



# Bannockburn Veterinary Clinic

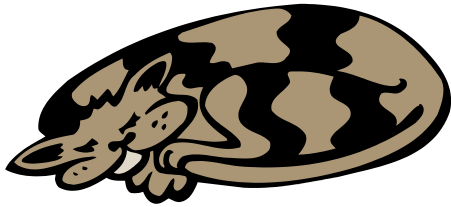
Welcome to our June newsletter



## PROTECTING YOUR PETS FROM WINTER WOES

The cooler weather brings a change in human lifestyles with more time spent indoors, heating turned on and winter woollies worn.

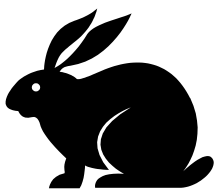
Pets also need adjustments to their lifestyles during the cooler weather. All pets deserve a dry and warm, draught-free area and some may even appreciate winter woollies.



Cats are masters at seeking warmth and will appreciate a cat basket by the heater or a cosy box with warm bedding in the shed or garage. Indoor cats like a window ledge or chair where they can catch the warmth of the winter sun through the window during the day, while outdoor cats will seek sunshine on top of a fence or roof.

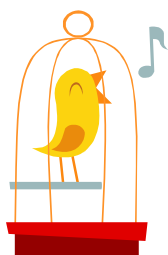
Dogs vary so much in their coat types that the amount of warmth that needs to be provided by the owner varies. The very sleek breeds have very little coat to keep them warm, and some, such as Whippets and Greyhounds, have very little fat covering so feel the cold quite badly. These breeds will appreciate a dog coat to keep them snug.

Outdoor dogs should be provided with a dry and warm kennel with warm bedding.



Guinea pigs and rabbits can live outside throughout the winter given the correct bedding and shelter. Ensure that their hutch is not exposed to strong winds or sitting in the middle of the yard without shelter. The hutch should have an enclosed area with a small opening where the animal can get out of the cold. The enclosed area can be lined with wood shavings or lucerne hay to help provide warmth.

Even though they are kept inside, rats and mice can also feel the cold. If you provide them with the right materials, they will happily construct their own cosy area. Good materials to use are old PVC pipes, cotton wool, tissues or straw. There are also trendy little resin mouse and rat houses available for purchase.



Birds can quickly become ill if they are exposed to winter chills for even a few hours. Ensure that your bird is not in a position where there are cold draughts. Equally, try and avoid having the bird in a heated room, which cools down dramatically overnight as these fluctuations can also affect the bird. Cover your bird overnight to help maintain the temperature in the cage. Birds kept in aviaries outside must have protection from the rain, wind and frost.

- ❖ Burns - because of the cold weather, your dog or cat will often seek heat by snuggling too close to heating sources such as heaters and chimneys. If this happens seek veterinary attention.
- ❖ Warm engines in parked cars attract cats and small wildlife, which may crawl under the hood. To avoid injuring hidden animals, bang on your car's hood to scare them away before starting your engine.
- ❖ Antifreeze is a deadly poison, but it has a sweet taste that may attract animals. Wipe up spills and store antifreeze out of reach.

## ARTHRITIS

Arthritis is especially common in dogs. Animals of any age may be afflicted, but it is more prevalent in older animals. Clinical signs include stiffness, especially on cold, winter mornings or after resting. The animal may be sore in one area only e.g. the leg or all over. Arthritic changes are usually visible on X-rays.

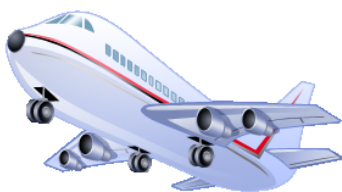
In normal joints, cartilage covers the ends of the bones that form the joints. Synovial fluid is also present and helps to lubricate the joint and prevent undue wear and tear on the cartilage. In arthritis, the fluid thins and the cartilage is eroded away. This results in restricted movement, swelling and pain.

Arthritic pets need a warm, comfortable, place to sleep. Warmth helps relieve pain. Conventional drug treatment includes cortisone and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. These drugs reduce swelling, in turn reducing pain. They do not repair the damage within the joint.

In recent years a new drug has emerged which is safe, helps repair joints, and prevents further degeneration. The drug is known as Cartrophen. Cartrophen has multiple modes of action. These include inhibiting the enzymes that break down cartilage; stimulating the joint cells to produce cartilage and lubricant; improving blood supply to the joints.

Cartrophen is administered by injection, once a week for four weeks. Booster shots are given every 3 months, as required or in less severe cases once a year.

### Pet Export and Travel Advice



If you are thinking of travelling overseas with your pet there are a number of requirements that need to be met before they can leave Australia. We can help you meet the Veterinary requirements necessary.

Dr. Peter Bond is AQIS (Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service) accredited so we can perform examinations and provide documentation for international companion animal travel (dogs, cats, rabbits).

Only an AQIS accredited veterinarian can do this.

## ZOONOTIC DISEASE

People can become sick from disease transmitted by animals. These are termed zoonotic diseases and some are very common. There are many different zoonotic diseases. Australian bats are a source of Lyssavirus and Hendra virus which have both been causes of death in people. Rabies is a zoonotic disease that is not present in Australia and our strict quarantine laws are in place to keep out nasty diseases like this.

The most common zoonotic diseases are less serious. This year with the moisture and humid weather, fleas have been causing many problems for dogs and cats. In search of a blood meal, adult fleas can bite humans causing a painful, itchy bite. Treating pets with 'Revolution' will kill fleas on pets and stop them breeding in the environment. 'Revolution' will also kill the scabies mite (Fox Mange) which causes a sever itch on dogs. It can be transmitted but is usually only short lived in people. Tapeworm in dogs and cats can cause hydatid cysts in people. We recommend treating your dog and cat with an all wormer every three months.

Ringworm is not actually a worm but a fungal infection which can be transmitted between dogs, cats, horses and people. It causes a skin rash that is often red and itchy in a ring shape. Iodine washes and anti fungal creams are effective. Another parasite is toxoplasmosis. This is transmitted in cat faeces or by eating uncooked meats. It causes flu like symptoms and may be serious. Caution should be taken by pregnant women.

Pregnant women, young children and those with poor immune systems are also at risk of Lysteria which can cause fever and gastro signs. This can similarly be transmitted by eating uncooked meats.

Cat scratch fever is a bacterial infection that develops in people from cat scratches and bites. Always wash a wound thoroughly with antibacterial solution if bitten or scratched by a cat.

Hygiene is very important in preventing the transmission of diseases from pets to people.

**Coming Very Soon**



**Our new website; we have many new additions to the site.  
We will keep you up to date on its launch.**

**Cheers From The Team At Bannockburn Veterinary Clinic**

