

THE NEWSLETTER OF SWANBOURNE VETERINARY CENTRE



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The Pet Professionals

SPRING 2020

Tony Viganò, Michelle Harrison & Melanie Criddle. Veterinary Surgeons

IRISH WOLFHOUND



Inside this issue

Road Test	Page 2
Irish Wolfhound	
Swanbourne Dashboard	Page 4
Dog Training: What You Need To Know	Page 5
Spring Issues	Page 6-7
The Coronavirus Frequently Asked Questions	Page 8-9
Online Bookings	Page 9
Kids Corner	Page 10

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Saturday: 8.00am to 4.00pm
Sunday: 8.00am to 2.00pm
Public Holidays: 8.00am to 12.00pm



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SWANBOURNE VETERINARY CENTRE

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ROAD TEST: IRISH WOLFHOUND



THE IRISH WOLFHOUND:

The world's largest sighthound, this dog is the original gentle giant, which is just as well as they can stand over 7 feet tall on their back legs fully grown and weigh over 80kg,

Originally bred to chase wolves, elk and wild boar they lost favour in the 1800's when wolves vanished from the British Isles and were resurrected as a breed in the 19th century by a British Army Officer who worked with the few remaining dogs and introduced Great Dane and Deerhound blood to re-establish the breed.

HISTORY:

As with many ancient breeds there is considerable variation in opinion as to how this breed arose. They may have descended from dogs brought to Ireland by the Celts in 1500BC (the Cu), or from old breeds indigenous to Ireland. Other opinion suggests they started as a cross between the Irish sheepdog and the Arabian greyhound and still others who claim they were derived from Deerhound to create a breed to hunt and kill wolves.

In any event they all but vanished in the 18th century only to be rescued as a breed in the 19th century and now are used as a companion dog.

APPEARANCE:

These are a massive, muscular dog which can reach the size of a small pony being one, if not, the tallest breed in the world.

They have a rough, shaggy coat which can be grey, brindle, liver, black or white (though grey is most common), and their signature apart from huge size are their wiry, bushy eyebrows.

They have large round paws, arched toes and curled nails, a long head with moderately pointed muzzle, arched neck, deep chest and strong shoulders.

They have a dignity and grace in their movements on the one hand though can

appear clumsy on the other (like an AFL ruckman compared to the nimble on ballers).

The tail hangs down with a slight curve and their ears are generally carried back (as with other sighthounds).

They grow 71-90cm in height, and can weigh 40-80kg. Regrettably they are short lived...between 6-8 years being the norm.



CHARACTERISTICS:

A sweet tempered and patient dog they are intelligent and dignified.

Excellent with children, other dogs and pets generally they are not a guard dog though their sheer size can be a deterrent!

They bond strongly to their human family and are very loyal, are quite easy to train and require a firm but gentle hand. In fact care needs to be taken as they can lack confidence during development so consistency and a positive approach is essential.

They grow very rapidly and so must not be over exercised during this growth period which may go on for 2 years as they reach their full size. A carefully prepared growth diet is essential to avoid deficiencies and hence growth abnormalities during this growth period.



ROAD TEST: IRISH WOLFHOUND

WHO SHOULD HAVE ONE:

Excellent with children, they are friendly to a fault with strangers, other dogs and pets generally so they make an ideal family pet. However, they are not for everyone as space to manage and house a dog of this size is the main issue in every respect. Everything about them is big, so a large house, backyard, car, and so on are necessary. They do not need huge amounts of exercise but it must be regular and if possible in an enclosed space as being a sighthound they will chase and forget you if the occasion arises.

The rough, medium length coat needs regular and thorough grooming and as with other wire haired breeds the coat needs to be plucked rather than clipped every so often. They are an average shedder of hair.

VETERINARY PROBLEMS:

This is unfortunately another draw back with them in that they suffer from a variety of conditions.

