

Nurses News – Rabbits

*Rabbits are completely dependent on us, they need attention EVERY day.

*Rabbits should be neutered and vaccinated annually against VHD and Myxomatosis.

*Rabbits live for about 10 years, so whilst they may be inexpensive to buy, their living arrangements – a safe and secure home and run, either indoors or outdoors – can be quite expensive. They will need regular supplies of quality rabbit food, hay and bedding. Over a lifetime these costs mean a pair of rabbits may cost around £11,000!

*Rabbits need to be fed correctly or they can develop dental problems that become expensive to treat. Hay or grass should make up at least 80% of the diet. Hay meets their basic nutritional requirements, which keeps their teeth in order and maintains healthy gut movement. Rabbits' teeth grow continually and their chewing action of eating grass or hay keeps the teeth worn naturally. Rabbits who don't eat properly will develop sharp spurs on their teeth or they may become overlong, cutting into their tongue or gums which then restricts their ability to eat and they may then starve to death. Greens should make up about 15% of the diet and the other 5% should be pelleted food. If your rabbit is on a healthy diet then it's droppings will be large and look like compressed hay.

The Rabbit Welfare Association and Fund has a great website which you can log on to at www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk

A few fun rabbit facts for you!

It is estimated that there are between 1.6 and 2 million pet rabbits in the UK.

Rabbits and hares are not rodents like rats, mice and guinea pigs – they're known as leporids.

There are 67 breeds and 531 varieties of rabbit. The smallest breed is the Netherland Dwarf Rabbit, weighing just 1kg when fully grown, and one of the largest is the Flemish Giant Rabbit, which weighs up to 6kg.

A rabbit chews 120 times a minute and has 17,000 tastebuds. That's 7,000 more than humans and 15,000 more than dogs.

Rabbit Awareness Week 11th-15th May 2015

Rabbit Awareness Week is a very important annual campaign and we wanted to be part of the national activity by offering free rabbit health checks all week. We look forward to welcoming rabbit owners to our free health checks at the surgery, to ensure they are not only physically well, but also emotionally. Book a free checkover for your rabbit with one of our qualified nurses. They will check your rabbit's eyes, ears, teeth, skin, nails, weight, and discuss any problems or questions you may have with their general care. **15% OFF RABBIT VACCINATIONS** (this week only. NB: these need to be booked with a vet)

For further information on looking after your rabbit go to the RAW official website:

www.rabbitawarenessweek.co.uk



Margaret Green Foundation Sponsored Walk

Thank you to everyone who sponsored our practice manager, Pip Davey, along with her dogs Shea and Time, raising a sum of £71.50.

Over 80 people and 70 dogs took part in the sponsored walk on Sunday 12th April. The six mile walk started from the MGFT centre at Wingletang, near Tavistock, and took in a beautiful tour around Dartmoor.

On the walkers return they were met with a delightful array of cakes which made all the hills worth the effort!

Although an annual walk, this year's event was extra special as the charity is celebrating their 50th anniversary. Managers Alan and Niki Ging were delighted with the turnout and have already received £1,400 in sponsorship money with more yet to come. The money raised will help rescue and re-home even more animals.

For further details on the Margaret Green Foundation's work see their website:

www.margaretgreenanimalrescue.org.uk



Vets Viewpoint - Slim Pets are Happy Pets!

Is your pet becoming a little on the chubby side? It is a sad fact for the health of animals in the UK that the number of overweight pets is increasing – 1 in 4 cats and rabbits, and 1 in 3 dogs are now overweight or obese.

Being overweight has a huge effect on welfare and quality of life for pets, especially as they get older. They are less able or willing to go for walks and play, they become breathless with exercise, and many serious health conditions are linked to being overweight. These include diabetes, urinary problems, respiratory distress and joint disease. Being overweight really can make a massive difference to how many years of happy life a pet has.

Weight gain is caused by the very simple equation of taking in more calories than the body uses up. As owners, it is our responsibility to regulate this! Increase the amount of exercise with play and longer walks and beware of calorie filled treats. Some breeds are more prone to putting on weight than others (eg Labradors and Beagles) and it takes a lot of care to prevent these dogs becoming overweight.

It can be difficult when we see our pets every day to judge if they have been slowly gaining weight. You should be able to feel their ribs, they should go in at the waist when viewed from above, and their belly should be tucked up, not hanging down. If you want some help to assess if your pet's body condition is about right, please make an appointment with one of our nurses for a free weight check. We can help you get your pet back on track with a diet and exercise plan if needed!



Book Sale for Ovoid

Thank you to all those who donated books to our sale and all those who bought books. We raised a wonderful £180 to send to Nigel Hicks to help care for Orangutans in Borneo. See his website www.ovoid.org for more on his work.

Launceston's Biggest Loser Competition

A pet obesity levels continue to rise, we will be running a competition to see who will become our biggest loser, starting at the beginning of June and finishing in December.

Our qualified nurses will be running regular clinics for your pet. The nurse will discuss your pet's current feeding and exercise regime and design an individual plan which may include food or exercise moderation. The plan will include feeding quantities and frequency and an end weight goal.

Weightwatcher clinics are free. Please contact the surgery to make an appointment to get started. There will be prizes for the winning pet and owner, just in time to enjoy for Christmas. All weight loss will be managed responsibly.

Fun Corner

Who can believe it's May already!

Can you find the 10 words in the grid beginning with May? They maybe (sorry couldn't resist!) found reading up, down, forward, backward or diagonal.

M	A	Y	O	N	N	A	I	S	E
Y	A	M	S	D	A	E	M	U	M
J	A	R	A	M	L	P	A	A	O
M	R	E	W	O	L	F	Y	A	M
G	O	H	P	E	C	B	T	A	A
I	Y	Y	A	M	E	R	Y	O	Y
S	A	D	A	H	U	D	R	L	F
M	M	A	Y	F	A	I	R	B	L
U	M	E	H	Y	A	M	V	S	Y
M	O	S	S	O	L	B	Y	A	M

Answers to April Quiz – Groups of Animals

Kaleidoscope of Butterflies

Murder of Crows

Skulk of Foxes

Mob of Kangaroos

Parliament of Owls

Rookery of Penguins

Prickle of Porcupines

Shiver of Sharks

Troop of Monkeys

Pod of Whales