



**Pet Healthcare Plans Flourishing At Petcare**

- Save money • Budget
- And do the very best for your pet



Our **Pet Health Plans** have proved to be a huge success with over 200 members joining in 2011. Members benefit from great savings, with added peace of mind that they are doing the very best for their pets, and budgeting too!

Whatever your pets' age or breed, there's a preventative care plan to suit, to help ensure optimum health and protection throughout their life.

**Pet Health Plans** are not insurance. **Pet Health Plans** cover the regular treatments like vaccinations, flea and worm treatments, health checks and advice that pet insurance generally doesn't. However young or old your pet, a **Pet Health Plan** is designed to adapt to your pet's needs, from Puppy or Kitten, to adulthood and throughout senior years, and life long essential healthcare for your Rabbit.

**Pet Health Plans** work well alongside insurance or on their own. You pay for your **Pet Health Plan** by a simple Direct Debit, that saves you up to 10% compared to paying each time you visit, allowing you to spread the cost of your regular veterinary treatment and save money too.

Our Plans offer you the reassurance of knowing that you are providing the best possible protection and care for the pet you love.

They come with our full recommendation and are extremely popular. Please contact the surgery for further information on **01903 782387** or pop in to discuss your joining application. You can also join over the phone with the **Pet Health Plans** team by calling **0800 169 9958**,

**Monday-Thursday**  
 8.30am-6pm **Friday**  
 8.30am-5.00pm from the comfort of your own home.

Visit our website for further information.

**Don't get the summertime blues!**



**AT LAST** – summer's here! But whilst we enjoy the lovely summer weather, it's worth sparing a thought for our pets. Here we look at a few steps you can take to keep them fit and well.

**Slip slap slop!** Cats just love sunbathing, however pets with *white* ear tips and noses are particularly at risk from sunburn and subsequent cancer (see photo bottom right). This risk can be reduced by keeping them out of the sun or applying waterproof sunblock to these areas during the summer months.

**Grass seeds** of the meadow grasses are an issue at this time of year. They are commonly trapped in dogs' ears, or may become embedded in the feet or other areas. In view of this, thorough inspection of the coat is advisable following walks.



**Bee and wasp stings** are another seasonal problem. Some pets are allergic to them and may require prompt veterinary care.

**Fleas and ticks** – do remember to keep up your guard against these pesky parasites

and finally – **NEVER leave your pet in a car on a hot day.**

**Flies** pose a big problem for rabbits as the weather warms up. Flies are very attracted to rabbits if they have soiled bottoms – here they lay their eggs which rapidly hatch out into flesh eating maggots. It is important to check bunnies' bottoms on a daily basis and call us at once if you are worried. Also remember that pets in outside runs need a *shaded area* to get away from the sun.



Ear tip of a cat showing early cancerous changes. If your pet is showing any skin changes, please arrange a check-up

Rabbit Photo: Warren Photograph

**PET TRAVEL SCHEME update 2012**

With 2012 very much under way, it'll soon be time to think about summer holidays. The good news is taking your pet abroad has become much easier and cheaper since the new Pet Travel Scheme rules came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012.

The changes mean that the rules on rabies vaccination for entry into the UK are now in line with the rest of Europe.

All pets still need to be vaccinated against rabies. Pets coming from the EU and listed non-EU countries such as the USA and Australia will no longer need a blood test and will only have to wait 21 days before they travel. Pets from unlisted non-EU countries such as India, Brazil and South Africa will be able to enter the UK if they meet certain strict criteria to ensure they are protected against rabies, including a blood test 30 days after vaccination followed by a three-month wait before they enter the UK.

Dogs, Cats and Ferrets entering the UK from an EU or 'listed' third world country from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 must:

- Be microchipped
- Be vaccinated against Rabies
- Have waited 21 days after vaccination before entering
- Have an EU pet Passport

If you would like to ask any question regarding the scheme, or wish to enquire about your pets' documentation, so you can take them away on holiday with you, please call us on **01903 782387**.



For further information on how to keep your pet healthy, and to keep up to date with current news and pet of the month articles, advise and offers, visit our website, [www.petcarerustington.co.uk](http://www.petcarerustington.co.uk)

**Sign Up NOW!**  
**Email Reminder Service**

With the demands of today's busy schedules, it can be difficult for owners to keep track of preventative healthcare treatment dates. So to help us help you keep your pet in tiptop health, we are now able to offer owners an environmentally friendly email reminder service.

For more information please contact **PetCare Veterinary Clinic.**

**LOCAL 24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE ☎ 01903 782387**

**Visit our website: [www.petcarerustington.co.uk](http://www.petcarerustington.co.uk)**

## Fact File: Heart Disease



DID YOU know that the heart – the most vital muscle in the body, is a muscular pump responsible for supplying the tissues of your pet's body with oxygen and nutrients.

