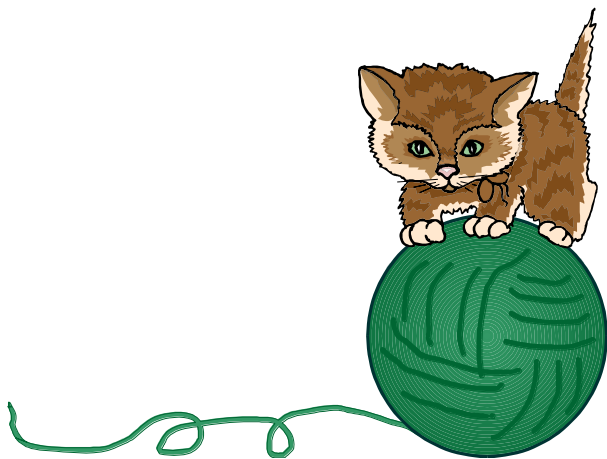




Welcome to our September Newsletter,

As school holidays are fast approaching we have included some holiday tips when traveling with your pets.

There will be a new face around the clinic for the next few months as Dr. Wendy is on maternity leave. Dr. Bea Kirk comes to us from New Zealand; she is looking forward to joining the team and meeting you and your pets.



## Kitten Consults

As our understanding of disease continues to grow, the majority of the veterinary community recognises the importance of preventative health care.

Vaccinations, parasite control, dietary management, dental care and routine health checks at all stages of life are the mainstays to any good health care programme. Your first few kitten consultations are vital in establishing your health care programme. For

all new kitten consultations we not only provide information but also answer any questions clients may have.

Below are listed "Nine Steps to Nine Lives"

### **Step 1 – Vaccinations**

Vaccination programmes are tailored to meet the individual requirements of each kitten based on age, breed and the time spent outdoors or in contact with other cats.

### **Step 2 – Parasite Control**

We recommend stringent prevention programmes for all kitten against intestinal worms (roundworm, hookworm, tapeworm) fleas, heartworm and ear mites. There are numerous highly effective preventatives on the market; we base our preference on effectiveness and ease of administration. Products we use include: Revolution, Advantage, and Milbemax.

### **Step 3 – Dietary Management**

Kittens have very different nutritional requirements to adult cats, as they require higher energy and calcium to help their growing bodies. At least 80% of a kitten's diet should be a well balanced kitten specific diet for the first 10-12 months of life. Introduce any new food slowly to avoid dietary intolerance.

#### **Step 4 – Dental Care**

Dental disease is one of the most common diseases we see in our domestic felines, and there is no better example where prevention is the key. Cats are creatures of habit, so dental prevention needs to be started early in life. In nature, cats crunch through bones, feathers and fur all which clean the cat's gums and teeth. Most dry foods, despite their appearance, do not offer much dental benefit. The biscuits crumble and don't clean the gums. There are dental foods available that are designed specifically to clean the gum lines and prevent plaque and tartar formation. We recommend Hills Feline T/D. It is important to train your kitten to eat raw bones such as chicken necks or wings.

#### **Step 5 – Desexing and Permanent Identification**

We recommend that all cats be desexed at four to five months of age, before they reach sexual maturity. This is a safe and routine day procedure that not only prevents unwanted pregnancies occurring, but also reduces the risks of developing unwanted behavioural patterns such as urine spraying and inter-cat aggression. Microchipping is the only form of permanent identification for cats. All cats need to be microchipped, regardless of whether they are indoor only or not. In most states microchipping is now compulsory.

#### **Step 6 – Toileting**

Most kittens have an innate sense and are well house-trained by the time they are adopted, they often only need to be shown where the litter tray is. However to maximize the chance of kittens using their trays, we recommend the following.

- Ensure the tray is in a quiet location, placed away from food and water bowls.
- Keep the litter pristine
- Be patient, as accidents happen and never punish your kitten; it may only serve to make them more nervous.
- Ensure all accidents are cleaned using an enzymatic cleaner (such as Urine Off or Biozet), as regular cleaners do not break down the chemical compounds in cat urine.

#### **Step 7 – Grooming and Handling**

We encourage owners to groom and handle their kittens on a daily basis, regardless of your kitten's coat type. Getting accustomed to being groomed and having their eyes, ears, mouths and nails examined not only promotes excellent coat health, but improves your attentiveness to their general body condition and will make our lives and your lives much easier should your cat ever require medications.

