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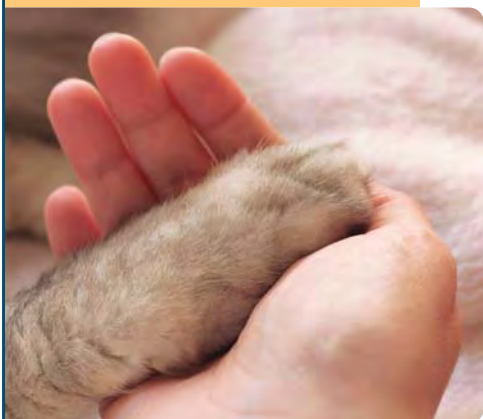
NEWS

TYGERBERG ANIMAL HOSPITAL NEWSLETTER



We care!

“Staff members care about each patient as if it’s their own”



At Tygerberg Animal Hospital, every veterinarian, veterinary nurse, orderly and support staff member cares about each patient as if it's their own. Not only do they provide the highest and most professional level of medical care, but their compassion extends beyond the call of duty.

Should any client experience service or care which isn't satisfactory, TAH has a policy of investigating and dealing with each such case thoroughly. TAH wants to keep clients and most of all, patients, happy and well. So, please contact Dr John Adam on 021 9763015, or if clients wish to speak to a non-veterinary person, contact HR manager Corné Krog on 021 9191191 or mail us at hr@tah.co.za.

Some unhappy clients of professional institutions choose to make use of web-based public forums to voice their dissatisfaction. However, this really

doesn't resolve the issue. Allow TAH to help you personally.

Often, vets need to give clients advice or a diagnosis they don't want to hear. It's quite natural that people want a happier answer and choose to seek a second opinion. In these instances it's important and in the best interest of the patient to ask your vet for copies of the medical records and lab work so that the second veterinarian doesn't work at the disadvantage of not knowing the history.

TAH vets only want to do what's best for pets. That's the first priority. So, please notify TAH when something is niggling or if you're not hundred percent satisfied.

Of course TAH would also like to hear from satisfied clients so as to inform the personnel concerned. Positive feedback serves as a great inspiration! Please send us an e-mail about the case and person concerned.

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Bellville: 021 9191191;

Goodwood: 021 5912571;

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www.tah.co.za.

Give your pet pearls for life

A healthy mouth means a healthy life for your pet. Daily tooth brushing with specially formulated pet dental toothpaste and a pet toothbrush will go a long way towards keeping your pet's pearlys sparkling and his/her breath dew-fresh – minimising chances of plaque and tartar on and around teeth. Although it's rare for animals to suffer from cavities, they develop periodontal disease, gingivitis and abscesses - painful conditions and all possibly avoided by daily brushing.



diabetes, nasal or facial skin infections, cancers, or ingesting faeces can cause bad breath with or without periodontal disease.

Plaque, which often results in tooth and gum disease, is a colony of bacteria, mixed with saliva, blood cells and other bacterial components. When plaque becomes mineralised, dental tartar occurs. This firmly adheres to the tooth enamel, then erodes the gingival tissue. Both plaque and tartar damage teeth and gums. Disease starts with gingiva in the gums, which become inflamed. The gums finally separate from the teeth, creating pockets where more bacteria, plaque and tartar build up. This causes additional damage, and finally tooth and bone loss.

So, if you notice bleeding during brushing or gingivitis (red area along the gum line), it's best to make an appointment for a pet dental. A proper dental procedure requires general anaesthesia to perform a complete examination and efficient cleaning of all teeth. Most dental procedures are completed within an hour.