Cardiomyopathy (a weakness in the heart muscle), bone cancer (osteosarcoma being the commonest), bloat (dilation/torsion of the stomach following eating, which leads to emergency surgery), PRA and cataracts (eye problems), Von Willebrands disease

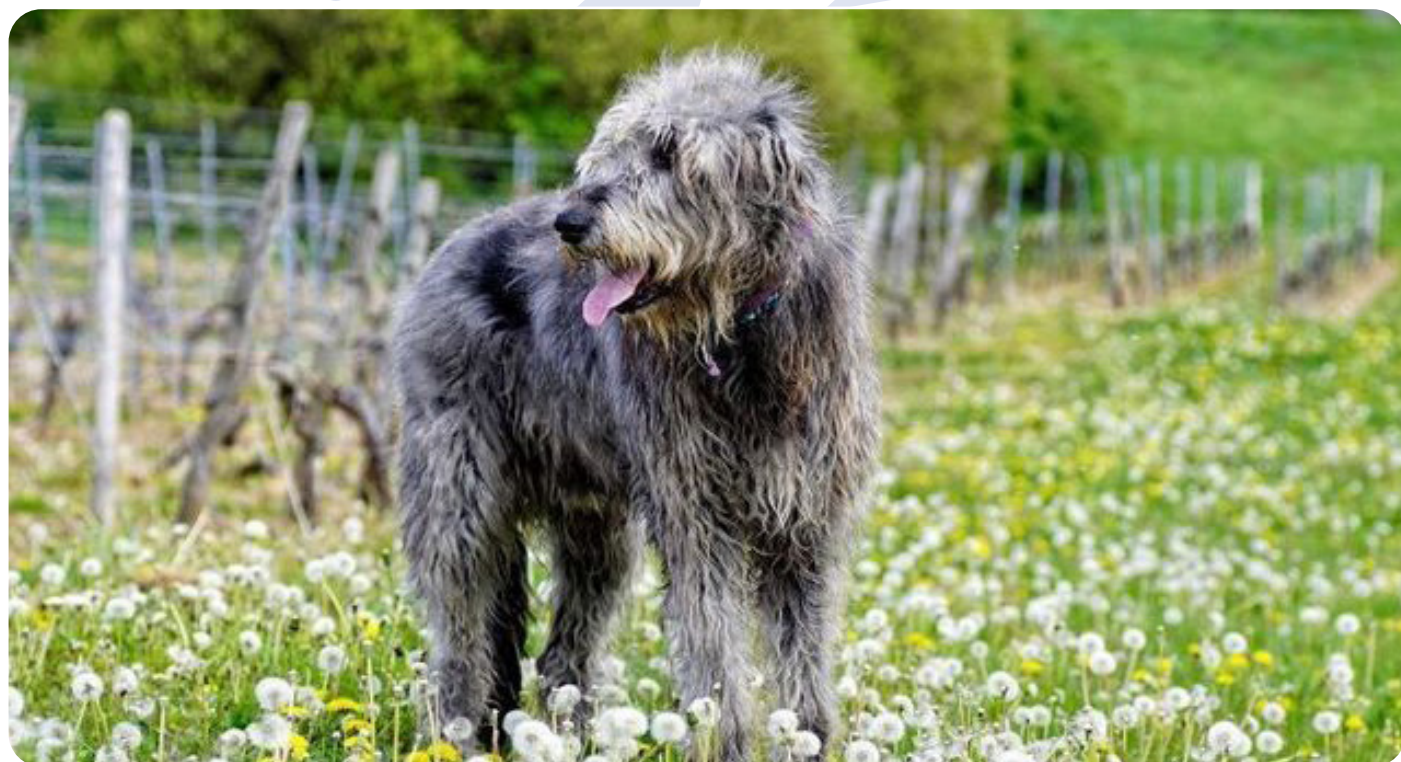
(a blood clotting defect), hip dysplasia (an hereditary, early onset, arthritic condition of the hips), hygromas (elbow and hock bursae), hypertrophic osteodystrophy and osteochondritis dissecans (joint and growth plate anomalies of the bones during development), are just some of the documented problems.

Many of these problems arise from their huge size, deep chest and rapid growth phase, so in taking on an Irish Wolfhound you need to be friends with your local vet and regrettably be prepared not to have them much over 6-8 years.

