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Bouncing into Spring

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It's Spring!



Our team have been enjoying some social dog walks in our beautiful town now the weather is warming up.

Spring always has us prepping, ready to treat some challenging and acutely sick patients - snakes and ticks keep us on our toes! In this edition we've a couple of reminders to help you keep your pet safe through the warmer months.

If you're heading down to enjoy the coast this spring, please make sure your pets are up to date with their tick prevention medication. It's been a year since we started offering the annual tick prevention injection for dogs, Bravecto Quantum. We've been really impressed with this product and know that it removes the stress of remembering monthly prevention medication.

We're again running a
spring special from now
until the end of October.

If we are treating your
dog with
Bravecto Quantum
you're eligible to receive
a free heartworm
prevention injection.

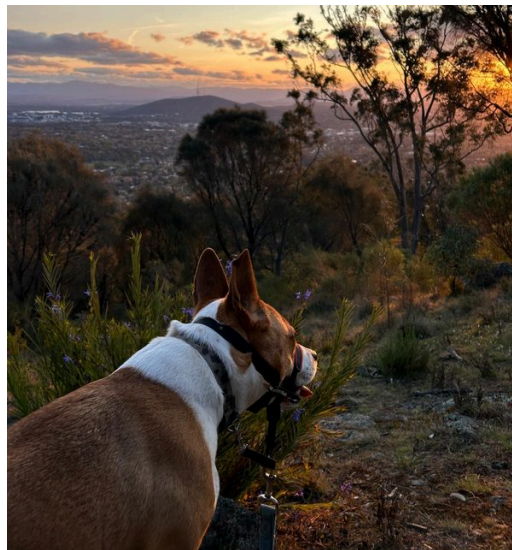


Bush Reserve Safety

The best way to avoid snakes with your dogs is to ensure they are close to you and kept on lead, especially on our bush reserves.

We are so lucky to have Mount Ainslie-Majura Bush Reserve so near AND especially lucky to be allowed to walk our dogs there.

PLEASE help us keep it that way! By ensuring you abide by [regulations](#) and keep your dog(s) on lead, you reduce the risk of snake bites and help protect the Rosenberg's Goanna.



Meet Buddy!

This handsome boy was brought to us last year by our amazing Labrador Rescue team. Buddy had arrived from Dubbo and had been diagnosed with heartworm disease. Heartworm is difficult to treat and can be fatal. Together Buddy's dedicated foster carer and our team managed his strict rest and 90 day treatment plan. Buddy recently had his 365 day (1 year) check at his new home in Victoria. We're so delighted to hear Buddy is now officially clear of heartworm infection and a happy, healthy and energetic labrador!



Heartworm Disease

What is heartworm, and how is it spread?

Heartworm *Dirofilaria Immitis*, is a parasitic infection of dogs. The adult heartworm live in the heart and major vessels. The juvenile stages (microfilaria) are microscopic in size. They are born into the blood stream and spread through the body in large numbers. When an infected dog is bitten by a mosquito, it ingests blood containing these microfilaria. These microfilaria go through a life cycle stage inside the mosquito. The mosquito then bites another dog, and injects these more mature microfilaria. These parasites then migrate through the body, enter the blood stream, and develop into adult heartworm, which lodge in the heart and major vessels.



Here is a picture of a heartworm microfilaria that was found in one of our patients recently.

Heartworm can also infect cats. It is rarer compared to dogs, but can cause significant

Where is heartworm in Australia?

90% of reported heart worm cases in Australia occurred in Queensland. The remaining cases were reported throughout mainland Australia. Heartworm is spread by mosquitos and is more common in areas with higher numbers of mosquitos - these areas are called *endemic areas*. When infected dogs travel, this can spread heartworm to areas with a lower incidence. At Northside Vet we have had 2 diagnosed patients with heart worm infections in the last year living in north Canberra. Whilst affected numbers are low, these patients are a reservoir for heartworm in our community.

What is heartworm disease?

Heartworm infection is the presence of heartworm in a dog. An infected dog may not necessarily have disease. Disease occurs and worsens as the number of adult heartworms present increases.

Heartworm disease is the consequence of heartworm present in the dog's heart and blood vessels. Affected dogs can develop lung disease, heart disease and heart failure, amongst other complications. Heartworm

heart and lung disease.

disease can progress to cause fatal congestive heart failure.

What are the signs of heartworm disease?

Heartworm disease is usually not apparent until severe infections are present. Signs are related to pulmonary hypertension and heart failure. This can include lethargy, shortness of breath, exercise intolerance, coughing, fainting or collapse, fluid swelling of the abdomen, weight loss and poor appetite.

Is heartworm treatable?

Heartworm treatment is possible, but it carries risks for the patient. As the heartworms die, they can cause thrombosis through the body. Treatment of heartworm infection can be costly. Killing the heartworms relieves some of the pressure on the heart. Some patients will have had irreversible changes to the heart after long standing infections. In these patients treatment of the heart worm will not reverse the changes to the heart, and the patient is treated as a long term heart patient.

Prevention of heartworm is safe, effective and easy. Prevention of heartworm infections will eliminate the risk of heartworm induced heart disease.

How is heartworm prevented?

Prevention of heartworm is safe, effective and easy. Prevention of heartworm infections will eliminate the risk of heartworm induced heart disease. There are 2 forms of prevention for heartworm disease. Monthly oral or spot-on preventatives, such as Simparica, Milpro and Revolution. Alternatively annual heartworm prevention injections are available.

