

MIMRAM SUMMER



NEWSLETTER 2017

Hello and welcome to our Summer newsletter!

Staff Matters

If you read our practice news articles online, you will have heard about **Steph's** upcoming charity trip. In May last year, Steph visited Malawi and helped Mission Rabies with their incredible work. This October, she will be joining them again on their Vaccination Drive in Goa, India. The practice will be donating supplies to this worthy cause but if you feel you could spare a pound or two next time you have your pet vaccinated then we would be very grateful. Chat to our lovely reception team or visit Steph's JustGiving page (www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stephanie-writer-davies) if you wish to donate.

In other news, receptionist **Nicola** has now left to start her maternity leave. We wish her lots of rest in the run up to the big day and look forward to meeting her new arrival! Receptionist **Sara** and Vet Nurse **Sophie** have both recently moved! We wish them all the best for life in their new homes. Sophie also has a new arrival of her own! Adorably named **Crumb** was brought into the surgery as a tiny, underweight ball of fluff whom everyone fell in love with! Her "after" photo was taken 2 months later showing what good food, a good home and lots of love can do!



Practice Matters

In our Spring newsletter, we mentioned we were working hard towards becoming a Royal Canin Approved Weight Management Clinic and we are very proud to announce that in May, we did it! Mimram now holds a "centre of excellence" status for our management of overweight and obese dogs and cats.



All members of the team have received bespoke training from Royal Canin to ensure that we can work with you and your pets to help them achieve their ideal weight. If your pet is overweight or obese they can now

be referred to our "in-house" Weight Management Clinic where you will receive a **free 30-minute consultation with one of our weight management nurses**. At this appointment, we will weigh, body condition score and measure your pet as well as give lots of support (in person and over the phone!) and advice specifically tailored to help your pet reach their ideal weight! Call us on **01438 712300** to book an appointment. If you would like more info on our clinic or obesity in general you can chat to a team member or why not request a copy of our



Spring 2017 Newsletter?

In other exciting news, Mimram vets were delighted to be a part of this year's **DogFest** which took place at Knebworth House. On our stand, we spent a very busy, fun weekend chatting to owners and giving advice about obesity, diet and more! We particularly enjoyed seeing some of our wonderful clients with their furry friends of course!

Other Matters

We are thrilled with our new-look website! With some super design work from **Rhoda's** husband Rob, the website is looking better than ever. Packed full of information and advice to help you care for your pets as well as our latest news and much more please check it out at www.mimramvets.co.uk and let us know what you think!

Spotlight on: Heatstroke and Dogs in Hot Cars

We all know that we should **never** leave dogs in hot cars but do you know why and what you should do if you came across one?

Heatstroke- the facts, the risks and the signs

Dogs are very sensitive to the heat and can't remove clothing or sweat in the same way as we can to cool down. They rely primarily on panting to lose heat but if their body temperatures rises too high this will be insufficient and heatstroke will occur. If a



dog's body temperature rises to 41°C (which can happen in as little as 20 mins in a hot car!!) this will cause internal

organ failure resulting in death.

A survey conducted by the British Veterinary Association revealed 48% of UK vets treated dogs for conditions relating to hot weather. Heatstroke *is* preventable and we as owners are vital for keeping our pets safe and healthy.

Those most at risk include dogs which are:

- Very young or old
- Obese
- Dark in colour (absorb the heat quicker) or have a thick coat
- Brachycephalic (have short, flat faces) e.g. pugs, bulldogs
- Suffering from certain medical conditions e.g. laryngeal paralysis or taking certain medications

The earlier the dog is treated, the better the outcome so recognising the signs of heatstroke is essential. Look out for:

- Increased, heavy panting
- Excessive thirst and drooling
- Lethargy, disorientation, un-coordination leading to collapse
- Dark gums
- Vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- Unconsciousness

Emergency First Aid

You can play a huge role in saving a dog who is suffering from heatstroke. Heatstroke is a **true emergency** and the dog's body temperature must be cooled down gradually. The following steps will provide immediate first aid for the dog whilst a vet is contacted:

- 1) Immediately move the dog into a cool, shaded area and soak them with cool (but NOT cold) water. A sponge and bucket can be used if a hose is not

available. Cool, damp towels can also be placed on the body or the dog positioned by a fan. Pay particular attention to the head area. The dog's tongue can be cooled by dabbing with a wet cloth. Dogs can also be submerged in cool water via a river or lake if you are out (take care to keep their head well above water) or if at home you can submerge your pet in the bath.

- 2) Offer small amounts of cool water to bring their internal temperature down and help to keep them hydrated
- 3) Continue to cool the dog until their breathing starts to settle and they can walk around as normal. It is very important NOT to cool them down to the point of shivering.
- 4) Seek veterinary assistance- we have additional methods of cooling pets down such as cold IV fluid therapy and can monitor internal body temperature with a thermometer.



Dogs in Hot Cars

Never leave a dog in a car no matter how quick, whether you are parked in the shade, have the windows open and the dog has access to water. The British weather is unpredictable and it has been shown that even in weather conditions of 22°C, temperatures in cars can reach fatal highs of 47°C within the hour!

Just imagine for a second that you are walking past a car and notice there is a dog

inside heavily panting, drooling and moving around in a highly uncoordinated way before collapsing on the backseat. What would YOU do? While we hope no one would ever be in this situation, it happens more than we realise and your actions can be the difference between life and death for that dog.

