



World Spay Day

World Spay Day, celebrated on the last Tuesday in February, is a global day dedicated to promoting the importance of spaying and neutering pets as a way to control overpopulation and reduce the number of unwanted animals in shelters.

In celebration of world Spay Day, we asked our veterinary team their thoughts on these life-changing surgeries, and how important they are to improving animal welfare globally. Let's hear what they had to say....

"From a global point of view dog and cat neutering is very important to prevent over population and welfare issues, in the UK the situation has changed significantly over the years.

For cats we would still support early neutering to prevent unwanted kittens and also the spread of diseases which are spread mainly by un-neutered cats (FIV - Feline Immunodeficiency Virus).

For dogs there are health benefits to the neutering of females, as early neutering reduces vastly the chances of mammary (breast) cancer later in life, for this reason we would suggest neutering most bitches after their first season. Neutering females also removes the risk of womb infection (Pyometra). The biggest change in recent years is with the view on castrating males, there are advantages in behaviour in delaying castration, and research is showing a reduced risk of cancer and other health problems by not neutering. It now is useful to talk to one of the Veterinary Nurses about these decisions.

For rabbits, neutering females removes the risk of womb (uterine) cancer, which is common even in middle-aged rabbits, and also prevents unwanted litters.

For ferrets the use of hormonal implants is increasing recommended, this needs to be discussed with one of the Vets."

Changes to Our Facebook Page

You may have noticed that our Facebook page name has changed recently to **Castle Vets Pets – Launceston & Liskeard**. From now on all posts from our Launceston practice and our Liskeard branch will be shared on this one page. We hope that by providing a central location for all of our followers, we will be able to promote a greater understand of what goes on across both practices and to enable audience cross-engagement.

Pet Dental Health Month



In case you did not know, **February** is Pet Dental Health Month. The health of your mouth can have a significant impact on your general health and wellbeing – for pets, it is no different! Just like us, pets can also suffer from a broad range of oral problems. Dental disease is becoming more and more prevalent requiring younger animals to have teeth extracted.

Do not forget that Castle Vets offer a mouth clean and screen service which is a ‘staged’ approach to dentistry for dogs and cats. Firstly, one of our Registered Veterinary Nurses will carry out a complimentary dental check-up. If dental disease is identified during this appointment our recommendation is that your pet undergoes a ‘Mouth Clean and Screen’ procedure.

Mouth Clean and Screen:

- A day procedure involving a short general anaesthetic aimed at cleaning your pet’s teeth, assessing and grading their oral health and then making a plan for further treatment if any is required.
- Pre-anaesthetic bloods are included as a screen for any health problems prior to administering an anaesthetic.
- Intravenous fluid therapy will be given to help maintain blood pressure during the procedure.
- X-rays will be taken of all the teeth to allow us to assess the structures below the gumline.
- The teeth will be descaled and polished.
- The gums and teeth will be assessed for any problems such as cavities, fractures or gaps between the teeth and adjacent gums.

- Your pet will then be woken up from the anaesthetic and a treatment plan of any necessary extractions will be made by one of our experienced veterinary surgeons. An accurate estimate of the cost of this treatment will be generated.
- When you come to collect your pet, we will show you the x-rays and dental chart and then run through the recommended treatment plan and explain what is involved.
- If further treatment is recommended, then your pet should be booked in within 6 weeks of the Mouth Clean and Screen for the initial treatment plan and estimate to still be valid.
- All our Mouth Clean and Screen patients receive a homecare 'Smile Kit', post-operative check and a dental check up with a veterinary nurse in 6 months. These are included in the package price.



The Benefits of a Staged Approach:

- Some animals will not require any further treatment. The Mouth Clean and Screen procedure is offered at a significant discount as compared to a standard scale and polish with pre-operative blood test, intravenous fluids and x-rays resulting in great savings for owners. (approximately £125 for cats and £150 for dogs)
- If further treatment is needed then this would be carried out on a different day, resulting in your pet having two shorter general anaesthetics rather than one potentially very long one. This provides the following benefits:
 - Better maintenance of normal blood pressure
 - Better maintenance of normal body temperature
 - Quicker recovery from the procedure as there is less anaesthetic drug used
 - Less time lying still so less muscle and joint stiffness
 - Reduced surgeon fatigue

All of the above have been shown to contribute to a reduction in anaesthetic recovery times and post-operative complications

- We are only able to properly assess your pet's teeth and gums once they are anaesthetised. A thorough examination together with the use of dental x-rays means that we will be much better placed to predict which teeth will require extraction. We can then run through the treatment plan with you so that you know what to expect from the next procedure.
- Being able to plan further treatment in much greater detail means that we can also give you a much more accurate estimate of what the next procedure will cost.



- It is possible that health problems might be flagged on the pre-operative blood test that might otherwise have gone undiagnosed. Your pet can then receive prompt treatment if required.
- X-rays, scale and polish and pre-operative bloods will not be required for the second procedure and there will also be a shorter general anaesthetic - resulting in savings as compared to a non-staged dental.

MEET OUR DEDICATED DENTAL NURSES



Sophie and Olivia have a real passion for all things pet dental health! We asked them what they enjoy most about this service.

Olivia – *“By specialising in pet dental health I feel I am able to make such a difference to their comfort and wellbeing. Cats and dogs dental hygiene has such a huge impact on their overall health.”*

Sophie - *"Dental hygiene in our pets is something I have become extremely passionate about, as it is unfortunately something I feel has been regularly overlooked in the past. However, if left untreated, dental problems can cause a lot of health complications. I have loved helping to start up our Mouth Clean and Screen clinics to help educate owners in the importance of dental hygiene but also to see and hear about the difference it makes to our patients lives, makes it even more rewarding!"*