In summary, temperament wise there is a not a gentler animal and in all those respects they make a great family pet. In reality the sheer size of the dog creates major logistical problems for most would be owners.

As vets we see very few of these magnificent animals for mainly these reasons.

Tony Vigano



SWANBOURNE DASHBOARD

SWANBOURNE DASHBOARD SPRING 2020

Thank goodness for Spring. In the midst of what has been the most unsettled year I can remember and probably since WW2, we in WA appear to remain safe in what has been a very difficult time in Victoria and on the Eastern Seaboard generally, and in particular the last couple of months.

Let's hope Christmas will bring the beginnings of normality whatever that may look like.

Here at Swanbourne things are pretty much the same but I dread the thought of another lockdown. Fingers crossed.

Apart from the distancing we are seemingly back to normal as far as our services are concerned. All the puppy schools on Sunday are back in full swing, the off site Dog Obedience classes are operating again and with the onset of Spring we look forward to the future with confidence.

The next month will see the erection of our new shade sails (2) which will give much better coverage for our puppy schools on Sundays as the weather hots up. This will be a welcome respite as even now the days are getting warmer. That plus the misting system will make things more pleasant on Sunday mornings.

We are also embarking on an update in the operating theatre in the next 4 weeks with the creation of an anti-room by dividing the scrub facility and the storage areas from the operating theatre. In this way we can accommodate the autoclaves and storage of sterile packs and drapes in close proximity to the surgery and within the Surgery module, thus allowing for more storage in the back area of the hospital.

This plus our IT modifications of storing records in the cloud, using new phones and creating a more robust system generally.

We already encourage bookings on line for clinical appointments, Puppy school and Dog Obedience classes as stated towards the back of this newsletter and texts rather than phone calls wherever possible as we realise how valuable your time is and how reticent some people are receiving mobile calls from unknown numbers. Certainly whenever you order food or drugs that need to be ordered in we will notify you by email or text when they arrive.

Currently all our Dog Obedience classes have concluded but new classes commence at the David Cruickshank pavilion on Wednesday evening at 7pm on October 14th and at Claremont Dog Reserve on Saturday October 17th at 9.30am.

As these will be the final classes held this year and there are plenty of spaces left at this stage I would book as soon as possible, though Neri has said that she will try to fit another class in before the end of the year if the need arises and there are still puppy classes concluding every fortnight so it is likely.

You can book on-line through our web site or just ring the practice on 9384 2644. It is best not to leave it too long after puppy school as "Gap years" are not recommended with our best friends. So if you are doing puppy school now but still have 4-5 weeks to finish I would express interest immediately as this will trigger an extra class if the numbers are there.

This will be the last Newsletter until next year and so let us be the first to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, and more than that, a return to normal in 2021!

Tony Vigano



GOOD CITIZEN PROGRAM DOG TRAINING : WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: Good Citizen Program

Our good citizen program consists of 3 courses that aim to turn your best friend into an upstanding member of society.

Dog training and communication helps build your bond with your dog and improve their behaviour. Our classes are run by Neri and Lisa from Dog Whispering and are unique to our practice.

What is new?

As the year draws to a close, final classes for the year are starting in October. To keep the training ball rolling, we may run some workshops between the next group starting in February – keep an eye out on our website and Facebook page.

For those who repeat Obedience courses and whose dogs go from strength to strength, we are hoping to run another invite only advanced course in early 2021.

The confirmed dates are:

Wednesday 7pm at David Cruikshank Reserve starting 14th October

Saturday 9:30am at Lake Claremont Reserve starting 17th October

www.swanbournevet.com/dogobedience

Our Puppy Preschool and Management classes are run as an 8-week, 2-part course. A new class starts every 2 weeks and can now be booked online at

www.swanbournevet.com/puppypreschool



Due to the popularity of classes and a surge in puppies and new dogs, we have been putting on some additional classes on different days. Remember to keep an eye out on our facebook and website or put your name down at reception to be notified of any new additional class.