If your pet has bad breath, salivates excessively or battles eating his food, he could be suffering from periodontal disease. Dental conditions can be exceptionally painful to your pet but may go unnoticed. If left untreated, bacteria from a chronically infected mouth can enter the bloodstream and affect major body organs. The liver, kidneys, heart and lungs are most commonly affected. Ask your vet to examine your pet's teeth and gums during your next consultation. Conditions such as kidney failure,



Introducing a VIP

TAH patient Tembi Kober is a Very Important Pet (VIP). But despite her hectic VIP schedule, she put pen to paper and wrote a beautiful letter to *TAH News*:

"On a boiling hot day in November 2009 my five siblings and I were left along a road in a cardboard box. Good Samaritans found us and brought us to TAH where, heartbreakingly, three of my siblings were found dead. The wonderful TAH vets and staff treated and fed us three orphans with love and care.

"On 15 December 2009 a friendly lady came to fetch me and took me to her home. There, she put me on the lawn with my new sister, Boxer Minka. What a huge sister! At that stage I weighed a mere 1,2 kg. I soon realised how lucky I was – being spoilt with loving brushing sessions, walks, playing with big sis and doggie treats.

"I also selected a few godmothers and the one sent my photo to a German magazine which is read worldwide. Fame at last! In addition, my other godmother is writing a poetry volume about her canine 'children'. I feature a few times – sometimes under a nom de plume, because one dog simply can't get up to so much mischief!

"So, in less than two years I'm queen of Bellville. I sincerely hope that my siblings had such good fortune."

Occurring exclusively in cats, Feline Hepatic Lipidosis is also known as Fatty Liver Syndrome (FLS) - one of the most common feline liver diseases. Typically the cat with FLS goes through an anorexic period, but the chances of FLS occurring are greater if the cat was overweight before the anorexia began. As fat is broken down to supply nutrients for the anorexic cat, the fat is deposited so rapidly in the liver that it can't be processed. It's stored in and around the liver cells, resulting in liver failure. The cat usually becomes jaundiced with a yellow colour in the whites of the eyes or in the skin. At this point, the disease can be fatal if not treated promptly and aggressively.

FLS –peculiar to cats



FLS diagnosis is made from liver function blood tests and a liver biopsy or aspirate. The tissue sample is sent to a pathologist for interpretation. The FLS cat will have a large amount of fat in and among the liver cells. Generally, other tests are then performed to determine why the cat stopped eating. If the

cause for anorexia is treatable or resolved, the prognosis is quite good.

This disease is treatable, but treatment requires nutritional support for the cat until his appetite returns.

A consistently high-quality diet will allow the liver to resume functioning so it may remove the fat. This takes on average 6 - 7 weeks.

Therefore, to allow an owner to force feed a cat at home, a feeding tube is surgically implanted into the cat for syringing special food into the stomach. The specially formulated food mixture is syringed through the tube three to five times a day. Persistence is essential, because the average cat requires about six weeks of feeding before it begins to eat. At least once weekly, the cat should be offered a small amount of his favourite food so that one can see when his appetite returns. After the cat has been eating well for three to four days, he should be returned to the hospital for tube removal.

Pets *in* history

Around 450 BC, anyone who killed a cat in Egypt was punished by death. When a cat died, the entire family would shave off their eyebrows as a sign of mourning.

During the Middle Ages in the UK, fishermen's wives believed that keeping a black cat in your home meant your husband would always return from the sea.

Cerberus was the watchdog of Hades (hell)

- chained to the gates of Acheron, harassing the spirits entering Hades and devouring those who tried to escape.

It's in the most sophisticated and earliest of civilisation, China, that the black dog plays its greatest role in religion, folklore and mythology. The 'Fu Dog', a recurring theme in Chinese culture, has the positive attribute of bringing happiness and good fortune.

Pampered Pets



There are many symptoms in a dog which are cause for concern. If your dog displays one of these 21 symptoms, you should visit your veterinarian immediately.

Watch out!

heartworm, bronchitis, lung tumours, kennel cough and heart failure. Some causes are life threatening.

1. Unproductive Retching. When dogs try to vomit but are unable to bring anything up, it could be a common sign of bloat.

2. Fainting. Some dogs fall and are unable to rise, others lose consciousness and some recover and basically look normal minutes after collapsing. All reasons for collapse/fainting are serious.

