

Vet Clinic Newsletter

March 2006

Have you got your pet micro chipped? Last week in the news there was a white deaf cat that went missing in Bondi and was found in St Kilda. Thanks to the micro chip the cat is now safely at home with his mum.

Micro chips are implanted between the shoulder blades of the animal, read with a scanner, similar to those reading bar codes in shops, your details are retrieved from a central data base. Collars and tags are also very helpful but do have a tendency to get lost.



Actual size of micro chip.

Common Household items toxic to your pet.

Many food and drugs that are safe for us are toxic to our dogs and cats, please take a moment to read these, keeping in mind that this is only a short list, if you have any doubts please do not give anything till you check with a veterinarian first.

-Paracetamol, especially toxic to cats, causing liver failure and anemia (destruction of red blood cells). It should never be given to cats. Dogs are not as sensitive but it should be avoided.

-Ibuprofen and other anti-inflammatories. Can cause gastric ulceration and kidney failure if given in improper dosages. There are anti-inflammatories specifically designed for pets which are much safer.

-Antifreeze Ethylene glycol or anti freeze is extremely toxic to kidneys and the central nervous system. Dogs will drink this so please be very careful if changing this at home. Cats don't usually drink or eat this type of thing but will lick it of their paws if they walk through it.

- Snail Pellets are probably the most recognized toxins. All can be lethal and there are no antidotes if ingested. Immediate veterinary attention can save their lives. Initial signs are salivation, diarrhea, vomiting, behavioral changes such as aggression, muscle trembling and fasciculation (tremor). These can progress to coma and death. Even pellets that are supposed to be pet repellent are often eaten by dogs. If you must lay them please place in a pipe or bottle.

- Rat bait another fairly readily recognized toxic substances for our pets. They cause the animal not to be able to clot its own blood and they become anaemic left untreated the animal will die from blood loss. Rat bait takes 3-5 days to work. If you suspect your pet has eaten bait please contact your vet immediately.

- Nicotine dogs have suffered from nicotine poisoning by eating the contents of a dirty ash tray.

'Human food' Feeding food that we enjoy is not only wrong, it can be fatal.

- Chocolate contains theobromine which dogs find hard to metabolize, it is similar to caffeine. The darker the chocolate the more theobromine. 100-150mg theobromine/kg of dog is toxic. A 10kg dog would only need to eat about 80g of chocolate to be in trouble.

The affected dog would show signs of restlessness, muscle twitching and a pounding heart followed by fitting a coma and possibly death. There are dog chocolates available instead of human chocolate.

- Avocado can cause cardiac damage, respiratory distress.

-Grapes & Raisins toxicity causes kidney failure.

-Toadstools/Mushrooms dogs can eat or even lick a mushroom and be ill. Symptoms vary from mild vomiting (even a day later) to severe stomach problems and diarrhea. Some mushrooms can cause liver failure (days or weeks later).

- Onions contain toxic ingredient thiosulphate which causes hemolytic anaemia where the pet's red blood cells burst while circulating in the body. Symptoms are gastroenteritis including vomiting and diarrhea, show no interest in food and will be dull and weak. The red pigment from the burst red blood cells appears in affected animals urine. The condition improves once the onion is withdrawn from the diet.

- Macadamia nuts as few as 6 nuts can show symptoms to show, these include tremor of the skeletal muscles, weakness or paralysis of the hind quarters they are often unable to rise and are distressed, usually panting often mimicking tick paralysis. Fortunately the muscle weakness, while painful, seems to be of short duration and all dogs recover from this toxicity.

- Rhubarb leaves only a small amount can cause violent convulsions or death.

Please do not hesitate to call us for an appointment if you have any concerns regarding your animal's health.

Monday 8.30am – 7pm
Tuesday – Friday 8.30am – 6pm
Saturday 9am – 1pm
Consultation by appointment only

Between 6pm Friday and 9am Monday and on public holidays if you have any concerns about your pet please call 0400 824 024 and a veterinarian will be able to advise you of an appropriate course of action.