Monthly medications work well if given on time every month. Recent analysis of reported heart worm cases discovered that 40% of reported heart worm cases occurred in patients that were being given monthly prevention! We know statistically that 80% of people miss 2 out of 12 yearly treatments - and our team confess that they are often guilty of missing or forgetting a monthly treatment!

Annual heartworm prevention injections give reliable prevention for heartworm infection.

Chat with our team during your pet's health check appointments which option suits you and your pet best.

But what about my Cat?

Can my cat get canine heartworm?

Yes! Cats can and do get heartworm and in the last few years research has shown that cats actually have similar infection rates in dogs. However, adult heartworms struggle to live in cats and thus we don't see microfilaria in cats. This means that the cat is not a reservoir for infection to others and infection, disease and treatment are all different. Heartworm can be difficult to diagnose in cats and exceptionally difficult to treat. It most commonly causes lung disease that may present as coughing, vomiting, weight loss or collapse.

Should I use prevention for heartworm for my cat?

Maybe! In Canberra, our cats are often predominantly or only indoors. Cats can be infected with heartworm via mosquitoes. In areas such as Queensland and coastal regions with high numbers of mosquitoes, we absolutely recommend year round heartworm prevention. If your cat is lucky enough to have a balcony or a cat run with possible mosquito presence, it's worth considering

year round heartworm prevention. Products include Revolution Plus spot-on, Milpro tablets, Bravecto Spot-on and Nexgard Spectra Spot-on.

Have we ever diagnosed heartworm in a cat at Northside Vet Centre?

Yes! Dr Winston has diagnosed a cat with an adult heartworm.

H5N1 (Avian Flu) Update

You may have seen online that there was a positive case of H5N1 confirmed in Goulburn last week. A Greater Crested Tern somehow made its way inland before succumbing to the illness. Though no cases have yet been confirmed in humans or cats, this disease does have the potential to infect both. NVC would like to remind our Canberra community on the steps that should be taken to ensure you and your pets stay safe.

If you find a bird that appears unwell, please do not attempt to bring it to a clinic. Instead:

-  Avoid touching or moving the bird to prevent disease spread.
-  Take note of time, date, and location of the sighting
-  Record photo or video if safe to do so
-  Contact the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline (1800 675 888).

If you find a bird that is injured but does not look to be unwell in any other way, please contact ACT Wildlife (0432 300 033) for their advice prior to engaging. If a bird is advised to be brought into a clinic, NVC or otherwise, please phone first so the team can appropriately prepare and instruct you where to wait outside. Birds should not be brought into the building.

! FOR CAT OWNERS !

While the risk of H5N1 affecting cats is currently low in Canberra, there is a small risk to cats that eat a raw diet (including raw pet food) and cats with access to birds outdoors. During this period, it is safest that you:

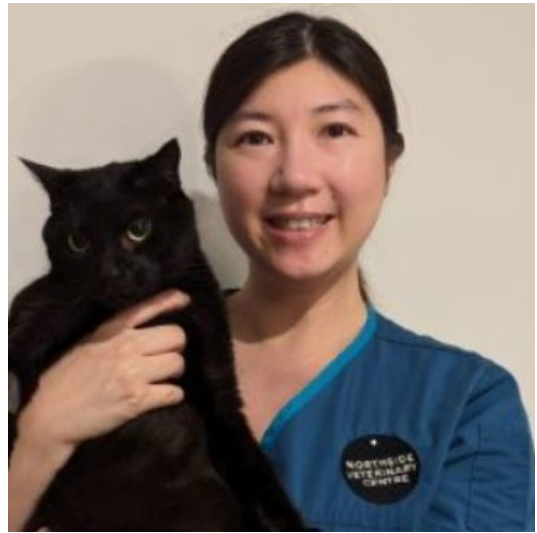
-  Switch your cats to a diet of cooked/pasteurised food ONLY.
-  Contain cats with no access to birds or wildlife.
-  Keep cats from poultry and livestock.
-  Wash hands thoroughly after handling animals with outdoor access.

Further information for cat owners can be found [here](#)

We Bid Adieu to Dr Joyce Yung

After 3 years of passionate and caring treatment of our NVC patients, Dr Joyce will be finishing up with us on Friday 25th

September. If you would like to see Joyce for one last visit before she closes her books, please give our reception team a call - she still has some appointments available next week!



Recent Customer Reviews

*In all seriousness, I wouldn't take my Winstan (Chihuahua of 13 years) anywhere else! Care & Love for your beloved pet is through the roof! Every receptionist I have encountered has been empathetically beautiful. Every time. I highly recommend this wonderful veterinary clinic in Braddon ACT.
Thankyou, from Winstan & Whitney - Whitney T*

*I've been a Northside vet client since 2018. Both my dog Morris and cat Eve have always been well looked after by the team- they are animal lovers who always take the time to help me understand what my pets need.
Also can't recommend the puppy class enough- Sarah does a fantastic job and my dog Morris is always happy and comfortable when we need to go to the vet (even when he's had to have big procedures) because of her class. - Annastasia H*

*Ruby phoned me to talk about the questions I had asked in an email, i thought she was awesome, very polite and super helpful!
She helped me book an appointment and it wasn't long till I had an email with all the information I need leading up to the big day..
13/10
Thank you Ruby! - Munkii*

Springtime Jumble

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