3. Seizure. A convulsion is sudden excessive firing of nerves in the brain that can last from seconds to minutes. The seizure's severity can vary between a far-away look or twitching in part of the face to a dog falling on his side, gnashing his teeth, urinating, defecating and paddling his limbs. Although not a disease, seizures can be caused by disorders such as tumours, epilepsy or toxins.

4. Anorexia. Loss of appetite often is the first indication of illness. Regardless of cause, anorexia can impact an animal's health seriously if it lasts 24 hours or more. Animals younger than age 6 months are particularly prone to the problems brought on by anorexia.

5. Pale Gums. This can indicate blood loss, shock or biliary. Your pet should be evaluated immediately.

6. Pacing and Restlessness. This might be because of pain, discomfort, distress or bloat.

7. Weight Loss. A negative caloric balance usually occurs when the body uses and/or excretes essential nutrients faster than it can consume them. Weight loss is considered clinically important when exceeding 10% of normal body weight. Some causes may be serious.

8. Breathing Problems. Respiratory distress (dyspnoea) is laboured, difficult breathing or shortness of breath during inspiration or expiration. When your dog has trouble breathing, he may not be able to get enough oxygen to his tissues. Also, if he has heart failure, he may not be able to pump sufficient blood to muscles and other tissues. Dyspnoea is often associated with fluid accumulation in the lungs or chest cavity. It's a very grave symptom.

9. Jaundice. Icterus or jaundice describes the yellow colour of the tissues throughout the body due to elevated bilirubin levels, a substance that comes from red cell breakdown. Regardless of the many causes, jaundice is serious in the dog.



There are many symptoms in a dog which are cause for concern.

10. Trouble Urinating. This can include straining to urinate, frequent attempts at urination, discomfort when urinating or licking at the urogenital region excessively. There are several underlying causes. If left untreated some causes can result in death within 36 hours.

11. Urinating and Drinking Excessively. These are often early signs of disease including kidney failure, diabetes, uterine infection, thyroid gland problems, as well as other causes. A normal sized dog usually drinks about one to two cups a day. If your pet is drinking excessively, consult your vet.

12. Fever. Abnormally high body temperature is believed to be a method of fighting infection from bacteria or viruses and needs veterinary treatment. Normal temperature is 38.05 to 39.16°C.

13. Bruising and Bleeding. Abnormal bruising and bleeding arises with blood clotting disorders. Bleeding from clotting disturbances may occur into the skin, mucous membranes and various internal organs, tissues and body cavities. The impact of such bleeding on the affected individual may be mild or severe depending on the degree of blood loss.

14. Coughing. Common causes include obstruction in the windpipe, pneumonia,

15. Bloating Abdomen. Abdominal distension is an abnormal enlargement of the abdominal cavity. One cause is fluid accumulation, another is enlargement of any abdominal organ including the liver, kidneys, or spleen. Pressure from the abdomen pushing into the chest may make breathing more difficult and pressure within the abdomen may decrease appetite. It's important to recognise abdominal distension because it can be a symptom of potentially life threatening diseases.

16. Bloody Diarrhoea. Blood in the faeces can appear black and tarry ('melena'). Melena is different from fresh blood in the stool (hematochezia). Bleeding into the colon or rectum appears as fresh blood in the stool. See your vet soonest.

17. Bloody Urine. Hematuria is the presence of red blood cells in the urine. It may be visible to the naked eye or microscopic. There are several possible causes including cancer, stones in the urinary tract or bacterial infections.

18. Bite Wounds. These may only appear as a small puncture wound in the skin, but can actually be quite extensive. Once the tooth penetrates the skin, severe damage can occur to the underlying tissues without major skin damage. All bite wounds should receive veterinary attention.

19. Bloody Vomit. Blood in the vomit can be fresh blood (bright red), or partially digested blood, which has the appearance of brown coffee grounds. There are a variety of causes and the effects on the animal are also variable. Some are subtle and minor while others are life threatening.

