

PORT KENNEDY Veterinary Hospital



Monthly Newsletter - November 2014

Issue # 11 2014

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Samantha is a one year old Siberian Husky, whose courage and intelligence match her good looks.

OPEN DAY

♥ For the Love of Animals ♥

Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital
U1-2/9 Fielden Way,
Port Kennedy
Sunday, 30 November
10am-2pm.



K-9 Rescue
Cat Haven
Greyhounds as Pets
Mandurah Wildlife
Staffy and Bully Rescue
Paws for Diabetics
WISH Animal Rescue
POOPS WA
Greener Pastures
HAART
SAFE
Assistance Dogs
Australia
Impounded Feline
Rescue
Squishypuffs

Activities include:

Pony Rides
Face Painting
Free Sausage Sizzle
Slushies
Free Weigh and Worm
Adoptions
Professional Pet Photos
Live Music with DJ
Raffles
100's of giveaways
Specialist on hand to
discuss your pets health
Many other discounts
Discounted
Microchipping

Come and join us and our local shelters for a day of food, fun and animals and much more.!



The Dangers of Grass Seeds and Plant Awns

Spring is finally here and many of us are taking our dogs for lovely long walks. But at this time of year at Port Kennedy Veterinary Hospital we start to see a lot of patients (particularly dogs), with grass seeds and plant awns embedded in various parts of the body.



Barley grass seeds are dry and ready to do their worst!

With this article we hope to raise awareness on this extremely painful problem.

Last spring/summer we had a many cases where we extracted often multiple seeds from ears and ear canals, the nasal cavity, between the eye and eyelids, between the toes and even in gums and between the teeth. A real danger exists of grass seeds traveling through an animal's system and into their internal organs after first entering the skin, as the seeds produced all have a certain shape that allows them to penetrate and travel. Seeds that cause the most problems are the barley grass seed (they look like small darts). They have a very sharp point and a long tail. When they come in contact with an animal's skin or other body part, the sharp point easily breaks into the skin and the tail acts like a non-return stop establishing the seed in its new position. If not removed immediately, it may actually start to burrow in and travel through the body.

Signs of Grass Seeds

The signs of a grass seed varies greatly. Sometimes what we see is as simple as matted hair or local swelling. However, a seed in the ear canal may cause intense irritation and pain with head shaking, ear scratching and rubbing on the floor, or a head tilt. In the eye, closed eyelids and heavy tear production, or constant pawing at the affected eye can be seen. Sneezing and nasal discharge will result from some intranasal grass seeds. Lameness from foot infections are common when they penetrate the toes. Excessive licking accompanies attachment to the gums, tongue and mouth. Pets with seeds in the back of the throat may cough, retch, or gag, and have difficulty eating and swallowing.

Treatment

Sometimes pets can remove superficial seeds themselves by grooming. However, if the seeds are swallowed they can stick to the back of the throat near the tonsils and cause inflammation and swelling. Others can migrate through the wall of the oesophagus, then through the lungs or abdomen causing widespread damage and infection. Most seeds in the eyes, ears, nose and mouth and those penetrating deeper into skin of the feet usually need an examination and some level of anaesthesia. Sometimes, local anaesthetic eye drops is sufficient to remove intra-ocular seeds. However, for safer removal from deep inside the ear canal or removal from under the skin, most patients need sedation. For example, a damaged ear drum can result if the head moves at the wrong time. A full general anaesthetic is occasionally required where intranasal seeds are removed. Some grass seeds can't be found on the first attempt, and repeated anaesthetics can be required.





Puppy Brown had a 3cm barley grass seed (pictured above) removed from his RHS nostril!

Prevention is better than cure!

Puppy Brown had a 3cm barley grass seed (pictured above) removed from his RHS nostril! These "Doggles" are one way to avoid grass seed problems in the eyes

Be particularly vigilant at checking your pet's coat for grass seeds, plant seeds and burs that may become entangled in the hair.

Daily grooming will help remove any attached seeds and help you check for any suspicious looking areas or wounds. If you find a seed, try removing it with a pair of tweezers. If you cannot remove it easily, or you notice a lump of an old seed already imbedded, feel free to CONTACT US immediately, as this could require surgery.

Keep hair around the feet, foot pads and ears trimmed short if possible, as this will help prevent grass seeds attaching.

Avoid walking in areas with long grasses during this time of year.

