

## Is your pet protected against the common diseases?

Temperatures are on the rise and we can look forward to brighter mornings and longer evenings. Spring is a perfect time to get out and enjoy what nature has to offer as well as spending some quality time with your pet in the fresh air!

When walking your dog in the park, on the beach or simply 'up the road' it is likely that you will come in contact with many other dogs. For this reason it is very important that your pet is up to date with his vaccinations. You will be happy to hear that we can protect against a number of commonly fatal infectious diseases and so if your pet hasn't had a vaccine in the last 12 months we would advise bringing them into the clinic to discuss the options available.



The following is a list of common infectious diseases we would recommend vaccinating against on an annual basis:

**Dogs:** Parvovirus, Infectious Hepatitis, Distemper, Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease), Canine parainfluenza virus and Canine Cough.

**Cats:** Cat Flu, Feline Panleucopenia, Feline Leukaemia

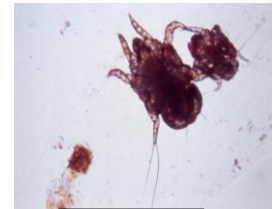
**Rabbits:** Myxomatosis and Viral Haemorrhagic Disease

Your pet will also receive a complete physical examination at the time of vaccination. This enables us to evaluate your pet's overall health and detect problems before they turn into serious illnesses.

## Recognising & managing ear disease in dogs.

Ear disease or Otitis Externa means inflammation of the outer part of the ear passage (also known as the external ear canal). It is a very common condition and particularly so in dogs. However it is a complex disease which is often due to a number of triggers. Unfortunately our pets can't tell us when they have a problem, so it is the responsibility of all of us, the owners, to recognise signs of ill health. Ear disease can manifest itself in many ways:

- Excessive scratching and pawing of the ear and head
- Rubbing the head on the floor or sofa
- Unpleasant odour
- Sensitivity to the touch – may cry out when ear touched
- Shaking of the head or tilting head to one side
- Black or yellow discharge in the ear
- Accumulation of dark brown wax
- Redness or swelling of the ear flap
- Changes in behaviour such as lethargy, depression or irritability
- Loss of hearing or balance and disorientation
- Bleeding from the ear



Ear Mite



Chronic Ear Disease

If you notice any of these signs then you should contact the practice to make an appointment with one of the vets. It is very important that a vet examines inside your pet's ears to check the canal thoroughly. Putting drops into the ears without them having been checked by a vet can cause further complications if, for example, the ear drum has ruptured or there is a foreign body present.

### How is Ear Disease Treated?

Ear disease is treated in a number of ways – dependant on the underlying cause and how long-standing it is. Your vet will recommend an appropriate regime that will best suit your pet. This may include an ear cleaner as well as a topical medication to use at home. Recurrent and neglected cases may require surgery to help manage the problems so it is always wise to attend to ear problems as soon as they are noted. A really important aspect of maintaining healthy ears is keeping your pet's ears clean. Animals that are prone to ear disease can really benefit from regular cleaning of their ears. This does not need to be performed any more frequently than every 48 hours. Your vet can advise you of the correct regime for your pet.

## Is your dog losing its bounce?

Your dog may in fact be older than you think, as a dog's size impacts on life expectancy. For example, a Great Dane can be considered elderly when it is only six years old. As dogs age, many conditions become more common – including diabetes mellitus, arthritis, dental disease, heart disease and kidney disease. Regular check-ups at the practice can help to spot any signs early.

Keeping your dog's weight down with regular exercise and good diet becomes even more important as your dog enters his later years, as being overweight increases the likelihood of diseases such as diabetes and arthritis.

Did you also know that some of the signs that you may take for granted in your older pet as normal signs of ageing can also be significantly alleviated? A general slowing down, lethargy, reluctance to exercise and laboured breathing are signs frequently seen in older dogs. At the same time, dogs can become confused and disorientated, forget some of their toilet training and bark at abnormal times. They also may become less alert and responsive to commands. While it is natural to think that these are simply the signs of age, help is at hand. Even though the ageing process cannot be reversed, treatments are available that restore vitality, agility and alertness in your older pet.

If this sounds like the answer you've been hoping for, please contact the practice to make an appointment so we can get your pet back to enjoying life in no time at all!



## Put your mind at ease.....



## Holidaying with your pet abroad

PETS (short for Pet Travel Scheme) is a scheme which allows dogs, cats and ferrets to enter Ireland and the UK from certain countries without undergoing quarantine. This means you will be able to take your pets on holiday with you, subject to the conditions of the scheme.

### What are the conditions of the scheme?

1. Your pet must have a permanent microchip implanted (this must be in place before vaccination)
2. Your pet must be vaccinated against rabies (but not before it is 3 months old)
3. Your pet must have a PET Passport signed by an official veterinary surgeon confirming that these conditions have been met.
4. Your pet must be treated for tapeworms 1-5 days

before re-entering Ireland and the UK and an official certificate obtained from the vet to confirm this.

We will be happy to advise you on the best timing of vaccination bearing in mind your travel plans and we will also be able to make an appointment to give your pet a thorough health check and advice on considerations of travelling with your pet.

Further information is also available from:

PETS Helpline: 1890 504 604

E-mail: [pets@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:pets@agriculture.gov.ie)

None of us wants to consider the thought of our pets being sick or injured but there may well come a time when that is the case. For this reason we would advise all our clients to avail of pet insurance to ensure that their much-loved family pet receives the best possible care should they become ill or injured, giving you peace of mind and enabling you to focus on your pet's recovery and not on the cost of treatment.

Many pet insurance policies are quite comprehensive and cover dogs and cats against a wide range of circumstances including Veterinary Bills, Third Party Liability, Death Benefit, Kennel / Cattery fees, Holiday Cancellation and Lost and Found ads.

There are now a number of companies offering pet insurance in Ireland so make sure and shop around to avail of the best quote making sure to read the details of the policy before buying.