SPRING ISSUES

SPRING HAS FINALLY ARRIVED

Finally Spring has arrived to brighten us up in all this Covid despair. A year like no other we look forward to a better 2021.

Winter is always a dreary time for pets and owners alike but this year made worse by the shadow of Covid albeit we have got off lightly in WA (at least for now).

So....Spring will be a welcome relief for many people and not the least being our pets that become quite depressed when their walks at the park are curtailed not to mention the anxieties that rain and particularly thunder create!

Cats equally stay inside by the fire and the activity rate of everyone in the household drops as the humans watch sport on TV as a blessed respite from the bad news, and our pets tend to be neglected.

As the weather warms not only do pets and their owners come out of hibernation but parasites, snakes and other nasties also become more active. In Perth our temperate climate means we should never let our guard down against parasites external and internal but many people do and the compliance rate of monthly preventives can be as low as 5/12 months a year which means a burst of warm weather in winter can spell disaster if heartworm preventives and other parasite control have lapsed. Fear not as we now have some excellent medications that can be given every 3 months such as Bravecto, and the spot on form of Bravecto that lasts for 6 months. So these can be used all through the Winter and like all oral medications these reach back rather than just forward in control.

1. Heartworm: I fear that vigilance has fallen off alarmingly with heartworm control since the disease was first discovered in Perth based canines some 30 years ago. Control is easy and I favour the annual injection which can be given at the same time as annual vaccinations. The injection is made of sphericles that are dissolved gradually from the site of the injection over the next 12 months giving good control. Heartworm prevention is also available in monthly, oral and topical medications and remember we have the right temperatures, the right mosquitoes and bodies of water such as lakes and the river for the disease to be ever present. The only factor that saves us is that the majority of dogs are protected as the disease requires an infected dog population to be propagated. This I fear is falling off and we are in danger of cases reoccurring in Perth once again. Ask your vet!

2. Intestinal worms: From a human health point of view control of internal parasites is important and this is easily done with the plethora of products on the market. These are monthly, three monthly, individually or in combination with other preventives so again ask your vet!

3. External parasites: These ramp up as the weather becomes warmer and fleas head the list but ticks and lice are also prevalent and easily prevented.

4. Flies: A major problem in areas such as horse studs but also seen in suburbia around rubbish bins and outside/backyard areas particularly if food is

left uneaten, if there is compost around or if faeces from the family pet are not cleaned up regularly....bag this as soon as you see it and keep a special bin that can be put out for collection or deposited in the special bins provided at most parks and recreation reserves. The use of pyrethrin sprays in the back yard, aerosols, on the pet and topical ointments on prime areas of your pet such as their ears all help to reduce this annoying problem.

5. Bees: A major problem all year round particularly for susceptible animals, stings can cause anaphylaxis in pets and people. Watch out for that sudden yelp and lameness or grossly swollen face during a walk at the park as they (bees) are often lying on the ground....a visit to the local vet may well save a life and if your pet (or child?) are susceptible the consequences become worse after each encounter and desensitisation may well be necessary.

6. Birds: We are so lucky in Perth having an abundance of bird life in the suburbs to enhance the beauty of our gardens and recreation areas, but beware the territorial species such as magpies, butcher birds and honey eaters which delight in dive bombing both people and pets during the mating season in Spring. A hat is a must and I also carry an umbrella as they can draw blood or worse as they dive bomb intruders into their breeding areas!

7. Equally give birds a chance in your garden by ensuring the family cat is wearing a bell as these fire side tabbies during the winter turn into efficient killing machines as they creep up and mesmerise birds and their young, just doing what comes naturally but very distressing when it happens

8. And on the subjects of cats, please keep them inside from dusk as they are busy meeting and mating during Spring (those that are not sterilised...as they all should be!) and the ensuing fights throughout the night can keep the neighbourhood awake as they scream at each other, locked in mortal territorial battle.



