

VetVan

Veterinary House Calls

NEWSLETTER ISSUE NUMBER 04

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Monday – Friday 7am – 5pm Saturday 8am – 2pm

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Practice News

Thank you to all clients (old and new) for choosing to use my service. I am aware of the important place pets hold in our hearts and I always aim to help our little friends with kindness and compassion. Thank you for trusting me.

Please note that my services will not be available during the dates 27th August to the 4th September inclusive. I regret any inconvenience and wish your pets the very best of health during this time.

I have decided to concentrate this new letter on paralysis ticks as they represent a true disease outbreak and the season of their arrival is imminent.

Paralysis Tick Identification

Paralysis ticks are a light grey colour and vary in size from a pinhead to the size of a large pea. Non-toxic cattle ticks are of a similar colour to paralysis ticks although the difference between the two lies in the position of the legs relative to mouthparts. Paralysis ticks mouth parts and legs are concentrated together at the tip of the head, while cattle ticks have the legs distributed down the side of the body.

When searching a pet for paralysis ticks, concentrate on your pets face, ears, neck and shoulders - 80% of ticks are found in these regions. A further hint when searching, run your hand against the lie of the hair – it is easier to detect ticks.

Signs and Symptoms

This is a common area of confusion and I want to set the record straight. There are two broad classes of clinical signs, the first relating to the ability to walk and stand, the second to breathing and swallowing.

Ticks cause symptoms of paralysis involving both legs, no pain is involved. Pets limping or holding a leg up are unlikely to be suffering tick paralysis. Pets suffering from tick paralysis appear weak in the back legs, have trouble standing up and look a bit 'drunk'. As signs progress they cannot get up at all.

In conjunction with signs of paralysis there are potentially more serious signs such as panting, gagging and choking. These symptoms relate to the heart and lungs and if an animal dies from tick paralysis it usually dies from heart and/or respiratory failure.

Prevention and Treatment

Avoidance is the best treatment and my research has revealed that if you walk your pet during the tick season, it is of great benefit to avoid scrub, bush or areas of long grass. Having a short coat will help in the early discovery of ticks, so owners of long haired pets should have them clipped in early September.

Frontline spray is the only registered product for tick control on cats, although I have found it difficult to use.

Frontline Top Spot and Advantix, a new product, are both registered for tick prevention in dogs and should be applied fortnightly.

Tick collars are a useful and economical product for dogs that are bathed infrequently. For those animals that are bathed regularly a wash called Permaxin is available.

Medication Offers

To encourage the use of preventive medications VetVan offers a 10% discount off the full price of a season's supply of spot-on anti-tick medications (i.e. Frontline Top Spot and Advantix). To qualify for the discount a 6-pack of the product must be purchased and only cash or cheque payment is accepted. Orders must be placed by close of business Monday with delivery taking place on Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday.