

# BENTLEIGH VETERINARY CLINIC

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**BENTLEIGH**  
VETERINARY CLINIC  
for healthier + happier pets



**Giving your pet too many treats** can ruin their appetite for dinner. Treats should be a dessert, not the main course. Too many treats also contribute to obesity and can cause health issues, therefore go easy on the treats. Set aside a small portion of their daily meal allowance for training treats to ensure their diet is balanced.



**To spay or neuter your cat or dog?** Should you do it right away? At six months? After one heat cycle? There are many viewpoints that can confuse the pet owner, so call us today and talk to our veterinary experts. But don't leave it too long, unless you want a brood of cute fluffy youngsters on your hands. [More info here.](#)



## Welcome to our February 2021 newsletter.

I am sure we all agree that the last month seemed to just fly by and if you are like me, you are surprised to be facing a new month so soon! How are you going with those new year resolutions? Now is an ideal time to reflect on those goals and maybe tweak them a little so that they are achievable. Make it as easy as possible to achieve your goals so that you experience success. Here is a new goal for you ... add some variety to your pets meals. Just like us, they can get bored eating the same old thing at every meal. If your pet is refusing to eat their food, it may be that the food is stale (even pet biscuits can go off if kept too long or not kept correctly). Animals have a keen sense of smell and no one likes mouldy old biscuits! Surprise them with something different. Swap to lamb if you have been giving them chicken, perhaps swap out fish for some beef? We all like variety in our diet so surprise your pet with a change in the menu – your pet will thank you for it.

## SOCIALISING YOUR PUPPY.

This should be a priority for your puppy during the first few months of their life. In as little as 8 -16 weeks of life, your puppy is very impressionable, and what they learn during this time, sticks with them for life! This is why it is so important for your puppy to learn about getting on with other pets, riding in the car, and imprinting them with good social skills so you have a well behaved dog that you can take with you wherever you go.

Teaching your pup bite sized slices of information will not overwhelm them and keep training fun, while they learn about different sounds, sights, and being handled. Take it easy, don't rush socialising or make the sessions too long. You don't want to overdo it and end up with an anxious pet that is nervous and panicky. Social skills include learning about the leash, fear aggression, being handled by other people (for example the dog groomer), loud noises, or being scared of strangers and other dogs.

## KITTENS NEED SOCIALISING AS WELL.

You may be surprised to know that cats can be socialised as well. They are very intelligent, although cats tend to need to want to do something rather than just take your word that they should learn! With cats, you need to make it fun, rewarding (offer special treats to win co operation), and don't make it too long. Short bursts of learning to relax when being groomed, allowing their feet and ears to be checked, getting used to visitors, and so on keep the socialising fun and enjoyable for your cat. Leash training is a good skill to teach your cat. You can walk them outside and while they adjust to this scary new place, you have control so they don't panic and run away. Life is easier with a confident and socialised pet!

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## RECIPE OF THE MONTH



### Homemade Dog Breath Mints

10 crushed crackers or ½ cup rolled oats

½ cup mint leaves finely chopped

Combine these in a bowl, slowly add water to the mix till the ingredients stick together. Roll into small (5 cents sized) balls and place them on a sheet of waxed paper in the freezer. Give a few to your dog at a time. This recipe makes about 20 small dog mints. Mint is soothing to the stomach and nervous system. You can also add parsley to the recipe as it helps relieve arthritic pain and calms an upset tummy.

### HAS YOUR PET BEEN STUNG BY A BEE?

If so, carefully remove the sting and bathe the area with cool water. Restrict exercise to decrease the blood supply to the area. Observe your pet – notice the amount of swelling. A bee sting can be life threatening if your pet has a severe allergic reaction to the sting. If you note severe facial swelling, difficulty in breathing, excessive salivation or anything unusual, bring them in immediately.



## HOW CATS NAVIGATE THEIR WAY HOME.

Cats are amazing creatures. There are many stories about a lost cat who has walked miles to get back home. But how do they find their way home, that's what we all want to know!

Did you know that your cat has mental maps that not only store the memory of their paths during the daytime and their lifetime, but this knowledge also helps them to find their way home if they get lost. They also navigate by observing the angle and position of the sun. A cat can run up to 30 miles per hour in a short spurt which means they can cover a lot of ground in a day. Nature thinks of everything!

## SORE JOINTS – SPINE, HIPS, KNEES, AND BACK.

Young pets leap off beds or furniture without thinking about it only to land the wrong way. Their enthusiasm to play can be the downfall of a youngster. Other pets can have developmental issues which make moving a chore. Older pets may feel the creaking of their bones but won't let on until arthritis has gotten severe.

If your pet is limping, perhaps they are having trouble walking up steps, it may be time to give us a ring to ensure this condition is just temporary.

Animals tend to hide their pain as in the past, an animal with health issues tended to get left behind for the predators to finish off. But if you can observe your pet carefully and catch joint issue early on, it is easier to treat than a fully developed health issue. There are many new developments in treatment of joints that can help your pet now.

## DENTAL DISEASE

It is said that a whopping 70% of cats and dogs have some form of dental disease by the time they are three years of age. Not just bad breath, but genuine [dental disease](#) that is associated with heart disease, diabetes, and autoimmune disease. Brushing your pets teeth sounds easy and it does work, it reduces dental decay. But it is usually the last thing your cat or dog wants to do, they just want to get on with play. Teaching them to get used to a quick tooth brush while they are young is easier than teaching an old dog new tricks. And I say do it quickly because pets don't have a lot of patience for your scrubbing out their mouth! You can get toys that do a good job of cleaning the teeth and your pet doesn't even realise it 😊 Better still, make sure you book your pet a regular dental check up with us. Prevention is always better than a cure.

## DIABETES IN CANINES.

Diabetes mellitus can affect your dog at any age, but catching it early ensures that your dog continues living a healthy, happy life. Symptoms to watch for include your dog peeing more frequently, your dog drinking more water than usual, watch for a ravenous appetite (more than they usually eat), weight loss despite eating normally, a cloudy look to their eyes and their vision is getting worse. Other signs are a lackluster coat, vomiting with no apparent cause, and your dog seems overly tired or seems weaker than usual. Learning to spot the signs of dog diabetes and talking to one of our vets can help you to intervene early on. Diabetes in dogs is usually a manageable disease and they adapt well once an insulin routine is developed. If your dog is showing any of these symptoms, bring them in to visit us and we can ease your mind. Even if it is diabetes, the sooner the treatment the better for your dog.

