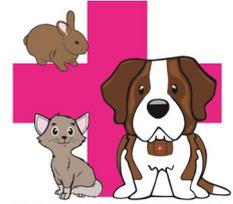


St Bernards Buzz



ST BERNARDS ROAD
Veterinary Clinic

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www.stbernardsvet.com.au

Happy Patients



During March we are focusing on creating a positive experience for your dog when you both visit the clinic. We would like to encourage you to make an appointment with one of our wonderful nursing team and come in for a "Happy Visit". The aim of these visits is to come in for lots of treats, hugs and attention, but not any of those nasty things that our patients often associate with vet visits (eg injections and tablets!)

We know that "Happy Visits" make such a difference for our worried patients, particularly when done on a regular basis. For all of our patients who come in for "Happy Visits" during March we will offer a \$5.00 credit on your account, up to a maximum of 4 visits.

If you have a suggestion about how we can help your pet have a "Happy Visit" please let us know - we would love to hear your thoughts and ideas.

For our fabulous feline patients we are working on helping you make their cat carrier a "Happy Place" to help reduce their stress when they visit us. There is an article this month with some great ideas about making vet visits less stressful for your cat.

With help from our Puppy School trainer Petra, we have some great environmental enrichment ideas to help you keep your pets mentally stimulated and happy. We will be posting them throughout the month of March on our Facebook page - let us know if you try any of our ideas at home.

Cat Carriers—a "Happy Place"

Cat Carriers are the equivalent of you wearing a seatbelt—essential from a safety point of view. The first step is to make your carrier a comfortable, secure place for your cat.

Keep the carrier open in the house. Leave the carrier out all the time, or at least for several days before the appointment. Leave a blanket or towel in the carrier, as well as toys and treats.

Regularly throw treats or feed meals in the carrier. Some treats that most cats will try, even in stressful settings, include smears of Marmite or Vegemite, small pieces of bacon, anchovies, tinned tuna or sardines, warm cooked liver or dried liver. Praise your cat for entering the carrier. Start coupling this sequence—carrier, tossed treat, cat in carrier, praise—with a word or phrase that he cat will learn means he is to go into the carrier (eg "travel time"). If your cat learns to like the carrier and to associate it with treats or meals, getting him to go in on cue is a very easy next step.

Chocolate—out of bounds at Easter!

Like us, dogs love chocolate and they are very good at finding it! Not surprisingly, Easter is one of the busiest times of the year for vets when it comes to chocolate toxicities.

If your dog eats your favourite Lindt bunny (the one you were saving for last), **here's what we will do:**

We will ask you *how much* and *what type* of chocolate your dog ingested. This helps us work out just how dangerous the ingestion might be. Cooking and dark chocolate are the most toxic, followed by milk and then white chocolate.

The toxicity is also proportional to the *size of your dog* and the *amount ingested*. We use a chocolate toxicity calculator to determine whether the dose is toxic. It is important to realise that **any amount of chocolate can cause a problem** so veterinary guidance is always recommended.



Patient of the Month

Lilly is one of our very special patients who has been visiting regularly for Fear Free visits.

Lilly is only a young dog, but unfortunately she had some negative experiences when she was a puppy (not at St Bernard's Road) and these have affected the way that she deals with other people and pets.

We have been working on improving her confidence during her weekly visits, and getting her used to the consulting room and being up on the consulting room table. She enjoys the treats she receives when she visits, and has particularly bonded to Bec.

It has been wonderful to witness her growing in her ability to deal with challenging circumstances, and to work with a family who are so committed to helping Lilly overcome some of her fears.



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