



## In this month's issue



### 1 NUTRITION AND WEIGHT MANAGEMENT FOR CATS AND DOGS

Good nutrition and a healthy weight are just as important to our animal companions as they are to us. Supplying your pet with a well-balanced diet is a great way to help extend their life and improve their overall health.

### 2 HOW TO STOP DOGS BARKING

Barking is a natural form of communication for dogs and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Identifying why your dog barks goes some way towards finding a way to restore quiet.

### 3 REMARKABLE MOTHERS

There are few things in this world more powerful than a mother's love, and we don't just mean human moms either.

### 4 WHAT IS ENDOCRINE DISEASE?

An endocrine disease is a disease that is caused by a hormonal imbalance. These diseases are relatively common and can greatly affect your pet's quality of life. Some diseases can even be life threatening if they are not diagnosed and treated correctly companion animals.

## 150 NUTRITION AND WEIGHT MANAGEMENT FOR CATS AND DOGS

It's not just more Australian people who are suffering from obesity. More pets are too, with over 41% of dogs and over 32% of cats estimated to be clinically overweight or obese.

The food your pet eats plays an important role in its overall health and well-being. Balanced nutrition is an essential part of an active, healthy lifestyle. Eating too much pet food, snacks or people food will cause your pet to become overweight, and this increases the risk of conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, heart disease and breathing problems.

Food also plays a very important role in treating overweight pets. Along with exercise, an appropriate and effective diet is essential in helping your pet lose weight and stay fit. Fiber is another key ingredient as it helps your pet eat less while keeping them full.

Once your pet has been overweight, it may be prone to weight gain and should have an ongoing weight-management plan based on good nutrition, exercise and regular check-ups and weigh-ins.

### Selecting the right food

With so many pet food products on the market today, it can be difficult to ensure you're providing your pet with the right diet to support his or her optimum wellbeing. Our experienced veterinary and nursing staff at **Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital** can provide you with all of the guidance you need to get your pet on the road to a lifetime of good health.

## Get a Tailored Nutritional Plan for your Pet



During the month of May, our Veterinary Nurses, Meg McLeish and Georgia Deakin, will be running our annual **Weight Clinics** as well as conducting a **Nutrition - Information** Session on **Tuesday, 5th May 7-8pm** at Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital.

**Veterinary Surgeon, Dr Steve Connaughton from Hill's Pet Nutrition** will be joining the information session to offer valuable nutritional information and guidance.

**Addressing specific needs**

During the Nutrition - Information Session, we begin by assessing your pet's unique lifestyle and specific needs so that we can develop a customised nutritional profile. We can then use this information to determine which food products would best support your companion's ongoing wellness. We can even create special dietary plans that specifically address a variety of medical conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, kidney disease, and heart disease.

### Management plans for overweight pets

Another area of concern that we'll address is your companion's weight. Pets that are carrying even a few extra pounds are placed at a greater risk of developing a number of serious, chronic and painful medical conditions like arthritis and diabetes. Obesity can even shorten your pet's lifespan. We will help you establish an appropriate exercise plan that will help your pet achieve and maintain their ideal weight range. Even if your pet is older or disabled, we can



determine the right type of physical activity at the appropriate intensity level, to keep your pet fit and healthy.

For accurate diagnosis and treatment options, come and talk to one of our qualified veterinary nurses and ask them to recommend the best food for your pet's weight management.

**At Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital, we know you want what's best for your animal companion, and we do too! So sign up for the FREE – Nutrition Information Session and let us work with you to develop the perfect nutrition and weight management plan to help bring out the very best in your pet.**

**BOOK NOW!**

**NUTRITION FOR WELLNESS SEMINAR**  
**7pm to 8pm - Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

This seminar is complimentary however,  
booking is essential to secure a place.

**Hill's** Healthy Weight Protocol  
Transforming Lives™

**Hill's Healthy Weight Protocol is a pet weight loss program specially developed to give you and your pet a new lease of life together, with greater vitality for the long run.**

- Education about weight management
- Tailored weight loss program
- Receive emails of updated progress
- Handy treat recipes and comparisons
- Free weigh ins
- Reward prizes for reaching weight benchmarks

#### Getting up and running

Discuss with your vet or one of our qualified veterinary nurses whether or not your pet is overweight and would benefit from being on the Healthy Weight Protocol program.

We will then provide you with the appropriate Hill's Prescription Diet food, and register your pet on our clinics' Healthy Weight Protocol system.

Once registered, it's simple for us to manage and track progress using online tools and records with some quick weigh-ins at Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital.

In just a couple of weeks, you should see signs of increased vitality and other improvements:

- Brighter eyes
- A shinier coat
- Firmer stools

Depending on your pet's current condition, it can take as little as 8 weeks to slim down to their lean and lively ideal weight.

#### Staying Motivated

Unlike some diet programs, the Healthy Weight Protocol offers an ongoing, dynamic tracking of your pets' progress, so you stay motivated and your pet stays on track to reach their target weight. Here are some of the resources that help:

A Progress Tracker plots out your pet's desired weight-loss curve, and we can enter actual weights to see how closely things line up, and email this progress straight to you!