SPRING ISSUES (continued)

9. **Noxious Plants:** When planning your garden please get advice regarding the species you should plant. There are a plethora of noxious plants in every garden and this is a topic about which most pet experts have only a sketchy knowledge. I have included a list to avoid with these notes. Equally planting native species will ensure your garden is full of birds, frogs and other marvellous creatures.

10. On the topic of "house and garden" and before you get too enthused as Spring starts to bloom, care must always be taken when using snail baits, lawn fertilisers and other caustics outdoors. Frogs and reptiles (avoid snakes!) are greatly affected by these agents and snail bait can be very toxic to dogs as they attract dogs and should be used sparingly (follow the directions!) and preferably put in wide necked jars and conduit pegged to the ground as the products will attract snails. Try to use animal friendly products at all times and don't leave stocks of nitrogenous fertilisers and snail bait in reach of inquisitive pets.

11. **At the Park:** After a long wet winter your dogs will be overjoyed to once again have that daily romp in the park, chasing balls and Frisbees and meeting their cohorts. Beware of squabbles that may occur between focussed individuals that become obsessive about their own balls and tug toys as this can cause mayhem, injury and bad feelings amongst owners! Ensure your dog has been properly socialised at puppy and obedience classes so they become good citizens and learn to share, recall and generally follow your instruction to the letter! Severe fines and worse can ensue if they transgress on a regular basis.

12. **Travelling in the car:** Please ensure you secure your dog just as we must do. There are some handy harnesses that clip into seat belt anchor points to prevent your best friend from injury when you are forced to stop suddenly, not to mention the damage they can cause flying around the car! Car sickness is also a problem in many dogs and this can be reduced by regular trips to desensitise them but also how and where they travel in the car. It is a combination of motion sickness (try putting them on the floor behind the front seats) but also anxiety due to fear so medications may also help initially to familiarise them with car travel. Most dogs get to love travelling in the car and being with their people.

13. On the subject of cars and we talk about this constantly, please do not leave dogs or any animals for that matter unattended at any time in a locked car. Heat stroke can occur within 6 minutes even in temperatures as low as 25C. Spring is a critical time as the temperatures can climb higher than you think!

14. The sun's heat particularly in the middle of the day can be detrimental in white cats particularly with sunburnt ears and noses and also white staffies and boxers. Consistent sunburn can lead to squamous cell carcinomas in dogs and cats so be sure to protect them from this. There are some good screening lotions available for pets though of not much value in cats.

15. The beach is back on the agenda in Spring so watch out for blowfish (beach and river) as these can be very toxic and also errant anglers who leave fish heads and gangs of hooks on the beach leading to these being caught in mouths and worse.

16. Throwing sticks for dogs at the beach is an absolute no no. Some dogs are incredibly quick catching them in the air and as they land pouncing on them with such ferocity that the sticks can be driven deep into their throats. Please use frizzbies to exercise them and not balls either as I have seen these caught deep in their throats, particularly squash balls which can also damage eyes as they fit neatly into eye sockets. Backyard cricket is best played with a tennis ball as cricket balls can break windows (!) but also teeth and limbs!

17. Swimming is great fun but the water can exacerbate ear problems so speak to your vet about a management program for chronic swimmer ear!

18. Some dogs also swallow water at the beach when jumping through waves and biting at the foam. This leads to vomiting in the car on the way home so give them time to settle down before that long trip home.

19. Also remember older dogs and the family pool can be a lethal combination with tragic circumstances when they can't get out. If you go out, and at all times anyway, keep the pool gate firmly shut.

20. Barbecues can be a problem because of that hot plate taken off to drain the fat and meat products. Very inviting but desperately hot and not good for eager tongues! Just like those hot bitumen roads on bare pads.

