



# Newsletter

Spring 2023 Edition



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## Allergies in pets

Pets can be allergic to several things, including fleas, foods and environmental factors.

### Allergic skin conditions

Allergic skin conditions can lead to itchy, red skin, usually caused by a reaction of the immune system to allergens in a pet's environment.

Symptoms of allergic skin disease in dogs include red skin, scratching, licking and chewing, persistent ear or skin infections, hair loss and runny, red eyes or noses.

In cats, symptoms include itchy skin, over-grooming, hair loss and thinning, rashes, recurring ear infections and thickened skin.

Your vet can diagnose your pet and rule out other potential causes like underlying parasites and diseases. Pets with allergic skin disease require unique treatment plans, and it can take time to find the best combination of treatments for your pet.

Options include: dietary changes, environmental changes, topical or skin barrier treatments, oral and injectable medications, immunotherapy and antibiotics.

Although the condition can't be cured, it can be managed! Continuous, proactive treatment is key, and symptoms may change seasonally, so watch out for allergens like pollen this spring.

For further advice on diagnosing and treating allergic skin conditions, please get in touch.

### Ear infections in dogs

Allergic skin disease is one of the causes of ear infections, where a dog's outer ear canal becomes inflamed or infected.

Dogs with ear infections are at greater risk of repeated infections, so it's important to treat straight away to prevent a narrowing and thickening of the ear canal.

Signs of infection include ear scratching, smelly ears, head shaking, flapping or tilting, redness or thickening in the ears and excessive discharge.

Your vet can diagnose an ear infection in practice, and options include topical or oral treatments, ear flushing and corrective surgery.

Uncontrolled or repeated infections can also lead to chronic pain and deafness, so get in touch with the practice if you think your dog might have an ear infection.



## Vaccinating your rabbit

It's important to make sure your rabbit is fully vaccinated against myxomatosis, rabbit viral haemorrhagic disease (RvHD) and the RvHD2 strain.

These diseases are fatal, so it's essential to keep on top of your rabbit's vaccinations!

- Vaccinations can be given to rabbits from five weeks old, and combined vaccines provide annual protection against myxomatosis and RvHD.
- Your rabbit will also need to be vaccinated for RvHD2 when they're ten weeks old.
- Annual vaccinations for all of these diseases can be given from five weeks old, but might not be suitable if your rabbit has had the myxomatosis vaccine but not the RvHD2 vaccine.

Please check with the practice if you're unsure what vaccinations your rabbit needs.

Regular boosters, controlling insects in and around your home, regularly cleaning and disinfecting enclosures and preventing contact with affected domestic rabbits and all wild rabbits are also great ways to prevent diseases.

Get in touch to learn more or book a vaccination appointment.



## Spring hazards

Spring has sprung, so here are some tips for keeping pets safe throughout the season!

### Watch out for Easter chocolate

Chocolate contains theobromine, which can cause serious harm to dogs. Please get in touch with the practice if you think your pet has eaten chocolate.

### Spring cleaning

Keep cleaning products away from pets, as they contain toxic chemicals. If you think your pet has consumed or licked a cleaning product, please call the practice for advice.

### The dangers of grass seeds

Grass seed injuries happen when foxtail seeds get trapped in fur and pierce the skin. Check your pet's feet and ears regularly, and look for symptoms like shaking their head and ears, licking toes, swollen paws and red lumps. Contact us if you think your pet is affected.

### Make the most of your dog's walks

As the weather improves, mix up your dog's walks and try out new routes that suit their needs, condition and age. You could even buddy up and walk with a fellow dog owner!

### Preventing flystrike in rabbits

Flystrike is spread by flies laying eggs, and you can prevent your rabbit catching it by using preventative products, keeping their home clean and dry and maintaining good dental health. Contact our team for further advice.

### Flowers and bulbs

Many dogs love to dig up the garden, but some spring flowers and bulbs can be toxic if eaten. Keep them out of reach, and get in touch with us if your dog consumes a flower or bulb.

### Wasp and bee stings

Most stings cause mild pain and irritation, and you can try scraping out the sting (without squeezing it!) with a credit card, washing the area in water and applying ice. Please call the practice if you're worried about your pet's sting.



## Intestinal worms in dogs and cats

Roundworms and tapeworms can affect dogs and cats, and live inside their digestive tracts.

### Roundworms

Puppies and kittens can be infected with roundworms from birth, so should be treated in their first few months of life.

It's not just young pets that are at risk though! Adult cats and dogs can also contract worms, so it's important to continue regular treatment throughout their lives.

Humans that have accidentally ingested contaminated soil can also become infected, so it's important to maintain your pet's worming treatments to prevent this

The frequency of treatment needed will depend on your pet's lifestyle, and regular worming is important if you have young children or your cat is a regular hunter and more likely to be exposed to worms.

Please speak to the practice team to learn more about the best treatments and products for your pet.

### Tapeworms

Tapeworms live in the small intestine and can affect dogs and cats. They have to pass through an intermediate host, such as a flea, before they can infect a pet, and may cause your pet to scoot across the floor.

They also pose a risk to livestock, as infected dogs may poo on their grazing areas and spread the infection.

Treatment options for tapeworms include tablets or spot-ons, and it's important to maintain flea control all year round to prevent it.

Please get in touch with the practice for further advice.

