



CASTLE VETERINARY GROUP LTD

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Monday – Friday 8.30am – 6.30pm; Saturday 8.30am – 3.00pm; Sunday closed.
24hr emergency in-house veterinary cover. Consultations by appointment only.



JUNE 2017 NEWSLETTER

RABBIT AWARENESS WEEK 2017—#HOPTOHAY



This year we are asking you to be part of the **#HoptoHay** pledge. Rabbits should be fed in a way that mirrors their natural diet with mostly grass or hay. Not all hay is equal and most rabbit owners don't know the difference between feeding hay and bedding hay. Bedding hay may be comfortable for rabbits to sleep on, but it may not be nutritious or tasty and can be yellow/brown in appearance. Feeding hay is lush, green and sweet smelling, making it more tasty to rabbits and it is usually dust extracted to help maintain respiratory health.

Rabbits are unique in their digestive system as they need to have a high fibre diet and without it they are at considerable risk of gut stasis (gut inactivity). Gut stasis is a potentially deadly condition in which the digestive system slows down or stops completely. Bad bacteria then builds up in the intestines and releases gas into the system, causing very painful bloating and further decreasing a rabbit's motivation to eat or drink. The 2016 PDSA Animal Wellbeing report highlighted only 30% of rabbit owners are providing constant access to hay for eating. The aim for RAW 2017 is to encourage owners to **#HoptoHay** by highlighting the important role that good quality hay and fresh grass plays in a rabbit's diet and the differences between feeding hay and bedding hay.

85-90% of a rabbit's diet should be fresh, high-quality feeding hay and grass every day. That's equal to their body size in feeding hay! Hay is a great source of fibre, it helps to support their digestive and dental health, wearing down growing teeth and it helps prevent boredom.

We run free rabbit clinics here with our qualified nurses. Please give us a call on 01566 772211 to make an appointment to go through the best care for your bunny.



Special Offer: In support of Rabbit Welfare Awareness, we are offering rabbit vaccinations with 15% off until the end of June. Myxo-RHD now £23.89 and Filavac now VHD2 £17.82 per rabbit.

Please remember these vaccinations need to be given at least 2 weeks apart.

Free Rabbit Nurse Clinics. Book your rabbit in for a free health check with one of our qualified veterinary nurses during June and receive a free sample of Burgess Dandelion & Marigold hay.

Make visits to the vet more comfortable for your cat

Taking your cat to the vet can be a stressful experience—for both you and your cat. Usually the most difficult part is actually bringing the cat to the clinic, not the visit itself. For some owners this means skipping the vet altogether, even though routine visits are crucial to their cat's health and wellbeing. While your cat may show stress on the trip to the vet, there is plenty you can do to make these important visits much more comfortable for you both.



Choose the right carrier: The right carrier can make a world of difference. Find a carrier that can be opened from the top and from the front. If you can remove the top half of your carrier when you get to your appointment, you won't have to take your cat out of the carrier or handle the cat more than necessary. Once inside this type of carrier, your pet will be able to stay in the bottom half while being examined.

Bring all of your cats together: If you have multiple cats at home, whenever possible, bring them to the vet together. Cats are very sensitive to strange, unfamiliar smells and may become aggressive or afraid of a cat coming back from the vet. Bringing all of your cats to the vet at the same time will eliminate this situation.

Felines like the familiar: The more you can make your cat feel at home in his carrier and in the car, the easier it will be for him. There are a few ways you can help your cat get acclimated before this visit:

Leave the carrier out: The first time your cat sees his carrier shouldn't be the day of your appointment. Leave it out—and open—so the cat can sniff and investigate, familiarizing himself with his carrier.

Go for a drive: Try going for a few, brief car rides with your cat that aren't to the clinic. Your cat won't associate the car with visits to the vet and being in the car will slowly become more familiar to him.

Make the carrier feel like home: Does your cat have a favourite toy or blanket? Put it inside the carrier to help him adjust. It will smell like home—a place that's already familiar and safe to your cat.

Allow plenty of time: Rushing to the clinic is not only a stressful experience for you, but for your cat as well. Give your cat plenty of time to adjust before heading out to your appointment, so he's not overwhelmed.

We also recommend the use of products such as Nutracalm tablets or FELIWAY pheromone spray. Just a few sprays of FELIWAY inside the cat carrier and your cat will feel more relaxed and make your travels together a more pleasant experience. This can also be sprayed inside the car for extra effect. Nutracalm tablets can be given prior to travel and both are suitable for use in any other stressful situation such as fireworks. These are readily available from our reception area so please pop in to buy or ask for more information.

Caring for your Rabbit Quiz



Do you know the correct answers to these questions on rabbit care? (there may be more than one answer!)

The average life expectancy of a pet rabbit is... A. 0-2 years; B. 3-5 years; C. 5-8 years

Rabbits should be kept with... A. With another rabbit; B. With a guinea pig; C. On their own;

Hay should be provided... A. Daily; B. Weekly; C. As an occasional treat

Rabbits teeth ... A. Stop growing once they are adults; B. Continually grow; C. Fall out like human baby teeth and they get new adult teeth

The only safe way to pick up a rabbit is... A. By both ears; B. A hand around the waist; C. The scruff of the neck; D. A hand on the chest & bum; E. By the back legs

Fly strike is... A. A disease carried by flies; B. Fly larvae burrowing into the skin; C. An allergy to a bite from a fly

Symptoms of teeth trouble include... A. Dribbling; B. Eating less; C. Change in droppings; D. Lumps on jaw/cheeks; E. Change in food preferences; F. Chewing in an odd way

Rabbits should be vaccinated against... A. Nothing; B. Myxomatosis; C. Viral Hemorrhagic Disease; D. Rabbit Flu; F. Measles