What to do if you see a distressed dog



- 1) Establish the health condition of the dog. If you suspect heatstroke then **phone 999 immediately**. Unfortunately, the RSPCA do not have powers of entry and the Police are used to dealing with this kind of emergency.
- 2) If the police are too far away or unable to attend and you believe the dog's condition has become critical then you may be tempted to break into the car to rescue it. While the police do not recommend doing this in the first instance (**always dial 999**) the law states that: "...you have a lawful excuse to commit damage if you believe that the owner of the property that you damage would consent to the damage if they knew the circumstances (section 5(2)(a) Criminal Damage Act 1971)". If you decide to break in, you must be aware that without proper justification this would be classed as "criminal damage" and you may have to defend yourself in court. If you need to break in to save the dog then the RSPCA and police suggest phoning the Police first to explain what you intend to do and why, take photos/videos of the dog in the car as evidence and get the names and contact numbers for any witnesses who are present.



3) Once you have rescued the dog from the car, take it to a cool, shaded spot and follow the first aid steps above and seek veterinary advice.

What if the dog is not distressed?

- Try to establish how long the dog has been left in the car by checking for a parking ticket.
- Make sure someone stays and monitors the dog in case their condition worsens.
- Make a note of the car registration plate. Even if the owner returns but you still feel the dog is in danger then you may wish to speak to the police for advice.
- If the car is near a supermarket/venue etc. have a staff member make a call-out for the owner.
- You can contact the RSPCA for advice on **0300 1234 999** but **always dial 999 in the first instance** if you are concerned about the health of the dog.



Be Summer Safe- Mimram's Top Tips

With this summer being predicted as one of the hottest in years, we need to know how keep our pets cool. Don't forget, it's not just dogs who are susceptible to heatstroke, our cats and small furries are at risk too! We've put together our top tips on how to stay summer safe:

Advice for all Pets

- Give plenty of clean water (accessible at all times) and change throughout the day to keep water cool.
- Avoid letting your pets outside between 11am-3pm when the sun is strongest.

- Keep on top of grooming, especially in long-haired animals! Keeping coats free from tangles allows the heat to escape more efficiently and is a great way to stay vigilant about flystrike in bunnies. Consider speaking to a groomer about getting your pet clipped (this is also a good way to reduce the risk of grass seed injury in dogs!)
- Very young, old, overweight and brachycephalic pets are particularly at risk for overheating and heatstroke. Look for fast, heavy breathing, a lack of energy/listlessness in dogs and cats and shallow breathing, hot ears, wetness round the nose and open mouth breathing in rabbits. Catch it early and move your pet into a cool spot and offer some water. If you have any concerns or your pet's condition deteriorates, then please contact us immediately on **01438 712300**.
- Pale coloured dogs and cats (particularly white cats) are very prone to sunburn on the nose, ears and areas of sparse fur. Sun damage exacerbates current skin conditions and can lead to cancer. Keeping pets out of the sun is the best prevention but you can also apply a pet-safe sun cream to susceptible areas (but try to prevent them licking it off!).



Dogs

- Walk your dog at the coolest times of the day (early morning and late evening) and always take water with you.
- Dog's paw pads can burn on hot pavements- if it is too hot for you to touch then it is too hot for your dog! Consider walking at a cooler time or you could use dog booties.





Rabbits and Small Furrries

- Keep bunnies and guinea pigs in a shaded area of the garden and provide additional shade with parasols etc. and tunnels/boxes to hide in. You can also place ceramic/marble tiles in the enclosure for them to lie on or use frozen water bottles wrapped in a towel. These can also be placed next to the cages of hamsters and other small furrries to give them somewhere cool to rest!
- If you are using water bottle drinkers for your pets, please ensure these are functioning and/or provide an additional bowl of water too.
- **Don't** give frozen treats or ice cubes as these can cause intestinal problems.
- Check your pets several times a day to ensure they are comfortable. If they show signs of over-heating then move them to a cool spot, wipe them with cool water (particularly on the ears) but never drench or submerge your small furry. Always seek veterinary attention quickly if you are at all concerned.

Seasonal Snippets

Remember to keep on top of your pet's flea and worming schedule as parasite numbers increased in the warmer weather! It is essential to check your rabbit's bottom at least once a day to ensure it is dry and clean to help prevent flystrike. If you have any concerns please give us a ring. Finally, don't forget to check your pet's vaccinations are up to date, especially if you are going away. Rabbit jabs are equally important to protect them from myxomatosis and viral haemorrhagic disease.

Best wishes for a fantastic, safe summer from all the staff at Mimram Vets!

- Make ice cube treats with your dog's favourite food or stuff a kong and pop it in the freezer!
- If your dog enjoys it, swimming is a great alternative to a walk and if it really is too hot to go out, keep them mentally stimulated with refresher training (e.g. sit, stay etc) or teach them something new!

Cats

- Provide plenty of shaded areas outside if your cat likes to go out (get creative and make a "canopy" from towels draped across chairs!)
- Cats do not normally pant so if you see this it may be a sign of heatstroke or another serious condition- please seek help immediately!
- Curious cats will often like to investigate open windows. In the heat, there are more open windows and so increased risk of them falling, sometimes from great heights which may cause internal damage or worse. Consider using a screen or netting across windows or install "tilt and tip" type windows.



- Cats are also well known for getting trapped in places such as sheds and garages. This becomes particularly dangerous in the summer when the heat and a lack of water can quickly cause dehydration (especially in older cats). Ensure your cat is microchipped and if they go missing, think about what's been going on in your neighbourhood and ring round local vets and animal shelters.