

# HEALTHY DOG, HEALTHY YOU!

National Veterinary Nursing Week 2009, gave staff at the Practice the perfect opportunity to educate owners on the importance of exercise - for themselves and their dog!

A fun day was held at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park for families and their dogs. Healthy Dog, Healthy You! aimed to show dog owners the many exciting ways they can exercise with their pet, improving both their dog's and their own fitness, while also having fun. With a range of activities to find out about or try, from Agility and Nordic walking to Obedience and Cani-X, the event had something to suit everyone. Veterinary nurses were also on hand to offer advice about canine diet and exercise.



*Dixie & Juliet - jumping on top of the 'Hickstead Bank'*

The highlight of the event was an assault course around the country park. Dogs and owners had to complete a series of tasks including hula hooping (for humans!), jumps, tunnels and even a game of hide-and-seek. The aim of the course was to show owners how to turn a dog-walk into an exciting training session using natural obstacles and a bit of imagination! Other activities, including a nature trail and a game of 'find the flea', were aimed at showing how dog walking can be turned into a fun activity all members of the family can enjoy.

Feedback from the event was really positive, and many dog-owning families left not only a little rain-soaked, but also with lots of ideas to keep themselves, their family and their dog fit and healthy. Improving the fitness of dogs is something the nurses at Cromwell Vets are really passionate about. Julie Eastham, Nursing Manager, said: "Ensuring your pet dog is fit and not over-weight is a really positive step

all owners can take to help keep their dog healthy".

Lack of exercise and inappropriate feeding soon leads to weight gain, which brings on many health problems.

Conditions such as osteoarthritis and diabetes mellitus are associated with obesity, so it is vital dogs get the exercise and diet they need.

Here at the surgery, the nurses run weight clinics, so owners, who are worried about their dog's weight, can get free advice about diet changes and appropriate exercise regimes. If owners left Healthy Dog, Healthy You! with just a few ideas on how they can make

exercise more fun for themselves and their dog, then I think it was a success, and well worth all the hard work the team put in to organising it."



*Daisy & Rob  
Damp but having fun*

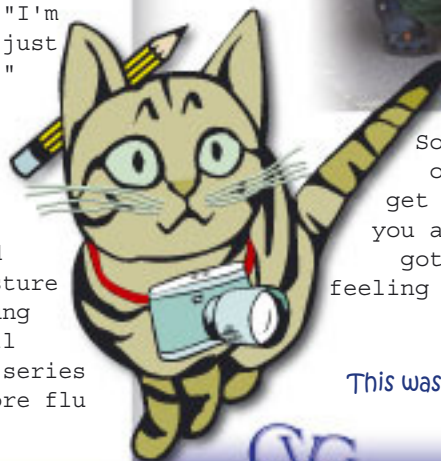
## Carrie Cat...reporter extraordinaire!

back with the latest happenings in the animal world. It's been quiet over the summer months, the usual flea infestations etc. to report but recently I was called to go and check out the victim of a rather nasty attack of a different kind. Warnings were that it was not a pretty sight, but I was prepared. On

arrival at the victim's home, an anxious

owner showed me into a darkened room, where Charlie was resting. A very miserable cat drooling, with sore runny eyes, a high fever and a really snotty nose, told me not to come too close. The vet had diagnosed Cat Flu, and I was at risk. Fortunately, my vaccinations were up to date, but I still kept my distance. "I'm usually a real lively cat" he said "but I feel just dreadful. Can't eat, sleep or breathe properly."

Charlie spent lots of time hanging out with his feline friends. "My buddies are cool cats. I was just having too much fun to bother about vaccinations, but I was unaware of the dangers of sharing food bowls or of the close nose to nose contact. The vet said this virus is passed from cat to cat via saliva and by drops of moisture through sneezing. Come to think of it, that young cat from No.28 had a disgusting, snotty nose all summer", at which point, Charlie sadly began a series of sneezes, coughs & splutters releasing yet more flu virus into the air.



*Vet Nurse Leanne Wright with the assault course winner Gunner & his owner Dom, who won a night's stay in a dog friendly B&B on the Norfolk coast.*

So a warning to all you young, old and middle-aged felines - get vaccinated, but if you think you are sneezing more than usual, got a runny nose, sore eyes and feeling poorly, it could be Cat Flu.

So get down to your vet for a check-up immediately.

This was Carrie Cat reporting and signing off from Cromwell Vets News Channel

# Healthy Guinea Pigs... Happy Pets!



These amazing little creatures originate from South America and are one of the oldest domestic animals dating back to 1000 - 500 BC. Living in groups in the wild, a pregnancy lasts 59 - 72 days and when born, they can run around almost immediately as they are fully developed.

