs, while it's said that the lack of a dense undercoat results in 'reduced shedding and matting'. Ragdolls have distinct blue eyes and they're known for their docile and placid temperament. The name Ragdoll is derived from the tendency of individuals from the original breeding stock to go limp and relaxed when picked up.



Ragdolls come in six different colors - seal, chocolate, flame and the corresponding 'dilutes' such as blue, lilac and cream. This also includes the tortoiseshell pattern in all colours. Kittens are born white.



James Herriot no 2



An inveterate collector of hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits, lizards, stray dogs, cats and other assorted animals from early in her life, cemented by James Herriot's books, Dr Donna Brook was set for a veterinary career from a very young age. Born in Bermuda and then living in the UK for the first six years, she spent the rest of her childhood in Cape Town, matriculating from Rustenburg Girls' High School in Rondebosch. Then on to Onderstepoort where she qualified in 1988.

Brook worked at a Germiston veterinary practice for a year, followed by 12 months at a Tamboerskloof practice. She then joined TAH, but left in 1996 when expecting her first child. During the ensuing years she worked at Animal Welfare and did locums for a while too. In 2010 she was back with a bang at TAH and now practices at the Kenridge branch. Although she enjoys all aspects of veterinary science, the human/animal bond interests Brook particularly, as well as trying to ensure that basic veterinary care is accessible to all in the country.

Apart from businessman husband David, sons Daniel and Christopher as family, she has six dogs, two cats, a horse, ducks, fish, a parakeet and a few waifs/strays for company. For leisure, she spends time with the family, the animals, walking the dogs, reading and writing. Caravanning and camping in the bush is a favourite family destressing activity.

Person who had biggest influence on your life: My parents & Standard 4 teacher, Mr King

Person you admire the most: James Herriot, aka Alf Wight

Philosophy of life:

Help where I can and work with compassion

Sport (self): Scuba diving, horse riding and skiing previously, but currently not much except walking the dogs

Sport (spectator): Horse riding events

Favourite actor(s): Brad Pitt

Favourite time of day: Early morning

Favourite food & drink: Italian food, anything with chocolate & fruit juice

Best reading: Contemporary fiction, medical thrillers, animal stories and almost anything else

Favourite TV programme: *Castle*, *Desperate Housewives*

Best holiday: Skiing in Switzerland and a visit to the Tuscan countryside

Biggest extravagance: Kids, pets and holidays

Hobbies: Reading and writing



Photo: classicbuildersltd.com

TAH's own playwright

As an aspiring writer, TAH orderly Garry Giyose will be visiting Berlin in Germany during June as the writer and director of the play *A tribute to Walter Sisulu*. TAH has sponsored his trip and Giyose is extremely excited about this stint abroad.

Writing has been his hobby since 1996, but Giyose said he simply loved his job as an orderly. "I'm passionate about animals and we're an excellent team at the Bellville branch." He's worked for TAH since 2006.

Married with two children, Giyose also shares his life with X-breed Gina - his pride and joy.



WHO'S WHERE BELLVILLE Dr Colin Levitan Dr Ian Campbell Dr Frank Kettner Dr Nolan Moss Dr Sam Pillay Dr Michelle Adam Dr Christa Gerber Dr De Wet Barnard Dr Kathryn Knipe Dr Keri Beviss-Challinor **DURBANVILLE** Dr John Adam Dr Izak van der Vyver Dr Bradley Hodgson **GOODWOOD** Dr Paulina Crous **PAROW** Dr Pieter Human **SONSTRAAL** Dr Ater McDonald **KENRIDGE** Dr Stephen Smith Dr Liesl Shaw Dr Margaret Haddon Dr Donna Brook. Although each branch handles all species, Kenridge is our exotics (reptiles, wild animals, etc) branch.

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