If your pet is tracking on target by 05 June 2016, you will be able to choose one of our **fantastic prizes**, including collapsible water bowls, ball throwers, or even cat toys for our feline competitors.

If your pet reaches its target weight or is continuing to track on target by 05 September 2016, you can **choose another reward from our selection of pet prizes**.

**PLUS**, on the 05 September cut-off, any pet that has reached its target or is still on track to reach their target will be eligible for entry to **win an extra special prize from us, valued at \$200!**

Make sure to spread the word about the importance of a healthy weight in our animal friends, and don't forget to take those all-important before and after photos to show your friends!

Pop in to Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital if you would like some more information on our weight clinic, our staff will be happy to assist you!

#### How to Stop Dogs Barking

Barking is a natural form of communication for dogs and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Identifying why your dog barks goes some way towards finding a way to restore quiet.

Barking behaviour is completely normal dog behaviour and stopping nuisance barking will not mean your dog won't bark at all. They will still let you know if there is an intruder, the aim is just to get the barking to a more manageable level.



Dogs bark for a number of reasons, so it is important to sit back and try to determine why your dog is barking. Some dogs bark for attention, out of boredom, at people or birds and some bark because they are stressed or anxious. A dog barking due to anxiety needs a different approach to a dog who is bored.

For this reason bark collars are considered by veterinary behaviourists to be a costly investment for something that most likely will not work long-term and can more often than not be harmful. More exercise, chewing, company and stimulation can assist.

#### Behaviour Therapy

If you have a problem barker make an appointment with your veterinarian. Many vets have additional qualifications or a special interest in behaviour, so it is worth asking whether one of the vets has a special interest in behaviour. Often there are health conditions that could be exacerbating the problem, such as dementia, pain, vision or hearing problems.



Dogs also bark if they are anxious, so medications can be used in the short-term to help your dog learn some coping skills. They need not be permanent. While there are some excellent dog trainers, there is little regulation in the industry, so skills and methods can vary. Ask your veterinarian to recommend someone if they can't help.

### Keep a Bark Diary

If you are not sure what your dog is barking at or if he seems to be barking at everything, keep a bark diary. You may start to see a pattern, for example he barks at 3pm when kids are getting out of school. It might be useful to ask your neighbours to do this also, so you know when he is barking when you are not home. Your neighbours also then know you are attempting to resolve the problem.

There are also voice activated recorders available, phone/tablet apps to monitor your pet and many different home security monitors you can set up via webcams to see what your dog gets up to while you are out.

### Types of Barking

Dogs naturally will bark to warn you, and this may become a problem if there are lots of things your dog sees, such as birds, cats and people walking by the fence. He may feel the need to alert you to every small thing that approaches. Sometimes it is as simple as blocking off a gate to block the stimulus of people walking past. Dogs will also bark out of boredom, or because they are worried about being alone.

Sometimes you can tell whether the type of bark is a play bark or anxious bark. A play bark is usually made while the dog has loose, relaxed body language. An anxious dog has ears back and the whites of the eyes are showing. If your dog barks only when you go out, he may have separation anxiety.

Medications may be necessary for those dogs who are tense and anxious, and in some cases a dog appeasing pheromone collar (DAP®) can help.

### Extinguish the Behaviour

Many times we have unintentionally taught our dog to bark by reinforcing the behaviour. If your dog barks in the yard and you go out and shout at him, he has gotten your attention and may even think you are joining in with your own funny little human bark. Even looking at your dog when he barks can be a reinforcer.

To extinguish the behaviour you must completely ignore it. Walk away, or look away and do not speak or give eye contact. Bear in mind that the behaviour will temporarily increase before it improves, and you must be persistent and consistent. Try never to enter the house or yard or let your dog inside while your dog is barking, as this can easily reinforce the behaviour too.

### Exercise

No matter why your dog is barking, some general training will help keep his mind occupied and wear him out. A tired dog is a happy dog. Regular walks in the morning can help, even just a 15 minute walk around the block is better than nothing. Two walks a day would be perfect. If you work long hours, consider a dog walker, doggy daycare, a play-date with a friend's dog or asking someone to visit in the middle of the day.

### Chewing

Chewing causes the release of happy hormones in dogs, so giving your dog something to chew as you leave the house is a good routine to get into. If your dog tends to bury things or is reluctant

to chew, just give a small amount of breakfast, so your dog is hungry enough to want to chew. Use something large such as a pigs ear or Kong® stuffed with treats so it lasts for a while. You can also put dry food into an old plastic drink bottle, and let your pet work to get the food out. For some great ideas for homemade chew toys check out this article on The Bark Post.

Whenever you branch out with a new toy, please be safe, supervise your dog to ensure he is not going to end up having emergency surgery due to a broken tooth or ingesting part of a toy.