Don't allow your dog to chew grasses that have seed heads on them.

If your pet is showing any signs of discomfort, such as licking, lameness, head shaking, excessive sneezing, coughing etc. or if you find a wound that you suspect could be from a seed, take them to the vet as soon as possible. The quicker we can remove the seed, the less damage it will do.

Source: <http://www.dmvs.com.au/grasseeds.html>
<http://castlevetsreading.wordpress.com/2013/07/17/the-dangers-of-grass-seeds-and-plant-awns/>



These "Doggles" are one way to avoid grass seed problems in the eyes

Summer Survival Guide

Bees: these pesky insects can cause swelling and pain at the site of the sting. It is easily treated with an injection from the vet.

Fleas: I'm sure you are all too aware of the affect these can have on your furry friend. Fleas start breeding more in the summer months and if steps are not taken quickly they can become a huge problem that can be hard to get on top of. Please feel welcome to come in and chat to us about the various flea preventatives available. We stock a range of products including spot ons and chews.

Heat Stroke: unfortunately every year a number of pets will suffer and some will even die from heat stroke. However the good news is it is easily avoided with the following steps:

- avoiding walking your dog during the hottest part of the day. Walks in the morning and in the evening are best.
- encouraging your pet to drink more. Chicken or beef stock can be frozen into icy treats for your dog and water can be added to dry food to increase the moisture content.
- very hairy dogs can be clipped
- children's play pools are great fun for dogs and also excellent for helping keep them cool.
- never leaving your dog in the car even for a short time.





Snakes: the main snakes in the Port Kennedy region consist of tiger and dugite snakes. Clinical signs can include big dilated pupils, weakness, paralysis, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or trouble breathing. Treatment generally includes hospitalization for fluid therapy and antivenom.

Ticks: Although we do not encounter the paralysis tick or Ixodes holocyclus here in Perth, we do have other ticks which latch on to the skin and suck blood. They can be very small and hard to find but grow in size as they feed. They can cause skin infections.

If you are concerned your pet have any of the previously mentioned conditions, contact us immediately for further advise on 9524 6644.

Skin Conditions

The importance of nutrition

The food your pet eats plays an important part in his or her overall health and well-being. Your pet's skin should be smooth and soft with no flaking, redness or signs of irritation. It should be neither too dry nor too greasy and have no areas of hair loss. A nutritious, complete and balanced diet is an essential part of an active, healthy lifestyle. When your pet has a skin condition, it's even more important to feed the right food.

Signs of skin conditions or disease include the following: Itching, scratching, licking or rubbing. Bad skin odour, flaky or scaling patches. Scabs, crusts or thickened skin. Hair loss, red patches, spots or pimples.

What causes skin conditions? Skin discomfort can have many causes. If your pet is showing signs of irritation, consult your veterinarian who will be able to diagnose the condition. Your veterinarian may carry out tests to identify the exact reason for your pet's skin condition.

Common causes include: Your pet may be allergic to either food or environmental factors like dust, pollen or mold. Fleas, ticks and mites can all cause mild to severe skin irritation. Pets with too much or too little of certain hormones are prone to skin problems. Bacterial infections can cause skin problems. Allergies, parasites, hormonal imbalances, infections.

How can the right food help?

Some skin conditions can be cleared up quickly, while others need lifelong management. The good news is, most pets with skin conditions can be helped by feeding the right food, even if the cause of the condition is not dietary.

Some important ingredients that can help heal and protect your pet's skin include:

Protein - High quality protein provides the building blocks for repair of damaged skin. Feeding unusual sources of protein can also help avoid reactions in pets with allergies or intolerances to more common ingredients.

Essential Fatty Acids - A diet containing high levels of omega-3 (found naturally in fish oil) and omega-6, will help nourish and protect your pet's skin, prevent dryness, and control inflammation.

Antioxidants Vitamin E and other antioxidants are vital in helping to maintain your pet's healthy immune system, and protect it from harmful free radicals. Combining these ingredients in a single pet food provides a convenient and natural way to manage your pet's skin condition.

Case Study – Samantha to the Rescue!

Samantha is a one year old Siberian Husky who courage and intelligence match her good looks.

Her canine companion recently fell in the pool. Samantha jumped in to save her friend, dragging her by the collar to the side of the pool where she could get out.

She is also very attentive to the people in the household and will accompany older family members around the house to make sure they are OK.

What a champ!

