

OCT 2024



# The Better Pet Gazette

highlandsveterinaryhospital.com.au



## One thing is clear- our beloved pets are getting chunkier and are less fit by the day.

Something must change and acknowledging we have a problem is a start. Firstly, analyse your pet's daily routine, diet and living habits to see where you can shift the focus in dealing with this problem.

Working to identify the causes of 'having obesity' and accepting that it is a metabolic condition and a disease state, frees everyone's expectations to work to cure these conditions. Working with your veterinarian to ensure food portions, the types of foods, whether the animal requires medications or not, and so much more can help the concerned pet owner support their pet.

Be aware that dogs especially, don't play fair. Those pleading doggy eyes can wrestle more food from the concerned owner. Instead, spoil them with your time (not food). Animals know all the tricks in the book (like pleading eyes) to blatantly steal food, so be prepared for it. When your pet achieves their weight and health goals, keep focused on keeping them healthy. You don't want to be doing the pet diet thing more than you have to.

And a final word... distraction works great with animals - a good belly rub, a fun new toy, a trip in the car to the beach for dogs, or a new climbing tree inside for cats. If you feel guilty eating in front of them, put them in another room, perhaps with a new toy, just while you enjoy your meal!

*Please see page 2 for some great tips on how to keep your pet fit and trim!*



*The Better Pet Gazette is a monthly newsletter full of informative articles and tips on pet health as well as updates on what's happening at the practice. We hope you enjoy the read!*

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*need an appointment?*  
**BOOK ONLINE**



*Doza the Bull Terrier was in recently for a small procedure and was the perfect little angel, receiving loads of cuddles from the staff here at Highlands Veterinary Hospital!*



# PET OBESITY tips & tricks

Here are some helpful suggestions to keep your pet's weight under control and fighting fit:

- Look for a high protein and low carb diet. High fibre and high protein content can help, as the foods satisfy the pet for longer.
- Help your pet to move more. Games for cats, like inside 'trees' for them to climb, all help. Dogs love to explore but as with anything, don't overdo exercise. Going from a casual 20-minute walk to a 3-hour uphill run doesn't do anyone any good. Gradual increases are important
- Pumpkin has great fibre and can help regulate digestion and prevent constipation. It is a great additive for dogs and even cats who can be picky eaters.
- Playing with pets can help get rid of excess weight and overcome boredom.
- Always work with your vet. They can advise on medications if needed, they know what is new to the market, and they can also guide you to the correct amount of food that your pet may require.



# pet panic!

*managing anxiety and phobias in dogs and cats*

If your dog or cat struggles with anxiety or phobias, it can be heartbreaking to watch them experience fear and stress in situations that seem harmless to us.

If your dog or cat suffers from anxiety, you may notice them pacing around, they may have a decreased appetite, vocalization, hypervigilance, trembling, restlessness and more. It is important to seek professional help to identify the underlying emotional components.

To oversimplify the situation, your pet is seeing the world as a much more dangerous place than it is. Visitors to the home, loud noises such as from traffic, or even just a stranger in the home can reduce your pet to a quivering shaking mess.

## What can you do to help them out?

- There are medications such as **Zylkene** that calm the animal and allow their system to relax. Medications can lower the anxiety they feel, so that they can learn to relax. The medications can offer mild support, however, if you need stronger treatment then your veterinarian will advise you of what is best for your dog.
- Minimise the stressors for the animal, such as moving elements in their environment around so that it is more in tune with your pet.

- Gentle exercises can wear off excessive worry and pacing.
- Teach the animal to be calmer and more relaxed.
- Avoiding places such as loud noisy crowds of people, if that is what sets their anxiety off. They will not adapt on their own, they need to relearn how to cope with the world as they see it.



- Build a bond between you so that your pet knows you are there for them and allow them to get braver and trust in life.

## Add in a bit of patience...

Anxiety and fear can wear a pet down. You don't want your dog to attack anyone because they perceive a threat. Talk to your veterinarian to see if Zylkene could help your pet relax and take life more lightly. Always be kind and gentle to your pet as they struggle to cope with the world as they perceive it. Don't add to their stress.

*Don't miss our Facebook Live Talk on Wed, 2 Oct at 12.30 pm "Soothing the Stressed: Easing Your Pet's Anxiety." Dr Diederik will offer up some pertinent information for this common condition!*

# upcoming

## f LIVE TALK



**soothing**  
*the*  
**stressed**  
easing your pet's anxiety

Highlands  
VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Join us on your  
lunch break:  
**02.10.24**  
**@ 12:30pm**

@ facebook.com / highlandsveterinaryhospital

**f LIVE** Highlands  
Veterinary  
Hospital  
**02 - OCT - 2024 - 12:30PM**

Veterinarian **Dr Diederik Gelderman** will share tips on understanding and alleviating pet anxiety, like separation issues, sound sensitivity, and general anxiousness, to help your furry friend find calm.



