

# BLOCKHOUSE BAY VETERINARY CENTRE NEWSLETTER



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Summer



Dear Clients,

Welcome to the Christmas newsletter of 2020.

By the time you are reading this, the Christmas period will be well and truly upon us all.

What a year 2020 has been. Lockdowns, re-openings, lockdown part-2, tracer apps. At one point it looked like it wouldn't end. Well enough said about that little virus and here's hoping for a more settled and normal 2021.



With the holiday season comes the need for some pets to go to kennels and catteries. Don't leave your vaccinations for the kennels and cattery to the last minute as they may not be allowed to attend if not done ahead of their stay. Book well in advance to get your pets all up to date ahead of their holiday adventures.

Wishing you and your furry family a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Years.

Geoff, Caroline, Miki, Fiona T, Rebecca, Fiona H, Vanessa, Anouska, Rachel, Hannah and Larissa.



At the end of November we welcomed Larissa Came to the Blockhouse Bay Vets team as a new vet nurse. Larissa comes to us from north of the bridge and joins Fi, Rachel, Anouska and Hannah as part of the nursing team here at the clinic.



## Summer Tips

This summer is predicted to be a La Nina summer and with it an increase in humidity and warmth compared to last year.

- Keep your flea control up to date. Fleas love Auckland, and summer simply speeds up their breeding cycles. There are a number of options available including some very effective long-acting options for both cats and dogs. Talk to one of the team to see what is right for your pet.
- Summer is grass seed season. Check your pets feet and ears after walks, especially when they go to areas with grass. These seeds can bury through the skin and cause all manner of issues. Get your pets checked if they start licking their feet, shaking their head or rubbing their ears. There could be a grass seed in there.
- Be mindful of how hot and humid it can get in the summer. Don't exercise your dog in the hottest part of the day and if you are out and about with your dog, take a water bottle and bowl for them to use. This is even more important if your dog is a brachycephalic (short nosed) breed. They can die of heat-stroke if exercised when it is hot.
- Sunburn can occur in our pets especially those with pink skin and short hair. Cat's with pink noses and ears are very susceptible. There are pet-safe sunscreens available to use.
- Fleas and flies are more prevalent in summer and both love rabbits and especially love rabbit urine and faeces. Flies can lay eggs on rabbits leading to maggots and flystrike. Check cages and rabbits daily for signs of flystrike and remove soiled bedding material frequently.



## Christmas and New Year Opening Hours

**Wednesday 23rd - 8.00am - 6.00pm**

**Thursday 24th - 8.00am - 5.00pm**

**Friday 25th - CLOSED**

**Saturday 26th - CLOSED**

**Sunday 27th - CLOSED**

**Monday 28th - CLOSED**

**Tuesday 29th - 8.00am - 6.00pm**

**Wednesday 30th - 8.00am - 6.00pm**

**Thursday 31st - 8.00am - 5.00pm**

**Friday 1st - CLOSED**

**Saturday 2nd - CLOSED**

**Sunday 3rd - CLOSED**

**Monday 4th - CLOSED**

**Tuesday 5th - 8.00am - 6.00pm**





# Allergies

Itchy skin is a common problem we see pets all year round, but summer does seem to bring on a surge in cases. Skin conditions are frequent source of frustration to pet parents, as they often seem to come back, no matter what they do to manage them.

Never under estimate fleas, even if you are not seeing them. Fleas don't live on cats and dogs; they are just the walking dinner tables. Even one single flea-bite can set some pets off itching.

However, it is also possible for pets to have skin allergies. Skin allergies arise when the pet's immune system overreacts to a stimulus, just the same as people with hay fever. Allergies to things in the environment, flea bites, and even food can cause skin signs (redness, itchiness, hair loss).

Quite a common type of allergy is Atopic Dermatitis, and put simply, this type of skin allergy arises when the pet reacts to one or more things in their environment, for example plant pollens. Typically, dogs with Atopic Dermatitis (atopy) develop itchy, red and inflamed skin. They want to lick and/or scratch the skin and this combined with the fact that the skin is compromised due to the effects of the allergy, makes them prone to developing secondary bacterial and fungal infections.

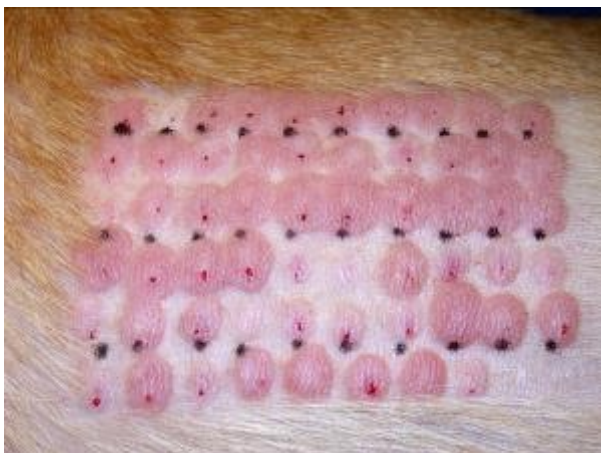
Paws, stomachs, ears, groin and armpits are common areas where you might notice red itchy skin, but other areas of the dog can also be affected. For some dogs there might only be obvious signs in one place e.g. itchy paws that they lick more than normal (often it is incorrectly assumed that they are just grooming a lot), or recurrent ear infections.

Treating the secondary infections with medications, like antibiotics, is important, however unless the underlying allergy is managed, the skin (and/or ear) problems will keep recurring.

Skin allergies, including atopy, cannot be cured\* but there are more options now available to help manage them which can make your dog comfortable and more happy.

If you suspect your dog may have a skin allergy then it would be worth talking to a veterinarian.

\*We put an asterisk here because desensitization immunotherapy treatment is possible for some cases with referral to a Veterinary Dermatologist (Skin Specialist).





## **Christmas Overindulgence**

Christmas is a time of celebration and consumption. Eat, drink, and be merry but just be mindful that our pets may take you up on that challenge if given the opportunity.

We have already had visits to the clinic from several pets that have got into the festive treats out on the tables and Christmas day has not yet arrived. Some of these cases were just upset stomachs but some could have been fatal if their owners hadn't realized what had happened.

The Main Offenders:

- Raisins and grapes are potentially toxic to our pets. This is also true when they are included in other foods like Christmas cake and fruit and nut chocolate.
- Chocolate is a perennial dog favourite and also toxic, especially if you are fond of the better quality and higher cocoa percentage types.
- Corncobs and bones are delicious for dogs to chew on but become expensive and potentially deadly problems when they get stuck in their intestines.
- Meat trimmings, pan juices and leftovers can be very fatty and can predispose dogs to pancreatitis if consumed.

Our pets are inquisitive and will gladly take the opportunity to consume many things they shouldn't if given half a chance. The best option is to simply avoid having them around at pet-level.

One final note; try to avoid placing presents for family members underneath the tree that contain chocolates/biscuits/dried fruit. It won't be the elves getting into them when you go to bed! Put these tasty presents out just before opening time.



### **Clinic after-hours numbers**

Animal Emergency Clinic - 97 Carrington Road, Mt Albert. (09) 849-2121

Western Afterhours - 2/348 Rosebank Road, Avondale. (09) 820-7273