



updates from the field

Spring News



Vet nurse Brittany Halls

In keeping with the continued learning philosophy at CVH, our most recent vet nurse recruit Brittany Halls has embarked on Certificate 4 in Veterinary Nursing studies (Britt has already completed a Certificate 2 in Animal Studies). The Certificate 4 is held by our other CVH veterinary nurses, Jessica Smith and Louise Duncan. *Above: Britt with Diesel.*

November is Microchips for Working Dogs Month

Attention working dog owners!

Book ahead now (ring 4832 1977) to take advantage of our November special – a **25% discount** on microchips for working dogs only. See over for details.

Crookwell Hospital Fair Pet Parade

1pm Saturday 1 November

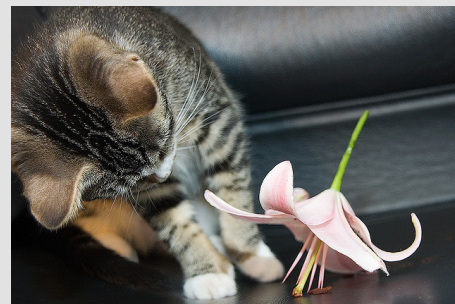
Help raise funds for Crookwell Hospital - enter your pet in the Pet Parade, forms at CVH, \$3 per pet, great prizes from CVH!

Cats and Liliums - a toxic combination

Who doesn't love liliums? These handsome blooms are often our first choice when sending a bunch of flowers or adding some colour and fragrance to our house and garden, but cats and liliums can be a fatal combination.

Plants from the *Liliaceae* family cause severe toxicity and kidney failure in cats – all the common liliums (Asiatic, Oriental, Tiger and Christmas lilies) and various day lilies (*Hemerocallis*) are considered highly poisonous to felines. Cats are the only domestic species susceptible to lilium toxicity.

ALL parts of the plant are toxic – the flowers, leaves, stems, roots and pollen. And just a 5 cent-sized piece of leaf or petal can be fatal. Cats that live inside are possibly at greatest risk – they are curious creatures and a vase of flowers is tempting.



Symptoms

Initially the affected cat will start to vomit, become depressed and refuse to eat. These early symptoms often start within a few hours of ingestion of the plant material and progressively become more severe. Within 1 to 3 days the cat will become critically ill and develop acute renal failure, with symptoms including dehydration, low to nil urine production, bad breath, sometimes with mouth ulcers. The kidneys are enlarged and painful on palpation. Without treatment, the cat will become progressively ill and die within 3 to 7 days.

Treatment

Ring us immediately if you even suspect your cat has nibbled lilies. Rapid veterinary intervention is critical if renal failure is to be avoided. Blood and urine tests help confirm the diagnosis.

There is no antidote – the responsible toxins are yet to be identified. Treatment includes aggressive intravenous fluid therapy and other intensive supportive treatment aimed at normalising kidney function, dehydration and urine output.

If presented immediately, plant material can be removed from the stomach and mouth. If more time has elapsed, intensive therapy is required to try to combat renal failure.

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Prolapses: before and after calving

Uterine prolapse

Cows experiencing a tough birth will often follow their long ordeal with a prolapse of the uterus. This should be treated as a veterinary emergency.

The prognosis varies – a cow that remains strong and standing or sitting comfortably can usually be treated successfully and go on to raise a healthy calf. Other prolapsed cows may be down, unable to stand, and die from shock and blood loss from tearing of the vessels in the uterus. Most cows will recover uneventfully if the uterus is replaced within a few hours of giving birth – early veterinary intervention is essential to minimise the cow's stress, shock, infection and ultimately, her survival.

What causes uterine prolapse?

Two conditions/events are primarily implicated in uterine prolapse: prolonged and difficult calvings, often with the cow down and straining severely, and obesity: fat cows have a higher incidence of prolapse.

Treatment

Uterine prolapses must be replaced as quickly as possible. This can be quite challenging if the entire uterus is external to the body. It's helpful, before veterinary attention starts, for the producer to keep the cow comfortable and the exposed uterus moist and dirt free. This can involve gently washing with cold water and wrapping the prolapse in clean towels if the cow is down. Without care, the uterus quickly dries out and swells (making it even more challenging to replace), tissues become damaged and torn, and infection sets in. Treatment involves:

- replacing the prolapse following administration of an epidural
- closing the vulva/external vagina with sutures or vaginal pins to help prevent a recurrence – a veterinarian will place these humanely and most importantly, without impeding urination
- maintaining antibiotic cover to prevent infection.

Once the uterus is replaced, most cases proceed well with the swelling subsiding and straining settling.



Full uterine prolapse
Image: Dr
Carie Telgen

Vaginal prolapse

Prolapses of the vagina are most often seen in heavily pregnant beef cows – and again, obesity increases the incidence. There may be a breed predisposition, with Hereford cows appearing to have a higher incidence of vaginal prolapse. While vaginal prolapses are relatively easy to correct, some cows have a tendency to re-prolapse until they calve. Treatment involves:

- replacing the prolapse after administration of an epidural
- closing most of the vulval lips with easy to remove sutures or vaginal pins to help prevent further prolapse – this should be done humanely and correctly by a vet
- maintaining antibiotic cover to prevent infection
- monitoring the cow closely with the aim of removing the pins or sutures when calving is imminent
- post-calving, if the cow looks like prolapsing again, it is worthwhile replacing the vaginal pins or sutures for several weeks. Before this is done, it's essential to ensure all membranes have passed.

Long term management

Cows with a history of vaginal prolapse should be retired from breeding. They will have a higher propensity to prolapse again. Cows that have experienced a full uterine prolapse may be difficult to breed again.

November is *Microchips for Working Dogs* Month

During November we are making microchipping as attractive as possible for working dog owners (only) by offering a **25% discount**. Please ring us now to make a forward appointment – (02) 4832 1977.

Microchipping is the best way to safeguard your working dog against loss or theft. Your dog's unique microchip number is a permanent identification that lasts for the life of your dog, and it is the only legal means you have of identifying your dog should it be lost or stolen.

Visit the **News and Animal Care** sections of our website for more information on microchipping and why it's so important.

Contact us

Opening hours 8.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday | 9am – 12pm Saturday

24 hour emergency service on (02) 4832 1977

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