Pets can be affected by stress, from an unfamiliar environment, exposure to different people, or owner separation issues! In this discussion, Dr Diederik talks about the best way you can help your dog or cat overcome these issues. If you have a fearful or anxious dog or a cat, listen in for some very useful tips about how to calm them down. Listen in and please ask if you have any questions during the Live talk - from the 'why do they get stressed?' to 'how do I calm my fearful pet down?' Dr Diederik will cover this topic with valuable insight and useful suggestions.

Please join in on Wednesday, 2 Oct at 12.30pm on our Facebook page [here](#). All of our previous talks can be found in the Live section under the More menu.

### SEPT FACEBOOK LIVE TALK RECAP

#### "Bladder Blunders: Understanding Pet Urinary Health"

Often it is easy to notice if your dog or cat has a bladder problem, as they keep trying to urinate frequently. Or, they may strain or cry while trying to urinate, as it can be painful. Dribbling urine, or frequently licking their genitals, is also a giveaway sign. In this Facebook Live talk,



Dr Diederik takes you step-by-step about what causes these infections, the difference between types of urinary infections, age-related bladder issues, and what is required to give your pet some much-needed relief. He also covers the differences between species and the sexes and offers some great suggestions to understand pet urinary health.

You can view this recorded episode of Facebook Live [here](#) as Dr Diederik covers ways you can assist your pet when in pain.



## HERO

OF THE MONTH

OCTOBER 2024

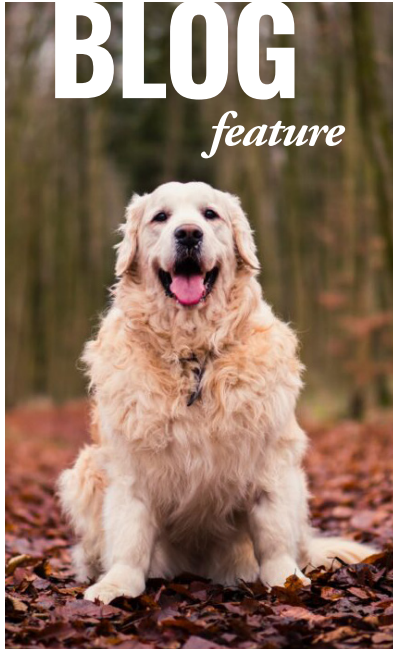


**Missy is a gorgeous Labrador puppy. As her diet expanded to include solid food, she began to have problems with vomiting and regurgitation after eating a meal.**

Dr Diederik suggested an x-ray, as he suspected a condition called Persistent Right Aortic Arch. The x-ray confirmed that this was indeed what Missy was suffering from.

This condition can be rectified by opening the chest for surgery. It was a tricky decision, as doing surgery too early can put a puppy at risk from the anaesthetic. On the flip side, if you wait too long to do surgery, the risk is that the condition may not be reversible, due to permanent stretching of the oesophagus.

Missy's owner used a vertical feeding technique until she was 13 weeks old, after which the operation went ahead. Missy was amazing and like a true hero, bounced back after a very successful operation. This brave little girl is now doing very well!



As pet owners, we adore our furry companions and strive to provide them a healthy and happy life. However, witnessing our beloved pets incessantly scratching, biting, or licking can be distressing. Itchy skin in cats and dogs is a common issue that can significantly affect their overall wellbeing.

Our blog "Why Is My Pet Itchy?" provides some reasons why pets become itchy and signs that can help us identify this discomfort in our furry friends. You can read it [here](#).



## STOP THE ITCH

My dog is itchy! Itchy skin is a condition that can often cause your dog stress and discomfort, and keep you and your dog up at night.

The good news is that it can often be easily and effectively treated. However, it is still important to identify the underlying cause triggering the itch. Itchy skin in dogs can have many causes, such as parasites, contact allergies, infections, atopic dermatitis, or food allergies.

Luckily, there are some amazing products to treat this annoying and uncomfortable condition. Give us a call to book a consult, so we can assess your pet and provide the best treatment strategy.

## help a pet in need

*assist families and their pets when they need it most*

*Highlands Veterinary Hospital is standing up to bring attention to the plight of pet owners who face urgent medical assistance but limited monetary resources.*

*Animals bring so much joy and reassurance to their owners, and no pet owner should have to make the heartbreaking decision between life-saving treatment and medication for their beloved pets. Helping Paws is a new initiative to overcome these emergencies and provide much-needed pet assistance that they need immediately.*

*By purchasing a raffle ticket from our reception you will not only get a chance to be rewarded with a great prize, but it allows pets to get the help they need NOW! Tickets are only \$2 per ticket or 3 for \$5. Or, you can donate a prize to help raise funds if you wish. Communities working together, and helping each other, are the best solutions! A heartfelt 'Thanks' for all your help.*



  
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