



# Oakwood Newsletter

WINTER 2009

## Goodbye from

### Catherine Bennett-Williams

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time working at Oakwood Veterinary Centre. The staff, clients and the patients have made me feel like part of the family. I will miss you all! I have moved to the Peak District to be closer to my partner Paul and to also walk the wonderful moors and hills of the area. Wish me luck.

## Who are you sharing your bed with?

- House Dust Mites are a major cause of allergic disease in the home.
- These unwelcome creepy crawlies are found in every home in bedding, soft furnishings and carpets.
- Total Hygiene DM-1 Spray reduces house dust mite colonies, mould, bacteria and fungi.
- As we spend more time indoors take action early and make the first move, treat bedding and soft furnishings and blitz those bugs before they bother you and your pet!

Ask your vet about Total Hygiene DM-1 Spray from **SENSITEST®** – the complete allergy service.

[www.animal-allergy.co.uk](http://www.animal-allergy.co.uk)

0800 8494 550



**SENSITEST**  
the complete allergy service

## Daytime Surgery

(By appointment only)

Monday - Friday: 9 - 6pm

Tuesday Evenings: late surgery until 7.30pm

Saturday: 9-1pm

24 hr Emergency Service

Tel: 01691 679699

Fax: 01691 657563

Email: [oakwoodvets@onetel.com](mailto:oakwoodvets@onetel.com)

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**Avacta Animal Health**  
and **IDEXX**

## Allergy Alert



With more of our pets being diagnosed with allergies, I thought I would tell you about my cat Tilly.

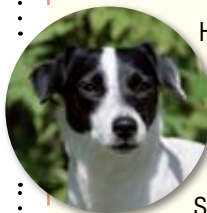
In 2004 we took Tilly to Oakwood Veterinary Centre as, not only was she constantly scratching, but also causing herself to bleed. She received many treatments but continued to scratch and was now constantly wearing a bandage around her neck to stop her making that particular area bleed. We decided to send a sample of Tilly's blood for a Sensitest screen which would show whether Tilly was suffering

with an allergic reaction. After a short wait the results confirmed Tilly suffered with a number of allergies, most of them to foods commonly found in cat diets. We were stunned. Tilly is allergic to salmon, chicken, turkey, beef and rabbit, also house dust mites, fleas, red top grass, nettle and ash!

We started her on a white fish diet and kept up a regular flea control, she also spent weeks at the veterinary centre having the wound on her neck caused by her scratching, treated and re-banded. She was also treated with homeopathy and antibiotics.

After nearly 2 years her allergies were finally under control. The experience was traumatic for both us and Tilly and the recovery period felt like a life time, but now Tilly is a happy and healthy feline who enjoys her white fish diet, with occasional treats. The only evidence of the experience is a small bald patch on her neck. Thank heavens for Avacta Animal Health Sensitest for helping to get Tilly back to tip-top condition. *by Laura Biggar*

## Just For You – A poem by Laura Biggar

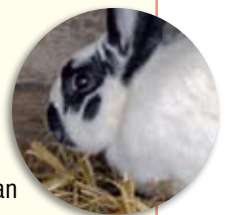


Here's a poem just for you  
From your dogs and cats and  
rabbits who,  
Can't tell you when there is  
something wrong

So please listen to their song.

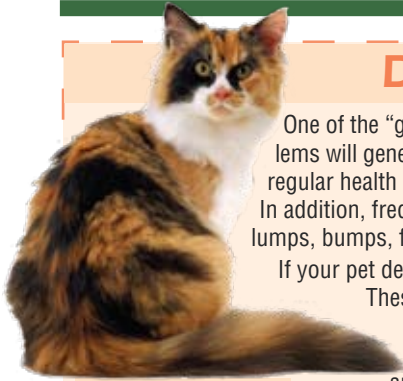
You mustn't forget to brush our teeth  
Or check our furs for what lies beneath,  
Scratch, scratch, scratch, Ahh I've got fleas  
Itch, itch, itch, get rid of them please.  
I'm hungry and something in my tummy  
squirms,  
Oh no Mum, I think I've got worms.  
It's not good to feed us loads and loads  
The cat next door is about to explode.

So we need to run around and play,  
A good long walk won't take all day.  
Then there's our trip to Oakwood for  
our MOT  
To check our, heart, eyes and ears  
And the things you can't see.  
But the vet is content we're up to par  
Woohoo we can go home now, let's get  
in the car.  
It's been a long day and we're  
ready for sleep  
To dream of our memories we  
will always keep.  
So keep us fit, healthy and clean  
With plenty of TLC in between.