### Company

If your dog is bored, getting a companion may help. Consider fostering through a rescue organisation such as Maggie's Rescue or the RSPCA. That way you are not necessarily committing, in case you end up with two problem barkers! You could also arrange a play-date with a friend's dog, or think about booking your dog into doggy day-care.

### Train Your Dog to 'Speak'

Pet owners always think it is strange when I recommend teaching their dog to bark on command. This places the behaviour under stimulus control and with one more step, you can teach your dog to be 'quiet' on command.

First, get your dog excited by ringing the doorbell, knocking on a wall or whatever you know will start him barking. Say your command word, such as 'speak' and pair it with a treat. When your dog is consistently barking when you say 'speak', you can then say 'quiet' and give a treat. Your dog will have to stop barking to get the treat.

### The Key Points

While problem barking can be an annoying behaviour, it is relatively simple to stop with a few simple tools. Remember to consult a veterinarian first, and remember these key points:

- Ignore barking by not looking at or responding to a barking dog, remove yourself or eye contact.
- Keep your dog busy and tired by giving things to chew on and walking him regularly.
- Consider a playmate, play-date or dog-walker.
- Train your dog to 'speak' on command.

Barking can be a nuisance both for you and your neighbours. It can also be a sign that your dog is bored or anxious. There are a number of solutions for barking dogs that avoid the use of punishing anti-bark collars and will help you to achieve peace.

**Source:** [https://www.lovethatpet.com/dogs/training-and-Remarkable Mothers](https://www.lovethatpet.com/dogs/training-and-Remarkable-Mothers)

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## Remarkable Mothers

There are few things in this world more powerful than a mother's love, and we don't just mean human mums either. Mothers of all species demonstrate that not only do they take the time to teach their babies how to find food and protect themselves against elements, but also that they will do anything to protect their children, even at great cost to themselves.



### 1. Orangutan

The bond between an orangutan mother and her young is one of the strongest in nature. During the first two years of life, the young rely entirely on their mothers for both food and transportation. The moms stay with

their young for six to seven years, teaching them where to find food, what and how to eat and the technique for building a sleeping nest. Female orangutans are known to "visit" their mothers until they reach the age of 15 or 16.



### 2. Polar Bear

Attentive polar bear mothers usually give birth to twin cubs that stick by her for about two years to learn the necessary survival skills in the cold climate. The mothers den by digging into deep snow drifts, creating a space protected

from the elements. They usually give birth between December and January and keep the cubs warm and healthy using their body heat and milk. The cubs leave the den in March and April to get used to outside temperatures before learning to hunt.



### 3. African Elephant

When it comes to African elephants, a new mum is not alone in guiding her young. Elephants live in a matriarchal society, so other females in the social group help a calf to its feet after birth and show the baby how to nurse. The older

elephants adjust the pace of the herd so the calf can keep stride. By watching the adults, the calf learns which plants to eat and how to access them. The females regularly make affectionate contact with the calf.



### 4. Cheetah

Cheetah mothers raise their young in isolation. They move their litter—usually two to five cubs—every four days to prevent a build-up of smell that predators can track. After 18 months of training as hunters, the cheetah

cubs finally leave their mothers. The cubs then form a sibling group that will stay together for another six months.



### 5. Emperor Penguin

After laying an egg, the mother emperor penguin leaves it with a male who protects the fragile hard shell from the elements. The mother then travels up to 50 miles to reach the ocean and fish. She later returns to the hatching

site to regurgitate the food to the newly hatched chicks. Using the warmth of her own brood pouch, the mother keeps the chick warm and safe.

Source: <http://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/five-remarkable-animal-moms>

## What is Endocrine Disease?

An endocrine disease is a disease that is caused by a hormonal imbalance. These diseases are relatively common and can greatly affect your pet's quality of life. Some diseases can even be life threatening if they are not diagnosed and treated correctly.

Endocrine diseases can develop because a gland is not functioning properly or the control of the gland is faulty.

When too much hormone is produced, the disease is referred to as a hyper disease. Tumours and abnormal tissue growth commonly cause an overproduction of hormone.

A hypo disease occurs when too little hormone is produced. Endocrine glands that are destroyed, removed, or just stop working cause these diseases.

### Symptoms of possible underlying disorders include:

- Increased thirst and urination
- Weight loss
- Episodic weakness
- Weight gain
- Hair thinning or hair loss
- Gastrointestinal signs
- Liver enzyme elevations
- Hyperlipidemia
- Vision loss and blindness

There are multiple ways we can treat an endocrine disease but diagnosis of the actual cause of the disease is essential.

### Endocrine diseases include:

- Hyperthyroidism
- Cushing's Disease
- Hypothyroidism
- Diabetes Mellitus
- Addison's Disease
- Diabetes Insipidus

The conditions listed above are only few, but there are plenty more out there so make sure your pet receives regular health checks with us.

Source: <http://www.animalendocrine.com/endocrine-clinic/overview-of-endocrine-diseases/>

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Nambeelup



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