20. Lethargy. This is a state of drowsiness, inactivity, or indifference in which there are delayed responses to auditory, visual or tactile stimuli. Lethargy is a non-specific sign associated with many possible underlying systemic disorders. It may have little or no impact on the affected individual; however, its presence may represent severe illness.

21. Red Eye. This is a non-specific sign of inflammation or infection. It may be seen with several different diseases including those involving different parts of the eye or it may occur with inflammation of the structures inside the eye, glaucoma or certain diseases of the eye socket. Either one or both eyes can become red, depending on the cause. Some possible causes may be serious and ultimately cause blindness.

DOG BREEDS:
Schnauzers

Bearded wizards

Bred in Germany in the 15th century to help farmers round up livestock, Schnauzers also helped to keep the rat population down. Today they come in three sizes: the original standard, miniature and giant. Minis are 30 cm tall, standards are 46 cm and giants around 60 cm. The mini Schnauzer is the most common size in South Africa.



Coat colours are salt and pepper, black, as well as black and silver. Although the Schnauzer is considered a terrier-type, they don't have the typical terrier temperament. They're much calmer, kinder and less energetic. These dogs love spending time with their owners and make excellent pets. They're quick to vocalise when perceiving a threat. They can be quite yappy, so owners should curb excessive barking from an early age.

Schnauzers are known for their distinguished-looking beards and feathery eyebrows. They're also a breed that sheds less than most dogs, making them ideal for pet lovers allergic to animal dander.



Meeting veterinary challenges



After matriculating from Eben Dönges High School in Kraaifontein in 1996, Dr Christa Gerber did her first year BSc Agriculture at Stellenbosch University before moving to Onderstepoort where she qualified as a vet in 2002. She spent two years in the UK and did locum work for a year in South Africa before joining a northern suburbs veterinary practice for five years.

Gerber was appointed at TAH Bellville in 2011 where she's on duty weekdays from 11h00 until 16h00. Asked why she chose veterinary science as a career, she said she

considered it an extremely challenging profession. Diagnostic imaging and soft tissue surgery are the veterinary science fields which interest her the most. After hours she hikes, does mountain biking, paints and reads. Sadly, she's not allowed to keep pets at her residence.

Person who had biggest influence on your life: My sister Esmé

Philosophy of life: With God anything is possible

Sport (self): Mountain biking

Sport (spectator): Rugby & cricket

Favourite actor(s): Edward Norton, Nicole Kidman

Favourite food & drink: A big steak, potatoes and Coca-Cola

Best reading: Philip Yancey

Favourite TV programme: Survivor

Best holiday: Camping with the family

Biggest extravagance: My flatscreen TV

Hobbies: Painting and reading



Hypertension in dogs

Systemic arterial hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is an increase in the systolic or diastolic arterial blood pressure (ABP). The systolic pressure is the high value when the heart contracts and pumps blood and the diastolic pressure the low value as the heart relaxes and fills. For example, 120/80 means a systolic pressure = 120 mm Hg and diastolic pressure = 80 mm Hg.

A systolic ABP consistently exceeding 170 - 180 mm Hg in the dog is considered high. Diastolic pressure in relaxed dogs shouldn't exceed the 100 - 110 mm Hg range.

Causes of hypertension could be chronic kidney disease, diseases of the endocrine system, adrenal gland tumours, drugs or central nervous system disorders. But some hypertension cases are idiopathic – ie no known cause.

High blood pressure may cause injury to 'target' organs such as the brain, eyes, heart, kidneys and blood vessels. Although your vet may suspect hypertension based on certain symptoms and clinical examination, it can only be diagnosed by repeated ABP measurements. TAH has sphygmomanometers or blood pressure meters at its Bellville, Kenridge and Durbanville branches.

Symptoms that you should watch out for include circling, depression, dilated pupils, blindness, blood in the urine and behavioural changes.



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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