

Spring 2025 Small Animal Newsletter

Heatstroke

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter for 2025 and who can believe the weather we are having. This Spring has been exceptionally hot and dry – weather that we may enjoy but our pets may not. As temperatures rise, so does the risk of heatstroke in pets—a life-threatening condition that can affect dogs, cats, and other animals in just minutes.

So what is heatstroke?

Heatstroke is a severe and potentially fatal condition that occurs in animals when their internal body temperature rises to a level that they cannot cope with. This can result in seizures, organ damage and even death. Once heatstroke develops it can progress rapidly and become increasingly difficult to treat.

What are the main signs of heatstroke?

Signs of heatstroke can include vomiting, diarrhoea, lethargy, heavy panting, seizures and collapse.

Are any types of dogs at a greater risk?

Yes, although it can happen to any breed of dog, some are more prone to heatstroke than others. This means it will develop under less severe conditions. Brachycephalic (flat faced) breeds, such as pugs and bulldogs, obese dogs or dogs with underlying conditions such as heart or breathing issues will be more likely to develop heatstroke. Brachycephalic breeds are unable to lose body heat via their nose like longer snouted dogs; therefore they are at risk of heatstroke even on cool day. British Bulldogs are 14 times and Pugs are 6 times more likely to suffer from heatstroke than a Labrador! Pets left in cars or enclosed spaces are at higher risk too.

Top tips for keeping your pets cool this summer

- Avoid the hottest part of the day: take your dog on a short walk before 8am and after 8pm. Your dog isn't going to know that you didn't take him along to the county show or the family BBQ!
- Avoid hot pavements
- Ensure they have access to fresh water at all times
- Restrict exercise: choose shorter walks, avoid letting them run. Remember, lack of exercise won't kill your dog but heatstroke might.

We see lots of myths causing damage at this time of year, please DO NOT: use cold/freezing water to cool your dog, cover them with a wet towel (stops the heat evaporating), squirt lemon juice in their mouth or put ice cubes in their bottom (these are myths), or let them drink excessive amounts of water

If you have any concerns please contact the surgery.

Hafren Veterinary Group

Newtown

01686 625344

Llanidloes

01686 413475

Knighton

01547 528292

Cross Gates

01597 851500



What to do in an emergency – healthy pets

1. Call the practice to let them know the situation
2. Immerse in cold water, being careful to keep their head above the surface

What to do in an emergency – old, unhealthy or brachycephalic pets

1. **Move your pet to a cool, shaded area**
2. **Apply cool (not cold) water** to the body—especially on the belly, paws, and armpits.
3. Use a **fan** or air conditioning to help cool down.
4. **Offer small amounts of cool water**, but don't force drinking.
5. **Call your veterinarian or emergency clinic immediately.**

Vet Nursing Awareness Month

For the month of May we are celebrating our wonderful veterinary nurses and the hard work they do.

Our Veterinary nurses are an integral part of our veterinary team at Hafren and are vital for the smooth running of our practice.

As well as providing expert nursing care for poorly animals, our veterinary nurses play an important role in supporting pet owners in keeping their pets healthy. They carry out essential clinical work and are skilled in performing diagnostic tests, treatments and can be delegated minor surgical procedures. The registered veterinary nurse (RVN) title is used by our nurses who have undergone extensive training and education. Once they've passed their final nursing exams, all nurses are entered onto the VN register and are regulated by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS). They follow the Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses, which includes the requirement to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) to keep their skills up to date.

Our veterinary nurses have a complex yet diverse role in our practice, with no two days ever the same. Here are just a few of the roles they carry out regularly:

- They provide in-patient care
- They monitor anaesthesia and sedated pets
- They take blood samples and place intravenous catheters
- They take radiographs
- They provide dietary advice
- They support owners during bereavement
- They provide intensive care to critical patients
- They support patients who are whelping
- They provide first aid
- They manage and package up laboratory samples
- They provide weight management advice
- They provide a nurse consultation service
- They provide dental care
- Scrubbing into surgical cases and assisting the surgeon
- Provide sterile supplies management and maintenance
- Carry out minor surgical procedures
- Provide aftercare for patients post procedures

To all our veterinary nurses — thank you for your dedication, skill, and kindness. Your work changes lives every day, and we are endlessly grateful.