The key function of the heart is to pump deoxygenated blood to the lungs where it is reoxygenated, and pump reoxygenated blood back round to the tissues of the body – allowing pets to lead a normal active life. Whilst most of our pets thankfully take all this for granted, heart disease is nevertheless surprisingly common.

In **dogs** it is generally more common in older pets, but in certain breeds it is more prevalent at an early age. In **cats**, heart disease is quite commonly associated with thyroid gland disease.



Any *loss* of normal heart function is called **heart disease**, and this can be gradual or sudden in onset. There are many possible causes of heart disease, however the two most common causes are due to either **heart valve** problems, or a problem with the **heart muscle** itself.

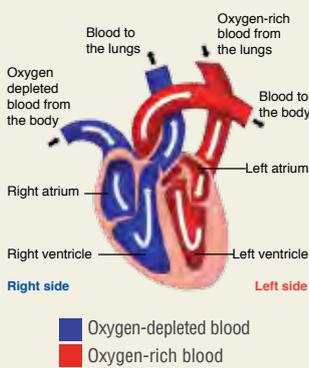
Heart disease is commonly associated with a range of symptoms including: • reluctance to exercise • tiring more easily • coughing • laboured breathing • pale or blueish gums • fainting or collapse.

If you are concerned that your pet is showing *any* of these signs, please come and see us for a full clinical examination – as with many illnesses, early detection is the *golden rule!* The good news however is that new methods of diagnosis and novel forms of treatment are now greatly improving and extending the lives of pets with heart problems.

### How the heart pumps

In a healthy heart, the right side of the heart receives deoxygenated blood from the tissues of the body. As the chambers of the right side contract, they pump the blood to the lungs where the blood is reoxygenated. The oxygen rich blood then flows back into the left side of the heart. As the chambers of the left side contract, the blood is then pumped to the tissues of the body. This is illustrated below.

As the heart muscle squeezes and pumps, valves within the heart prevent back flow of blood.



## Is your pet microchipped?

IT'S A sad fact that hundreds of pets go missing every day and many are never reunited with their owners for one simple reason – tragically, they cannot be reliably identified.



However, the good news is that, in addition to the traditional collar and engraved tag (which doesn't always stay in place), you can now have your pet *permanently* identified with a tiny microchip, giving you the best chance of being re-united with your pet, should they go missing.

A range of pets can be microchipped including dogs, cats, small pets, birds and even fish!

A microchip is hardly bigger than a grain of rice and having it implanted is quick and simple. Like a normal injection, it is inserted under the skin at the back of the neck and, once there, it lasts a lifetime. Each microchip carries a unique code which, together with information about your pet and your contact details, are held on a central computer database.

Should your pet go missing, when found, the chip can be "read" using special hand held scanners.



Tiny microchip implant



A special scanner is used to "read" the unique code, speedily identifying your pet.

Veterinary practices, the police and animal welfare organisations routinely scan all strays, hopefully ensuring that if the unthinkable happens, you and your pet can be speedily reunited.

So – don't take any chances! Get your pet microchipped today!

## Rabbit dental problems – a growing issue!



YOU MAY be surprised to learn that one of the most common health problems in rabbits is dental disease. Rabbits have *continuously* growing teeth, with both the cheek teeth and the incisor (front) teeth growing by as much as 1-2 mm per week!

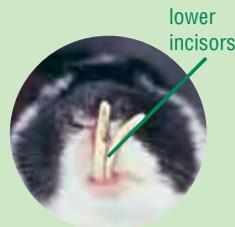
The **incisor teeth** should meet (see photo left), thereby ensuring that as your rabbit chews, they will wear down. If they become misaligned they will continue to grow, and will overgrow past each other leading to eating problems.

Turning to the **cheek teeth**, these are grinding teeth. However if they become overgrown, they frequently develop sharp spikes (see photo – lower right) which can lacerate the tongue and cheeks, making eating very painful. Signs commonly include "slobbers" with saliva wetting around the mouth, a decreased appetite and often marked weight loss.

**So what can be done to help?** Feeding your pet rabbit the correct diet is very important. Their ideal diet includes plenty of hay (high in fibre), together with a selection of fresh food and a small amount of commercial rabbit food. High fibre diets promote dental health, reduce obesity and keep them occupied for several hours each day! Commercial rabbit foods are now available as extruded pellets and this helps to avoid the problem of rabbits selectively feeding – leaving vitamins and minerals uneaten.

If you are worried about your rabbit's teeth, we would be pleased to check them for you and also advise you on diet regimes aimed at promoting optimum dental health.

**Both incisors and cheek teeth may be affected:**



Misaligned and overgrown lower incisor teeth.



Overgrown cheek teeth (arrowed) are sharp, spikey and can lacerate the gums.