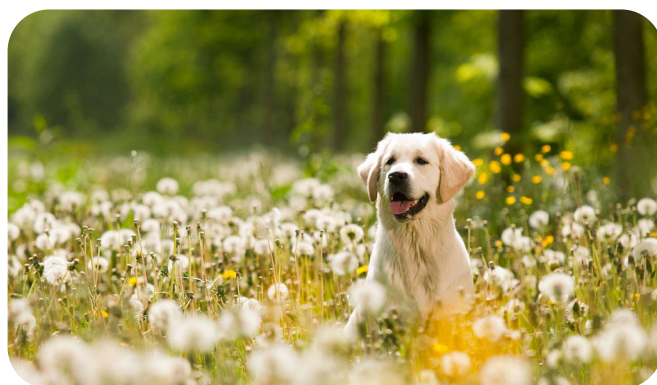
21. Beware also that guests do not casually drop or feed the dog at the BBQ party. Offcuts of fat and particularly onions can be very toxic with the latter causing anaemia in susceptible animals.

22. **Reptiles:** Beware of snakes in the Spring. They come out of hibernation full of venom and are a constant problem. Dugites in the sand dunes and inland and tigers around lakes and rivers must be avoided at all costs. Keep your dog on the path and trained to recall under all circumstances. It is best to walk in the early morning rather than the heat of the day to avoid any unpleasant surprises.

The list of issues we encounter with our pets in the Spring is endless but is also a special time, beautiful in most respects but there can be a sinister side for our pets.

Tony Vigano

Swanbourne Veterinary Centre



THE CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I'VE HEARD THAT A DOG TESTED POSITIVE TO COVID-19 OVERSEAS. CAN MY PET GET COVID-19?

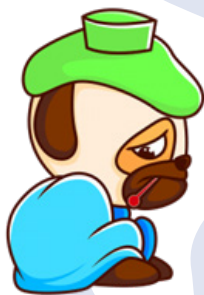
On the evening of the 4th of March, Hong Kong's Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department issued a statement that a Pomeranian, belonging to SARS-COV-2 positive patient, repeatedly tested positive for the virus. It is believed that this is the first reported case of human-to-animal (reverse zoonotic) transmission.

The Hong Kong authorities collected nasal and oral cavity samples on 5 occasions since late February, and low levels of the SARS-COV-2, which causes COVID-19, was detected. A blood sample was also taken from the dog on 3 March 2020 for serological testing and the result was negative. The negative result indicates that there is not a strong immune response and that there are not measurable amounts of antibodies in the blood at this stage.

The Hong Kong authorities believe this finding may indicate the dog has a low-level of infection, and that it is likely to be case of human-to-animal transmission of the virus. The dog has not shown any clinical signs of disease and is currently being held in quarantine.

At this stage there is no evidence that pets can play a role in the spread of this human disease, or that they become sick – the major risk remains human-human contact. The Australian Veterinary Association continues to monitor the situation and provide us with regular updates.

(Facts Supplied by the Australian Veterinary Association).



WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE AS A PET OWNER?

Hand hygiene is critical before and after handling your pets, as well as their food. Wash your hands thoroughly before and after touching any animal.



Pet owners who may be infected with the virus or who are voluntarily isolating because of risk of infection, are advised to keep their pets with them, but minimise handling as a precautionary measure until more information is known about the virus and routes of transmission.

WHAT IS SWANBOURNE VET DOING TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19?

HAND HYGIENE is being championed at SVC!! This is one of the most important infection prevention and control practices that can be performed. All staff are regularly washing their hands and using alcohol-based hand rub to minimise any transmission of COVID-19. We have also ramped up our clinic disinfection and hygiene protocols which includes:

- Regular environmental cleaning – door handles, light switches, desks, computers, keyboards, veterinary equipment, floors and walls to name a few.
- Diligent cleaning and disinfection of all equipment used on any patient.



CAN I STILL BRING MY PET TO THE VET?