- **Look at this** Guinea Pigs teeth change from baby to adult before they are born.
- They eat normal food from day one.
- Their eyes are open at birth.
- They have good vision, hearing & sense of smell.
- The average lifespan is 4-8 years.

Guinea pigs make delightful pets and become very responsive to your attentions.

Like all pets, they also need regular check-ups at the vet. Teeth & nails grow continuously and may

require clipping. Mites and fungal infections are sometimes a problem, so your vet can examine their coat & skin too.

**Guinea Pigs Home** Provide a good-sized hutch, plenty of bedding and an outside run with tunnels and boxes - they are flight animals and like to hide! Give protection from the sun as they can suffer from heatstroke. Ensure they are warm, dry & snug during winter.

**A varied diet is essential** Grass, dandelions, carrots, cabbage, tomatoes, roots, spinach, apple & pear. A good quality dried pellet food helps keep teeth in shape & prevent selective eating. Give a regular supply of hay & clean fresh water.

**Warnings!** Always carefully identify any plants before feeding them to your pet, as not all are suitable. They may cause illness and sadly in some cases can be fatal. If in doubt...don't let them eat it! Place outside runs away from potentially hazardous plants.

**Do not feed grass clippings to your pet** - they ferment in the stomach and can cause bloat, an often-fatal condition.

**For further advice, phone the surgery.**

## Is your Pet Diabetic?

Our pets' bodies and organs function in a very similar way to our own. Each part has its job to perform in helping to keep us fit and healthy. Sometimes though there is a hiccup in the system and unless dealt with, it can cause problems.

Like humans, animals can also suffer from the condition of diabetes. This is when the body has difficulty in regulating blood sugar levels. A hormone called insulin is in charge of moving sugar into the body cells and is produced in the pancreas.

**Causes** If the pancreas becomes damaged possibly from an infection, this can affect the production of insulin. Overweight pets may also develop diabetes, as the pancreas has to work overtime to produce insulin. With an incorrect production of insulin, this then leads to a high level of sugar building up in the bloodstream.

### Signs to watch out for in your dog or cat

- ❖ Increase in water drinking
- ❖ Urinating frequently
- ❖ Lethargy
- ❖ Weight loss, despite increased appetite

**Should you notice any of the above in your pet, then bring them in for a check-up as soon as possible.**

**Treatment** Daily treatment is available for diabetes, and a change of diet may also be necessary. Your pet will need to visit us now and again so we can check their sugar and insulin levels. Diabetes in your pet is a manageable condition and we are here with all the help that you may require. Once regular treatment is in place, your pet can lead quite a normal life again.



**We may like fireworks but our pets don't!**  
Help & advice is available for nervous pets, so please call us at the surgery.

**Remember Remember 5th November**

**CGG**  
Cromwell Veterinary Group

**SURGERY HOURS**  
All consultations by appointment

New Years Eve or any other celebratory events.

## CROMWELL NEWS

- ❖ We are pleased to announce that there has been somewhat of a baby boom here at the Cromwell Vet Group in the last 6 months. Veterinary Nurse (VN) Rheanon Sicheri gave birth to daughter Sofia, VN Sarah Bonner gave birth to son Callum, and VN Bev Lee gave birth to baby Harry. Two of our Vets have also been part of the baby boom: Amanda Jakins gave birth to daughter Francesca, and Emma Rous gave birth to her third son Arthur. All mums and their babies are doing very well.
- ❖ Three of our Veterinary Nurses, Michelle, Sam and Katie 'tied the knot' this summer. We wish Mrs Williams, Mrs Bradshaw and Mrs Thompson and their husbands all the best for the future.
- ❖ Leanne Wright has just received the fantastic news that she has passed her final exams and is now a Registered Veterinary Nurse. Well done Leanne!

**HUNTINGDON**  
01480 52601

**ST NEOTS**  
01480 216612

**ST IVES**  
01480 300389

**RAMSEY**  
01487 814789

**CAMBOURNE**  
01954 715161

**Mon to Fri 8am - 8.30pm**  
**Sat 8am - 1pm**

**Mon to Fri 9am - 6pm**  
**Tues LATE NIGHT 8.30pm**  
**Sat 9am - 12.30pm**

**Mon to Fri 9am - 6pm**  
**Mon LATE NIGHT 8.30pm**  
**Sat 9am - 12.30pm**

**Mon to Fri 9am - 6pm**  
**Sat 9am - 12.30pm**

**Mon to Fri 9am - 6pm**  
**Sat 9am - 12.30pm**

**EMERGENCY PHONE 01480 52222**

**www.cromwellvets.co.uk**