

St Bernards Buzz

Time for a Facelift...



If you haven't been in to visit St Bernard's Road Veterinary Clinic since Anzac Day, then please pop in and check out the "new look" in reception. We have started the clinic makeover – it's amazing what a coat of paint does (or actually 4 coats of paint to cover the existing dark blue paint!) There is of course a splash of pink involved and some really cool artwork.

Our focus this month is on gastrointestinal disease - which can present in lots of different ways. It is surprising how many of our patients have adverse food reactions to their current diet. Patients with adverse food reactions will present either with gastrointestinal signs (vomiting and/or diarrhoea) or with skin and/or ear disease. So many of the skin allergies and ear infections that we see in pets are actually caused by one or more components of their diet. If you have a pet with skin disease that is proving difficult to resolve then consider diet as the cause.

Should I be worried about vomiting?

There are many reasons your pet might vomit, and physical obstruction from eating a foreign object is just one of them! Diseases such as pancreatitis, liver or kidney disease, or endocrine diseases like diabetes can all produce vomiting. Dogs and cats can also suffer from inflammatory bowel disease and may vomit intermittently or have periods of severe gastrointestinal upsets associated with the condition.

So if your pet is vomiting, what should you do and when should you start to worry?

As a guide, if your pet has had a one off vomit but appears happy, bright and alert and otherwise well you should keep a close eye on him over the next 24 hours. It's best to withhold food for a few hours (gastric rest) and offer fluids for rehydration. If your pet has vomited more than once in a short period of time, seems quiet and lethargic or has a reduced appetite or diarrhoea you should call us for advice.

Why we recommend desexing...

Surgical desexing or neutering involves removing part of the reproductive system of dogs and cats so that they can't have puppies or kittens. In females it is known as a spay and in males it is referred to as castration.

Why do vets recommend desexing?

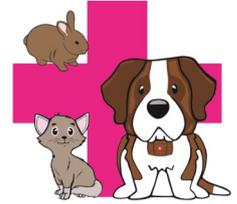
Desexing ultimately **prevents unwanted pregnancies** in female cats and dogs. It helps stop unwanted attention from males and reduces the wandering instinct.

There are also **medical reasons** for desexing. It greatly reduces the risk of cancers in both males and females and other life threatening conditions such as pyometra (see below).

With the large number of strays and abandoned animals euthanised every year we recommend you desex your pet. Maximum benefits are achieved if desexing is done at a young age.



**Congratulations to our April Puppy Preschool Graduates
Pip, Mable, Tilly & Argo**



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Patient of the Month



Herbie is such a cool cat! He was a stray kitten who was surrendered to us at St Bernard's Road Veterinary Clinic and because of his awesome personality he was put in the Cat Adoption Program.

Although he has always been a bright and happy kitty, he has had intermittent tummy problems and is a good example of how diet can make a huge difference when trying to settle down vomiting and diarrhoea. Initially he was vomiting frequently, probably because he suddenly had access to lots of high quality food, and he also had really soft faeces. Even though kittens should be fed on a kitten or growth diet, he was put onto Hills i/d diet and his vomiting and diarrhoea resolved. We also found that he would 'inhale' anything put in his food bowl, which would then trigger vomiting. By regulating the amount of food that he had access to we were also able to better manage his gastrointestinal disease. Transitioning him onto dry biscuits, rather than feeding wet food has also helped, as he can't eat the biscuits as quickly.



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