Of course! We look forward to seeing you and your pets in the coming weeks and months, and continue to offer all our services to our valued clients. That being said, we are a busy practice and come in to contact with many clients on a daily basis including the elderly, pregnant women and people with compromised immune systems, so we appreciate your cooperation and understanding with adhering to the following:

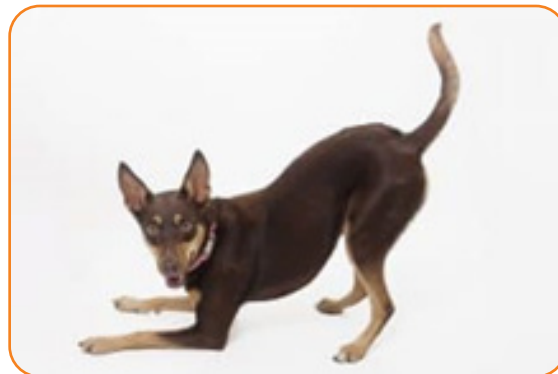
If you, or someone you have been in close contact with, has exhibited flu like symptoms or has been overseas in recent times, we ask you to follow the 14 day quarantine procedure diligently. If you are unwell but have an urgent appointment for your pet, please let us know so that we can minimise exposure. We are more than happy to reschedule non-urgent appointments including procedures and grooming.



THE CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW CAN I RECEIVE MEDICATIONS, PRODUCTS OR FOOD FOR MY PET?

If you require products, medications or food for your pet, you can utilise our 10 minute parking bays in the driveway of the clinic. Just call us when you arrive so that we can bring your pre-paid products out to the car! Alternatively, we can also arrange for these items to be delivered to your home!

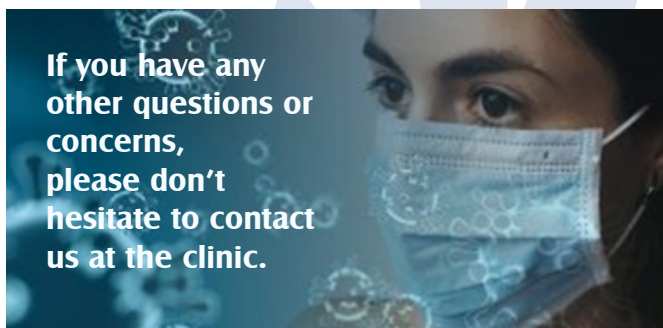


WHAT CAN I DO TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 WHILST VISITING YOUR CLINIC?

There is no reason to cause alarm – we just ask that you practice good hygiene habits when visiting us at the clinic.

Please use the hand sanitiser provided at the front door on your way in to and out of our clinic. Feel free to wash your hands at the end of your consultation with the vet.

Please inform any staff member if you are feeling unwell or may have been exposed to COVID-19 so that we can minimise exposure.



ONLINE BOOKINGS

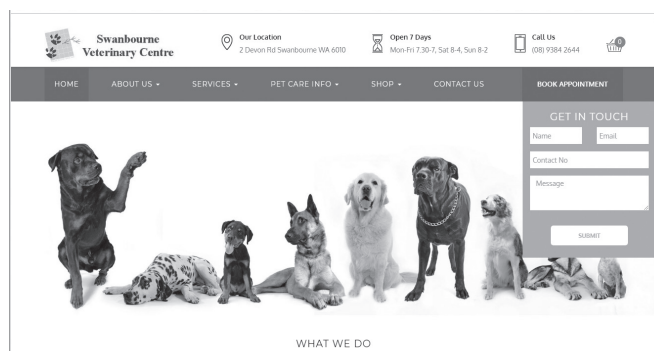
We have introduced the functionality to enable our clients to book their own appointments through a secure link on our website. Appointment times are available 7 days a week. You select the service – vaccination, general check, dental check or senior health check - then choose the day and time that suits, and book your pet in! When you complete your booking, you will receive an email with confirmation of the booking details.

If you wish to book an appointment with a specific vet or cannot find a suitable appointment time, please don't hesitate to give us a call.

Always remember that if you have immediate concerns about your pet, please call us! As always, our friendly team are here to help by calling 9384 2644.

Booking is easy – simply visit

www.swanbournevet.com/BookOnline



Kids★ Corner

Children up to 12 years old are invited to enter our colouring-in competition.

Please post or return your entry to Swanbourne Veterinary Centre by
December 31st 2020 for your chance to WIN a year's supply of Flea Control
products for your pet, plus a pet toy for your best friend.



Name:

Age:

Address:

Contact No.:



docuprint 9335 2255
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Good Luck!

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