

ISLE VALLEY VETERINARY GROUP SMALL ANIMAL CLINICS

Alfie's Story

On the 9th April, we received a telephone call from the owner of Alfie, an 11 year old Jack Russell Terrier. He had been playing in the garden when he suddenly refused to put any weight on his right hind leg. Alfie's owner was very concerned and we arranged to see him immediately. Alfie was brought in to our Creech St Michael branch



wagging his tail, but holding his leg off the ground.

The vet examined him and explained to the owner that we needed to take an x-ray to see the extent of damage. His owners gave full consent to admit him, administer sedation and take the necessary x-rays, so without delay an x-ray was taken. This confirmed that he had severely broken two bones in his leg.

He was given some strong pain relief and antibiotic injections to help prevent infection and the vet applied a large support bandage to help stabilise the leg. When Alfie woke from his sedation, he still continued to wag his tail!

An hour later his owners came to discuss the injury and treatment with the vet. The vet explained the damage to his owners and explained the options available.

Alfie could be referred to an orthopaedic specialist for surgery and treatment or he could have his leg amputated. If he was referred he would hopefully have a working limb eventually, although this could not be guaranteed. However, it would be a long recovery process with further treatment; he would be confined to a cage for two months and would most probably need to wear a lamp shade

collar throughout. If his leg was amputated it would mean major surgery, cage rest for up to ten days and a recovery process of two weeks.

After a long discussion at home, Alfie's family decided the best thing for him would be to have his leg amputated, a decision we completely understood. Alfie is a very active dog and they felt

that he would hate to be confined to a cage for such a long time.

Alfie came into the surgery on Monday morning ready for his big operation. The vet proceeded to amputate his leg with no complications; the operation was a complete success.

Just hours after the operation, Alfie was wagging that tail again! He also gave us a few cheeky growls, something we got used to with Alfie! He went home later that day. His owners were given strict instructions on post-operative care. We saw him back at the surgery three days later to make sure he was continuing to make good progress, and he was still wagging that tail. He had slight bruising around his wound, something to be expected with major surgery, but overall was doing very well. He was now allowed out of his cage and into the garden with supervision. A week later his stitches were removed and everything was well.

Throughout the ordeal this amazing little dog kept his spirits high and has made a full recovery. He is still playing, undeterred by only having three limbs. The decision to amputate was definitely the right one for Alfie!

Summer is Coming



Hot Cars: please remember not to leave your dog in a hot car during summer.

Heat Stroke: remember to keep your Rabbit and Guinea Pigs hutches out of direct sunlight.

Flystrike: the danger increases during the summer months. Flies are attracted to the smell of a dirty hutch where they lay eggs which hatch into maggots. These maggots then feed on the flesh of the rabbit, and this can result in death or euthanasia. Please remember to clean the hutch daily to prevent flystrike.

Sun Burn: remember cats with a white nose and ear tips should have sun block. This will help prevent sun burn that can potentially turn cancerous.

Grass Seeds: it's that time of year when grass seeds start causing problems. These can get stuck in your dog's ears and feet. Please be cautious of this.

Kennel Cough

Kennel Cough is a highly infectious disease in dogs. When your dog has been exposed to the bacteria, it can take up to 7 days to start showing any symptoms. These symptoms can include:

- dry hacking cough
- retching
- runny nose
- sneezing

It is spread by close contact. Boarding kennels are an ideal environment for the disease to spread rapidly (hence its name). Any reputable kennel will insist on a kennel cough vaccination prior to a dog boarding.

Depending on severity, signs of kennel cough can last a few days to several weeks. Medication is required to help stop the cough.

Over the years there have been numerous outbreaks of kennel cough, which can be very upsetting and stressful for both you and your dog. Isle Valley Veterinary Group recommends annual vaccinations against kennel cough to help prevent your dog contracting this unpleasant disease.

Lungworm - be aware!

Lungworm is a parasite which infects dogs in the UK and Ireland. As infection with the parasite can prove fatal, dog owners are urged to be aware of the signs of infection and understand what measures can be taken to prevent and treat this parasite!

Dogs become infected through eating slugs and snails which may be carrying the larvae of the parasite. While some dogs eat slugs and snails on purpose, the hidden danger arises from small slugs and snails which can be accidentally swallowed when dogs are drinking from outdoor water bowls, playing with toys left out in the garden or rummaging through undergrowth. Symptoms can include:

- Breathing problems or coughing, tiring more easily
- Poor blood clotting leading to excessive bleeding from minor wounds, nose bleeds, bleeding into the eye, and anaemia (paleness around the eyes and gums)
- Behavioural changes, seizures (fits), spinal pain, weight loss, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhoea

Isle Valley Veterinary Group recommends the use of **Advocate Spot On** or **Milbemax Tablets** to help prevent your dog getting lungworm.

We also offer a worming service. Wormers are sent direct to your door every 3 months to help you remember to worm your pet regularly. Please contact the surgery for more details.

Information & Appointments

For more information and advice about any of the issues raised in the newsletter or if you wish to make an appointment please do contact one of our clinics on the numbers below and we would be pleased to help.

Please phone your local surgery for more information or look at our website
www.islevalleyvets.co.uk

Tetts Farm, West Street, **Hinton St George**, TA17 8SB **Tel: 01460 73398**
St Michael Road, **Creech St Michael**, TA3 5DP **Tel: 01823 444234**
Equine Clinic: Eleighwater, Chard, TA20 3AF **Tel: 01460 66099**