

## Rex and the Onions

Rex is a 3 year old miniature fox terrier. He is very fussy with food and so his owners had been cooking food for him. He came into the clinic when he had stopped eating and wasn't his usual happy self.

Rex had blood taken from a vein in his neck and we were able to run it on our in house analysers. This gave us information about his liver, kidneys and pancreas, the electrolytes in his blood and his red and white blood cells. Luckily most of these values were normal however his blood smear had some interesting abnormalities on it. The edges of his red blood cells had damage as you can see in the picture. This damage is commonly see with onion toxicity and causes the red blood cells to become fragile and break.

After further discussion with Rex' owner we discovered that French onion soup mix was an ingredient in the mince and vegie mix he was having for tea every night. In most cases onion toxicity occurs in this manner, with small bits of onion over a period of time which allows the toxins to build up. In most cases owners don't know that onion can be an issue even in small amounts.

In Rex's case this was caught earlier and with supportive care he has made a full recovery and we are working on getting him to eat a well balanced diet.

## Healthy Mouth, Healthy Pet



If you want your pet to live a healthy life they need to have a healthy mouth, there is just no way around this. As our pets are living longer, we are finding that dental disease has become an issue that is at the forefront of keeping them healthy well into their senior years.

We know from years of research and gathering of evidence that dental disease can cause other more serious diseases involving the heart, liver and kidneys. These are life threatening diseases.

Plaque and tartar build up on the teeth, leading to infection of the gums (called gingivitis). Bacteria can then travel into the blood stream from the mouth and impact other internal organs as far away as the kidneys.

Gum infections can also spread around the roots of the teeth and extend into the jaw. This can lead to osteomyelitis which can, in time, result in fractured bones of the jaw. Can you imagine the pain involved?

We are trained to detect gum disease, plaque and tartar on teeth, so we can advise you when you need to get your pets teeth cleaned. We also have lots of techniques and products to help prevent dental disease.

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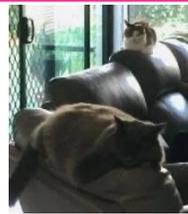


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## Kimmy Update



We regularly get asked how Kimmy is going so we thought it was time for an update. The last 9 months have been very stressful but Kimmy is currently doing well and whilst its very unlikely that she will completely recover from her episode of acute kidney failure she is continually showing improvement as monitored with regular blood and urine tests.

Throughout this time it has been a team effort to make sure she received regular weight checks as well as daily medications and close monitoring of how much she is eating and drinking. This included taking turns at looking after her on the weekend as well. We are unsure whether she got better at taking her medications or we got better at giving them! She also had to go onto a prescription diet, although not the one that we would have wanted her on as she just completely refused to eat that- yes that happens to us too! This means that we had to find a way to get nutrients into her in a way that were ok for her kidneys and that she agreed to eat!

Since the renovations she has been enjoying staying at Dr. Penny's house and you may have seen some updates of how she is going there on our facebook page. She has taken a real liking to her current accommodation.

We are very thankful that she is doing so well and we really appreciate your well wishes and regular enquiries.

## Top Tips: Seniors



Have you ever wondered when your pet will become a senior? You may have noticed their muzzle is a bit more grey, that they aren't as active as they once were or they are having trouble jumping up on things. In general we consider cats and small breed dogs to be senior at around 8 years of age and large breed dogs at around 6 years of age. If your pet fits into this age group there are things you can do to make their life a little bit easier!

- Increased vet visits. Once our pets become seniors they age approximately 3-4 years for every calendar year. This means that rather than just an annual health check, we recommend checks at least every 6 months so that we can find any issues earlier and have a better chance of picking up any problems. We can also use urine and blood tests to evaluate how they are going internally.
- Diet change. Seniors have special dietary needs such as decreased density (so they don't put on too much weight), increased fatty acids to help with brain health and increased minerals to help with joints and bones.
- Exercise: Exercise is still really important for seniors. Getting out and about is just as important for their mental health as keeping their muscles strong. Making sure you use a joint supplement like 4cyte to help keep joints comfortable and adjusting your exercise regime to include more low impact options to help to make this possible.
- Elevated food bowls. There is some evidence that putting your senior pets food bowl up on something to make it just a little bit higher can help make them more comfortable. Many elderly pets have difficulty sitting and this can make eating and drinking from low bowls more difficult. What height you ask? Well that depends on the size of your pet but if you watch them eating or drinking, the bowl should be at a height just below the shoulders to allow for normal neck curvature.
- Dental care: Our pets teeth become more of a problem as they get older so it's even more important to focus on dental hygiene. This includes regular dental checks, cleans and using products at home to keep the teeth clean.

## Clinic News!

Our new cat consult room is up and running.

This means that if you bring your cat into the clinic there is a separate area for you to wait and a consult room used only for cats. This is designed to make vet visits with cats less stressful for both the cats and our dog patients.

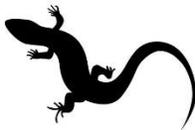
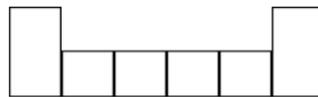
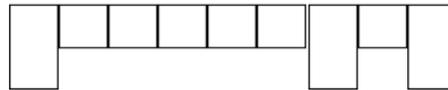
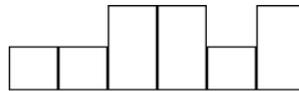
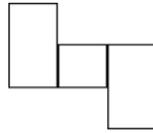


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# Puzzles!

Can you work out which animal's name goes with each shape?



## *Joke of the Month*

What do you call a  
lazy baby  
kangaroo???

A pouch potato!!!