

# BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



24 Donovan Street, Blockhouse Bay  
Phone: 626 3456  
Fax: 627 1073  
E-mail: [vets@bhbvets.co.nz](mailto:vets@bhbvets.co.nz)  
[www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz](http://www.blockhousebayvets.co.nz)

Winter 2016

Dear Client,

For those of you who regularly read this newsletter you will be familiar with Jacqueline and her achievements in the athletics field. Recently she finished third in her age group at the Rotorua marathon and received three more medals. I won't even try to explain how you get three medals from one event. In our house we have a small gym with a medal wall, with 63 medals and two shelves of trophies. I will point out that none of them are mine.

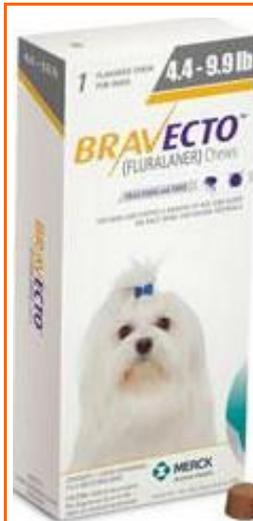
Anyway this summer I decided to get fit and race the giant Toa enduro race at crank worx in Rotorua. It took endless training all summer but I managed to not crash and ended up 9th in the masters. I also did a local event the Riverhead enduro and actually won the legend category. Now legend means old and should know better than to race downhill at this age. I was very happy with my win, but no medal or trophy to show for my efforts.

Jacqueline took pity on me and bought a trophy for me so at least our little gym has one prize that belongs to me.

Don't worry the rest of the newsletter is about pets.

Look forward to seeing you soon.

Lance, Jacqueline,  
Geoff, Jess & the  
Team



## Keep forgetting to flea treat your dog?

If you struggle to remember to flea treat your dog every month we have the solution for you. One meaty flavoured tablet that lasts for three months. We will even send you a text message to remind you when the next one is due. Problem solved.

## Can't get a worm tablet in your cat?

Do you struggle to convince your cat to swallow a worm tablet? You are not alone. Broadline is a topical flea and complete wormer in one simple application. Apply Broadline to the back of your cats neck- problem solved.



## **Rat bait poisoning.**

We have seen quite a lot of cases recently of dogs consuming rat bait poison. Luckily all cases have ended well due to early intervention but I fear we may not always be so lucky.

Rat bait is an interesting poison as it works via stopping blood clotting. A dog can eat rat bait and show absolutely no ill effects from doing so but a week later is fighting for its life.

If your dog eats rat bait do not under any circumstances wait to see "how it goes". If the dog has just eaten the rat bait we will often induce vomiting to remove the poison from the stomach.



Luckily we have an antidote treatment for rat bait poisoning, which can be given if the poison was consumed earlier. This medication may need to be given for up to one month. We can also do blood tests to check if blood clotting is affected. If the clotting is delayed we can continue the medication until the clotting is back to normal.

The difficult cases are the ones where the dog is simply unwell and we do not know it has consumed the poison. Sometimes they are bleeding internally with no outward sign.

I think nearly every case we have seen recently the poison was laid by the dogs owner. It is therefore really important to think carefully about where and how it is placed. Dogs can be very sneaky and inquisitive so don't underestimate where they can get given the chance.

One option is put the poison in drainage pipe that is securely fixed down. Rats can get inside the pipe but dogs cannot. Rat traps can be a safer option and you have the benefit of seeing what is caught. It is also a more humane option. Also if a rat eats poison then dies in your roof space it can make for an unpleasant smell.

Take home message– Be careful with all poisons and if you think your pet has eaten some, ring the vet immediately. If you have the packet with the ingredients that is very helpful.

## **We live in a corporate world.**

The world is changing and trying to stop it is a futile exercise. One of the changes has been the transition from family run businesses to corporate chains. This is nearly true for all professions whether it be you dentist, optometrist or your vet. You would think that a big corporate would have greater buying power and therefore result in cheaper prices to the consumer. This has simply not happened, certainly not in the veterinary profession.

I love the fact that Blockhouse Bay Veterinary Centre is not part of a chain of vets. Our vets have complete freedom to treat each pet however they see fit. They have no "targets" to reach nor are they dictated which medicines they must use.

I would like to give a shout out to another family run business. For many years we have had an association with Ian and Sharon the owners of Pet shop boyz in Glen Eden. They like us are not part of a chain and as such are not put under external pressures to make a profit. I have seen pet shops in the UK that will let pets die if it is uneconomic to treat them.

Ian and Sharon clearly love animals and will spend money to treat their pets even if it costs more than the value of that pet to sell.

I believe we should support such businesses and hopefully we can maintain our little communities with local owners who genuinely care about their customers.





# CASES OF THE MONTH

## Emergency surgery saves Ben's life.

We get many people rushing through our door with "emergencies" but in reality we see very few true emergencies.

Ben however was a true emergency and without quick intervention had a 100% chance of dying.

