



Hilton Veterinary Hospital

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Inside this issue:

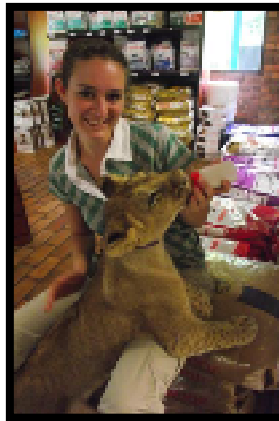
I hope February finds every one well and still enthused about the new year.

Many studies involving nutrition, pain protocols, surgical procedures and medical treatments in hospitals show that it is repeatable systems that make a difference. Humans need check lists to make sure they do not miss things. You would not want your pilot to give the plane a quick look before taking off. You would want him or her to go through a thorough check list, fuel (check), tyres (check) etc.

A veterinary hospital begins to function well when everyone knows what is expected of them. Forms and check sheets although tedious to fill in procure continuity, accountability and completeness in patient care. When such systems are in place, functional magic starts to happen, not by chance, but by methodical processes. I am very proud of our team of veterinarians, receptionists, nurses, kennel hands and night staff for working with me to build such systems. If your animal has had to stay with us, you will have seen the hospital sheets documenting their monitoring, nursing, feeding and treatments during their stay. You will have received phone calls to check on their progress once home and hopefully you would know when and why we need to follow them up with a physical exam or blood test. So the question is why? Well the answer is simple. Practicing with the mind set of bringing every problem possible to resolution is an ethos and a goal of everyone at Hilton Veterinary Hospital. It is what makes us feel good about

what we do as a team.

February has seen some changes to our dedicated team at Hilton Veterinary Hospital. Dr Elge Bester has joined our dedicated staff. She is busy with post-graduate studies and has already



completed an extra internship year at Onderstepoort. She will bring with her enthusiasm and new ideas and updated information directly from Onderstepoort to our hospital.

Derek has moved to open his own practice in Hayfields. I know that this has been a dream of his for sometime now and we wish him all the best. I am sure he will find the experience he has gained from Hilton Vet Hospital will put him in good stead for his future. I do miss him but have previously as in the case of Richard, had to learn that life is about making the best of the time we have together and then moving on. Thank you Derek for all your hard work in the past.

Thank you to all the staff and clients who contributed to this newsletter.

All the best wishes for a great year ahead.

Regards

Martin de Scally

Dedicated to the health of your pets.

Opening Letter 1

Nurse's Clinic 2

Vaccinations 3

Progress on patient's page 4

Staff Profile 5

To make you smile 5

After Hours

Emergencies:

Please phone
(033) 343 4602

Contact Details:

If your contact details have changed then please inform us.

This month's theme:

Vaccinations

Nurse's Clinic:



At Hilton Veterinary Hospital we offer Veterinary Nurse's Clinics for your companion animal. These clinics are designed to promote good preventative care for your pets and these check ups will help aid your pet to live a longer happier life.

The clinics we offer are:

- 🐾 General Care and Check up Clinic
- 🐾 Mouth Matters Clinic
- 🐾 "Golden Oldies" Senior/over 7s Club
- 🐾 Slimmer's Club
- 🐾 Young and restless Club
- 🐾 Small Furries Club

Please note these clinics are designed to promote good preventative care for your pets and any abnormalities that are identified will need to be investigated by a Veterinarian. A full consultation and health check by the Veterinarian and investigation or treatment will be charged at normal rates. A fee may be included in the nurses's clinic if any consumables are used.

Each Month we will give an overview of each Clinic and the information will also be available on our website.



Slimmer's Club

Extra weight may have an adverse affect on the health of our pets. Our Veterinary Nurses can give you advice on reaching the optimum weight for your pet. We offer the Hill's Pet Slimmer's Programme which has great success and free goodies for your pet at various stages of their weight loss journey. Our Nurses are here to help and encourage you every step of the way.



Firstly we will look at the history of your pet to determine the cause of the weight gain i.e. age, breed, diet, acute/long term weight gain, known underlying conditions or medical problems. We will perform a general clinical examination. We will then advise you on the appropriate weight loss diet for your pet, with a personalized feeding plan and exercise plan to reach your pets' ideal weight. We will give you any further advice and information to support you and for your pet to have a successful weight loss programme.

Vaccinations Dr Martin de Scally

Very few people take vaccinations seriously. The times of wide spread disease in our domestic animal populations are distant memories for some and only documentations in history books for others. The fact is, the same diseases that we vaccinate against are still present and are waiting for a susceptible population in which to explode. The World Small Animal Veterinary Association has come out saying we should only vaccinate every 3 years once an adequate initial series of vaccines is given. The initial series of vaccinations is highly dependant on the individual situation. For example, a neonatal puppy whose mother's vaccination history is unknown or any other animal with unknown vaccination history should immediately be vaccinated against rabies to protect humans. They would also benefit from parvovirus, distemper and possibly hepatitis vaccinations.