Oakwood Veterinary Centre, Babbinswood Farm, Whittington, Oswestry, Shropshire, SY11 4PF

Tel: 01691 679699 • Fax: 01691 657563 • Email: [oakwoodvets@onetel.com](mailto:oakwoodvets@onetel.com) • 24 hr Emergency Service



## Don't ignore that lump!

One of the "golden rules" of veterinary practice is that early detection of problems will generally give us a much better chance of sorting things out and the regular health examinations we give your pet are a key part of this approach. In addition, frequent grooming allows *you* to keep a watchful eye out for any lumps, bumps, fleas, ticks and a host of other problems!

If your pet develops a lump there may be several possible underlying causes.

These include allergic reactions (such as bee stings), abscesses, hernias and tumours. The most serious of these are tumours; these may be either *benign* – which tend to be slow growing and remain in one place, or *malignant* – which are frequently fast growing and spread to distant parts of the body.

If you do find a lump it is therefore very important we examine it as soon as possible – in order that we may establish the underlying cause and start any required treatment without delay. We are able to submit biopsy material or the lump to Idexx Laboratories for an idea as to what the lump could be and as to possible causes. Idexx are sometimes able to offer a long term outlook for your pet.



Skin lump on the elbow of a cat

If you are concerned about a lump on your pet – or any other health problem, don't delay – please contact us today for an appointment!



## Shape up!

**OBESITY** is a problem that affects pets and humans alike, and just like us, carrying extra weight places extra demands on virtually all the organs of the body. Excess weight can lead to or worsen many medical conditions including:

- joint and ligament problems,
- heart disease,
- increased blood pressure,
- diabetes mellitus (sugar diabetes),
- breathing difficulties,
- decreased stamina and heat intolerance – to name just a few!

Sadly, affected pets often become old before their time, have a diminished quality of life and a reduced life expectancy.

You can tell if your pet is overweight by feeling their chest – the ribs should be felt easily – but not seen, and dogs and cats should have a 'waist' between ribs and hips. If you feel your pet is getting a little portly we are happy to weigh him or her and advise you on their ideal weight. We will also examine your pet to check for any medical conditions (such as an under-active thyroid gland in middle aged dogs) that can result in weight gain.

To achieve weight loss, pets need a combination of a specially formulated calorie controlled diet (often down to around  $\frac{2}{3}$  their previous calorie intake) and more exercise. The good news is that as your pet loses weight, the benefits of increased healthiness and vitality are usually seen quite quickly. Please contact us for advice about your pet's ideal weight, diet and exercise regime – we are here to help!

## Winter worries!

IT IS that wonderful time of year again with winter walks, roaring fires and celebrations. As the chilly weather and festivities begin we've got a few tips to keep your pet healthy.



Firstly – when out and about, remember that whilst many dogs love playing in the cold and snow, slim fine coated breeds will find it much harder to conserve their body heat. Also beware of hazards such as frozen ponds and lakes.

Pets that live outside (such as pet rabbits and guinea pigs) need special consideration at this time of year. It is important to ensure that their hutches are warm, clean, dry and in a sheltered position. Bedding needs to be plentiful and changed daily; give them fresh food and water every day and check the water bottle regularly to ensure it has not become frozen.

Inside the home, don't forget that Christmas decorations such as ribbons and tinsel are often attractive to kittens and puppies – and if swallowed may lead to an intestinal blockage. Similarly make sure that turkey carcasses and string (used to tie up the carcass) are safely disposed of.

Beware also of other household hazards: dogs are particularly fond of chocolate (see box right), but this can prove lethal. In addition, there are now several reports confirming that dogs eating even fairly small quantities of raisins, grapes and sultanas can develop renal failure. Many pets

love to chew on house plants, however many of these are toxic to pets. Lilies pose a particular hazard to *cats* – with all parts of the plant including the pollen being toxic.

Finally fleas don't take winter holidays – so keep up your regular flea treatments!

### What's bugging you?

With the warm weather just a distant memory, it can be tempting to take a pause in the battle to keep your pets and your home flea free! However take a look at the picture on the right – these are **flea eggs** at 10x magnification!



Adult female fleas can lay in excess of 50 eggs per day – thus even a brief infestation can result in (literally!) thousands of eggs being produced. These fall off your pet and are deposited around your home in carpets and bedding where they can lie dormant for up to a year or more before developing into adult fleas.

### Chocolate alert!

Most dogs love chocolate, but as well as being very fattening, it also contains a naturally occurring substance called theobromine which is poisonous to dogs (but not humans you'll be relieved to know!)

The theobromine content, and hence the toxicity of the chocolate, varies according to the type of chocolate with plain chocolate the most dangerous. So if you *must* feed your dog chocolate, specially formulated pet chocolate is the safe option!

