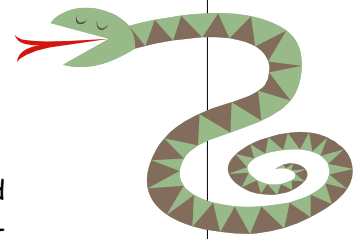


# NOVEMBER NEWS

November 2008



## IT'S SSSSSUMMER AGAIN (NEARLY)

The warmer weather has come again (did we even have winter??), and unfortunately it's that time of year when we start to see animals with snakebite. Snakes are already out and about with numerous sightings around the district and this means they are at risk of coming into contact with our animals.

We see many snakebites in dogs and cats each summer, and although we manage to save most cases, snakebite is still fatal in some animals. If your animal has been bitten by a snake, rapid action helps to achieve a good outcome. It is important to know the signs of snakebite (although often seeing your animal wrestling a snake is a reliable indication).

Signs of snakebite vary but some signs are common to most cases. Animals often vomit shortly after being bitten by a snake. Other signs that are likely to follow include tremoring, salivating, panting, incoordination and collapse. Sometimes animals appear to recover temporarily after initial symptoms. In dogs these signs often progress very rapidly and may not all be seen by owners. Cats sometimes simply present as very flat, weak and unable to walk properly. They may also have big black dilated pupils.

If you think your animal has been bitten it is important to call the vet straight away so that we can be prepared for you. Please note that we do not need to see the snake involved as it doesn't alter our treatment. We treat snakebite with combined tiger-brown snake antivenene, intravenous fluids and supportive management. Most cases have a good outcome if treated early. Remember—be alert, not alarmed!

## IT'S CONTAGIOUS.....

Mysterious things have been happening at the Mansfield Vet Clinic. After Peter Cullen had to put up with two of his daughters getting engaged in the same year, we are very pleased to congratulate Kat Gannon on her recent engagement to partner Matt. We are all very happy for them, and tests continue to see if there is something in the water here... We all hope so!



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Stallions

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## TICKED OFF



Earlier this month we saw an unusual case. Mini Mouse the King Charles spaniel came in to see us one morning when she was found unable to use her hindlegs. She had been very weak the night before as well and had deteriorated overnight. She was flat and lethargic and seemed to be slowly worsening.

Details of her history gave us a clue as to what was going on. She had recently been away on holidays and spent some time around the Gippsland Lakes area. This area is known to have problems with paralysis ticks and Mini Mouse was carefully combed and 6 paralysis ticks were found attached and feeding from her. They were immediately removed and after some intensive treatment and hospitalization, Mini Mouse improved and was able to go home the next day.

Paralysis ticks are not known to inhabit the Mansfield region (although we do have non-harmful bush ticks), but are commonly seen along the eastern coast of Australia as low as Lakes Entrance. They have even been found around metropolitan Melbourne. Paralysis ticks attach to dogs and cats and feed from them, injecting toxins along with their saliva. The toxins affect nerve function and cause a slowly progressing paralysis. Signs usually start as unsteadiness and weakness of the hindlimbs, and can progress to complete paralysis. In severe cases, the respiratory muscles become paralysed and the animal is unable to breathe.

Tick paralysis is treated with tick antiserum and with intensive supportive therapy to keep the animal stable. Another important part of treatment is prompt removal of any ticks and continued searches for more. Ticks can be attached for up to 10 days before signs begin but typically signs begin after about 7 days.

## E.T. AT MANSFIELD VET CLINIC (NO, NOT THE MOVIE...)

Embryo Transfer (E.T.) in horses is an emerging technique that is revolutionizing the horse breeding industry. It involves taking a week old embryo from a pregnant mare and transferring it into a suitable recipient mare, who then carries out the full term pregnancy. The foal born to the recipient mare is therefore not genetically related to the mare that gives birth to it, but is raised as her foal.

The technique allows mares of desirable breeding to have genetic offspring without them carrying a pregnancy (therefore allowing them to continue competing, etc.), or allows them to have more than one offspring in a breeding season.



*8 Day Old Embryo*

Dr. Sally has developed a keen interest in embryo transfer and is well on the way to achieving her aim. She recently had great success in recovering an embryo from one of her broodmares and transferring it into another. Unfortunately the embryo did not take in the second mare due to an infection, but isolating the embryo itself was a fantastic and exciting first step.

Many thanks to Jacquie and Brian Pollard for allowing the use of their handsome paint stallion 'Sting' for the making of the embryo!