These initial vaccinations are followed by boosters approximately every 4 weeks until 16 weeks old. The vaccine is boosted at 1 year of age and then every 3 years.

In high risk situations the current recommendations still include annual vaccination or a test to see that titers are adequate to protect against viral infection with out revaccination to boost immunity. Much thought has to be put into advising to reduce these protocols as the responsibility of failure with fall squarely on the shoulders of those individuals.

When deciding on vaccination protocols we look at three things. Risk of exposure, cost of prevention and consequence of an infection.

In European countries where 80% of pets are vaccinated it is probably unnecessary to maintain high antibody titers against these fatal viral disease. In South Africa we do find ourselves in a slightly different situation and I would not be comfortable not vaccinating

unless annual titers against viral diseases including rabies are checked. Because this would involve higher costs than vaccinating most people prefer to vaccinate. So why not? The animal is seen annually and gets their essential once a year thorough check, the owner has done the right thing and has piece of mind, the animal is protected from the preventable, potentially fatal, viral diseases included in the vaccines. Everyone is happy. Not true. Somewhere a dog or two develops protein urea. On biopsy it is found that there is an immune reaction in the kidney destroying it. Could this be a vaccine reaction? Yes it could be. Now here is the problem. We cannot not vaccinate to avoid the one in ten thousand vaccine reactions because in an outbreak, thousands of dogs and humans will die, as does currently happen in parts of the world. So what do we do? We simply evaluate each case at their annual check up for the merit of re-vaccinating by doing a thorough physical exam, history and life style assessment. If we are unsure and owners are sensitive about vaccinating we can do a titer check on their blood. Remember this thought process cannot override the country by laws. By law, you have to vaccinate your dog against rabies and any negligence in this regard can lead to criminal charges if your dog bites another human being. Aside from rabies, in order to give your pets the gift of protection against other fatal viral diseases you can vaccinate them against parvovirus, distemper virus and hepatitis virus.

In conclusion I hope that you will carry out a thorough investigation and a discussion with your vet regarding vaccinations.

The WSAVA guidelines can be seen by searching WSAVA vaccine guidelines.

<http://www.wsava.org/guidelines/vaccination-guidelines>

Progress on our patient's page:

Annabelle By Jenny Jones

Annabelle is a thirteen year old White West Highland Terrier with the most gentle and laid back temperament of any dog in the world. When we relocated to Howick, our vet in the Cape, gave us Martin's cell number and suggested we get hold of the "best vet he knew", as Annabelle had a number of serious problems. We doubted such a person could possibly exist in the "sticks".

Annabelle had been sent from pillar to post in the Cape, including another specialist, all with no results, except that we had a shaking dog, one who drank vast quantities of water, had major skin problems and panted a lot.

Our first meeting with Martin, in January 2010, was interrupted by the arrival of a poisoned dog and we were totally impressed by his swift and professional reaction. He conducted many tests on Annabelle, including bloods, and sent us home with instructions on how to chart her water consumption!

A week later he confirmed a case of Cushings. The treatment and care started with many major setbacks as Annie, as Martin now calls her, did not react well to any medication prescribed; a couple of times being totally allergic. It was very much a case of patience and small doses to start. An anaesthetic to do a biopsy, unexpectedly became a stay in ICU, where only a small black nose peeped out from many blankets and tubes. It was discovered that she had severe liver disease as a result of the Cushings.

In 2012 the decision was taken to destroy her adrenal glands as they had grown so large they were impacting her heart. This is a new procedure and I believe the first done in South Africa.

The decision was not taken lightly, due to Annabelle's poor condition, so we all held our collective breaths while she recovered for a few days in ICU receiving the best nursing possible.

Annabelle has not looked back. She has gone from many drugs a day to just two low dosage ones. She has proved frequently that she is a survivor. She is treated as an old lady now, goes on short walks and is sometimes carried home, and her favourite habit is to sleep in in the mornings - frequently looking for her breakfast after twelve noon.

Our vet in the Cape was correct. Not only did we find the 'best' vet, we found one with superior knowledge and experience, empathy and understanding and who does not give up when faced with additional problems. He has a dedicated, professional staff that follows his lead and so Annabelle has always been treated with kindness and care.

Thank you Martin. Without your intervention we would not have Annie still with us.



Staff Profile:

Elgé Bester

Elgé has just joined the team at Hilton Vet Hospital. She is one of our very caring and capable veterinarians. Elgé qualified in 2012 and was invited to complete an internship year at Onderstepoort in 2013. This is seen as quite an honour. Elgé is busy studying towards an honours degree in veterinary medicine.

Elgé has 3 cats, 4 dogs and 4 horses. She enjoys working with cardiology cases and endocrine cases. This includes animals suffering from hormonal and glandular problems.

In her spare time, Elgé enjoys travelling, running cycling on and off road, horse riding, scuba diving and snorkelling.



To make you smile



If you have a story about your pet that you would like to share with us, then please e-mail it to lauren@hiltonvethospital.co.za

In next month's issue: Feline chronic renal failure