#### **Step 8 – Behaviour**

Although most of us consider our feline friends to be 'one of the family', it is important to realize that even domesticated cats still exhibit a number of natural behaviours that their wild cousins display. It is important that we accommodate for this, especially for indoor only cats. Cats are natural hunters; therefore it is important to allow them to exercise these in a positive and non destructive manner. (i.e. avoiding us becoming their kill). Try to develop set play times during the day, never use your hands and feet as toys! Games cats play as kittens are what they will do life long. It is important to provide a range of different toys that stimulate the various creatures they would naturally hunt in the wild, such as bird, mouse and bug like toys. Regular rotating toys help also to maintain interest. Scratching is another natural behaviour, helping to remove the old claws and also mark their territory. Furniture and carpets commonly become the victims. Scratching posts are ideal for providing both horizontal and vertical posts. Cats also like to be high up, so tall scratching posts with platforms are ideal.

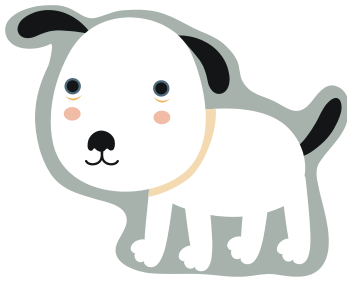
Applying catnip to scratching posts and actively playing around the posts can help cats to bond to the idea.

### **Step 9 – Regular Health Checks**

It is important to understand that we provide far more than a simple vaccination when your cat comes to the clinic. Routine physical examinations are essential to the early detection of disease. This is especially important when it comes to cats, as they are masters of 'hiding' the early clinical signs of many serious diseases.

## **Updating your pet's details**

It is extremely important for you to keep your pet's microchip details up to date as it is the best way to ensure you and your best friend can be reunited. Every year thousands of animals are admitted to shelters or brought to veterinary clinics without microchips, or with microchips that are out of date, making it very hard for them to be returned to their owners. When updating your details it is important to list your mobile number.



## **HOLIDAY TIPS**

We have compiled some tips to help your pet have a safe holiday whether they are traveling with you, boarding or being looked after at home.

- ❖ Always have an ID tag with a contact number and your microchip details up to date.
- ❖ A visit to the vet prior to departure is recommended to make sure your pet is up to date with worming, vaccinations and has all medications required.
- ❖ Make sure your dog is used to car travel. Your holiday shouldn't be their first trip in a car.
- ❖ When traveling in a car be sure to have cats and small dogs confined in a crate and large dogs harnessed. This prevents them from becoming flying missiles, should you have an accident.
- ❖ Make sure you have regular toilet and water breaks. With cats, it is best to offer them a litter tray inside the car. Cats are far more likely to bolt off in strange territory.

- ❖ Even though they may love to do it, don't let your dog hang its head out the window of a moving vehicle, as this can lead to eye injuries.
- ❖ Advise the clinic if you are going away for an extended period of time and make sure you give your pet sitter the clinic's details; this helps us in the event of an emergency.
- ❖ If you are traveling to an area where heartworm or ticks are prevalent, it is **vital** your dog is protected. Telephone the clinic before you leave if you are unsure of the prevalence in the area. The easiest and most effective way to provide cover against heartworm is to use Revolution on a regular basis.



### **Revolution Rewards**

*Purchase any 3 or 6 month packet of Revolution and receive **free** Canex wormers.*

### **Earn a FREE 3 month packet of Revolution**

*When you have purchased 12 months' supply of Revolution, return your completed Rewards Card to the clinic to receive a 3 month pack for FREE*



## **EQUINE REPRODUCTION**

It's that time of year again when breeding season in horses occurs. At Bannockburn Veterinary Clinic we offer Artificial Insemination for those of you who want to breed your mares. Performing A.I. ensures your mare is looked after by yourself rather than going to a stud, where it will mix with horses from various different areas. We have full ultrasound facilities, undercover crush, day yards and holding paddocks for horses that require day stays.

Previously we have used stallions from New Zealand, America and all Australian States. If you would like to breed your mare to a stallion outside your local area, you need to contact the stud and ensure they can collect the semen and send it to us.

If you have any further queries on procedures, costs and availability contact the clinic we are always happy to answer your questions. Finally AI benefits are:

- ❖ Disease Control
- ❖ Reduced stress to your mare
- ❖ Reduced transport costs
- ❖ Reduced risk of injury
- ❖ Allows breeding with problem mares
- ❖ Allows mare to be bred at best time for conception

Cheers from the team at Bannockburn Vet Clinic