Ben is a 10 year old male Corgi who started feeling restless in the early hours of the morning. This steadily got worse and Ben came into the clinic first thing. He was looking very sorry for himself and had a large bloated abdomen.

A quick x-ray showed the classic gas shadow of a gastric torsion.

This is where the stomach has literally rolled over twisting the entry and exit to the stomach. The food ferments in the stomach creating gas which cannot escape creating a giant balloon for a stomach.

The first thing we did for Ben was connect him to an intravenous fluid pump to try to stabilise his shocked circulation and while we were doing this we inserted a needle through his abdominal wall to relieve some of the gas. Not the most pleasant smell, but all part of being a vet.

Once Ben was stable enough he was taken into surgery. We did explain to Ben's owner that the survival rate is only about 50% as in many cases the tissue damage is so great the patient dies of toxic shock.

Once Ben was under general anaesthetic we were able to pass a stomach tube and remove some of the stomach contents.

His abdominal wall was opened up and his stomach carefully and slowly rotated back to its normal position. A procedure called a gastropexy was performed to attach the stomach to the abdominal wall to prevent this happening again.

Ben was closed up and sent to recovery where he was closely monitored. Luckily Ben is a tough little dog and recovered well. Ben has been back to have his stitches out and is doing very well.

Luckily we don't see gastric torsion's too often. I remember as a new graduate doing after hours my biggest fear was seeing a gastric torsion in the early hours of the morning. They simply can't wait till the morning and many won't survive even with your best efforts.

Now many of you are probably getting alarmed thinking could my dog do this? As I said it is fairly rare but does occur. It is seen mostly in deep chested breeds like Boxers and German Shepherds but can occur in other breeds also.

My advice would be not to exercise dogs after a meal and probably feed two smaller meals rather than one large one. If your dog's abdomen feels very tight and he is clearly uncomfortable then take him or her to the vet even if it is the middle of the night.



Ben recovering after his surgery.



The large black area in the centre of the x-ray is a massively bloated stomach.

## Breeze- Embarrassing situation.

This year will be my tenth birthday and after both knees being operated on I am starting to feel my age. I still enjoy chasing my ball but am now happy to retrieve it a couple times then sit down and chew it, rather than chase the ball until my Dad simply refuses to throw it any more.

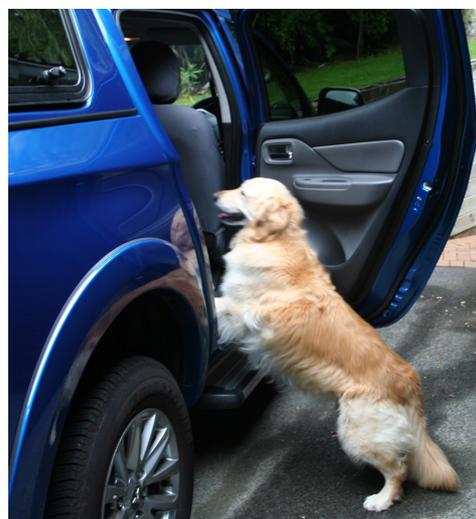
I do have one embarrassing problem though. I used to be able to jump straight into the back seat of my Dad's ute, but now can't quite manage it. Many of my friends at the clinic tell me their parents have bought low cars so they can get in easily. Some even have special ramps so they can walk up the ramp into the car.

I was very pleased when I found out my Dad was getting rid of his old ute. I was not impressed when his new one was even HIGHER!

It is humiliating I have to put my front paws up on the seat then my Dad hauls me up by my bottom! I am a lady don't you know.

If you see my Dad please tell him it is not funny and he needs to get me a van.

The Breeze



## New drug available for itchy dogs.

A new drug has recently been launched in New Zealand to help treat itchy dogs. Itchy dogs are a huge problem in Auckland. Many are simply down to fleas but a large number are caused by allergic skin disease.

Treatment may involve shampoos, creams, antibiotics and antifungals but in many cases we need to use steroids to control the itch and inflammation.

A short course of steroids is rarely a problem but long term use can have undesirable side effects.



Apoquel does not have these same long term side effects.

Another big advantage of Apoquel is many arthritis anti-inflammatory medicines are not compatible with steroids. We often get itchy, sore dogs and have to choose which is most important, the itchy skin or the sore joints. Now dogs could have Apoquel for the itch and safely use arthritis medication at the same time.

If your pet is on long term prednisone or prednil then ask us if Apoquel could be right for your dog.



## How would you like us to communicate with you?

We are currently in the process of updating how we communicate with you.

Many people like to receive reminders for vaccinations, tests and treatments for their pet via text or email rather than post.

I must admit we like it too as it is less work for the staff and is cheaper also, helping keep the cost down for you.

Next time you are in the clinic let us know how you would like your reminders sent.

We also have our newsletter on our web site, which looks better being in colour rather than the printed version. Let us know your email address and we will let you know when the latest one is out.

If you still like receiving paper reminders, no problem just let us know.

I must admit I have now written over 60 of these newsletters and often think of stopping. Then someone tells me they love reading them and I keep going. If you really do like reading them and don't have email then let us know and I will make sure you get posted one every time.

