



Oswald's Health Plan

Our own Practice Membership Health Plan is designed to help pet owners spread the cost of routine treatment and also provides the support to help you keep your pet fit and healthy.

The membership plan means that the cost of maintaining good general health of your dog, cat or rabbit is distributed throughout the year by making monthly Direct Debit payments; **it's simple, affordable and gives you peace of mind.**

THE PLAN PROVIDES:

FREE Annual Booster Vaccinations

FREE Wormers

(sufficient for 12 months supply)

FREE Flea control

(sufficient for 12 months supply)

20% off the normal costs of other services

10% off Pet food

10% off Neutering

10% off Dental procedures

10% off Sundries

like leads and toys

Optional extended payment scheme for treatment costing over £200 (conditions apply)

FREE Full clinical examination twice yearly

Accidental Injury Cover*

(conditions apply)

No limit on number of pets or their age

Please see our leaflets at reception or call for further information:

01902 731127



FOUR OF OUR OSWALD'S HEALTH PLAN MEMBERS
Olive (Blenheim) • Judy (black tan) • Kiki (ruby) • Edie (tri)

Opening Times

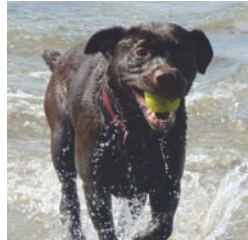
Monday - Friday **8.30am - 6.30pm**

Saturday **9.30am - 3.00pm**

Sunday **Closed**

24 hour emergency cover

Arthritis alert – is your pet affected?



As the weather cools down, signs of arthritis can become more noticeable in many pets. Arthritis is a painful and debilitating condition caused by inflammation and damage in the joints. It is more common in older pets, affects all species and breeds and can strike at any age.

The joints most susceptible to arthritis are those permitting limb movements – called synovial joints. The ends of the bones which meet at these joints are covered by smooth articular cartilage and the joints are lubricated by synovial fluid. Arthritis develops when the smooth cartilage that lines the joints becomes roughened and cracked. This can be due to general ageing but poor joint conformation, like hip dysplasia, will exacerbate issues and cause problems earlier in life.

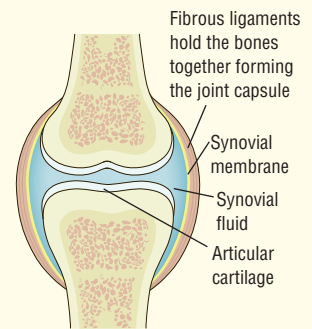
Signs of arthritis can be difficult to pick up on at first, particularly because our pets are great at hiding chronic pain and often changes such as resting or sleeping more, slowing down on walks or general grumpiness can be easily put down to 'old age'. Cats especially are absolute masters of disguise when it comes to arthritis and despite the fact that a huge 80% will suffer once they are older than twelve years, very few are actually on any treatment.



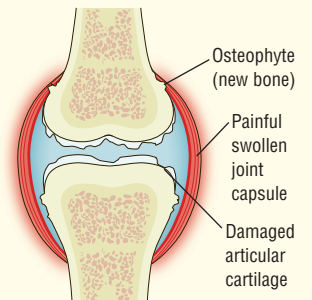
Arthritis is usually diagnosed with a combination of a clinical examination (looking for stiffness, pain and roughness in the joints), plus a history of changes compatible with the disease. X-rays can be helpful, confirming the degree of bone changes and allow assessment of the joints affected.

There are many different treatments for arthritis and as every patient and their joints are different, there is no set protocol to follow. Pain relieving medications are the mainstay for most pets and these are safe, effective and available in various formulations. Supplements can also be very helpful, as can physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and acupuncture. It is also vital to keep arthritic pets slim and fit, so their joints don't have too much weight to carry. If you think your dog or cat may be showing signs of arthritis, please come and see us for a check-up today!

Joint Anatomy



Healthy synovial joint with smooth articular cartilage



Arthritic synovial joint with damaged articular cartilage

Do you struggle to get to the vets?

Do you struggle to get to the vets?

Did you know we can collect your pet in our van?

We can also deliver repeat prescriptions, food, flea and worm treatment. If your pet needs a veterinary consult and you are unable to get to the surgery, we can collect and return your pet in our ambulance. We also offer nurse consultations such as flea and worm applications or clip nails etc in the comfort of your own home reducing stress to your pet.

For prices and availability please contact Laura on 01902 73 11 27.



Maya enjoying the sunshine with Laura and checking out our new look van. Think it gets her approval!



Feeling ticked off?

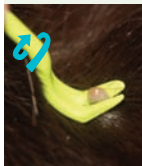
Autumn is the prime time of year for ticks as they thrive when the weather is still mild, but moist. They are particularly prevalent in areas with livestock, especially sheep, and where the undergrowth is thick, waiting to hop on to passing pets as they brush by.

Ticks will attach themselves to your pet and feed on their blood for several days. Although pets are rarely bothered by them, they can leave skin irritations behind and have the potential to pass on some nasty infections. Ticks can spread: **Lyme Disease**, an inflammatory infection which causes lameness and fever, **Babesiosis**, which can lead to life threatening anaemia and **Ehrlichiosis** which also attacks red blood cells and can be fatal. The latter two conditions are particularly prevalent abroad, so if you take your dog abroad on holiday, it is essential to protect them against ticks.

Pets should be monitored daily for ticks and if any ticks are found, these should be promptly removed with a specially designed tick remover. Treatments and preventions for ticks are available as spot-ons, tablets and collars and are generally very effective.



Grooming reveals an *Ixodes* tick. These are widespread across the UK and Ireland and may be infected with Lyme disease.



Ticks can be carefully removed using a tick hook.



Autumn Awareness!

Autumn is a truly beautiful time of year – the trees are turning to glorious golds and the weather is crisp. However, here are some things we need to be aware of to ensure our pets stay happy and healthy as the seasons change.

Parasite alert! Firstly, keep up your **flea** protection! Turning on the central heating means our homes become their ideal environment when it is too cold for them outside. Continue to treat your pets and come and talk to us about how to protect your home as well. **Harvest mites** and **ticks** (see above left) also thrive at this time of year and again we are happy to advise you on how to prevent problems.

Toxic alert! Cars often have anti-freeze added to their engines around now which means bottles are often left out and spillages can occur. Unfortunately, cats find it very tasty despite the fact it is highly toxic and often fatal. Make sure you keep anti-freeze well out of reach, clean up drips and if you think they might have eaten some, bring them to us immediately.

Outdoor pets like rabbits or guinea pigs are usually able to cope fine as winter approaches but we can help by ensuring their cages are free from drafts and that they have enough bedding to create a cosy bed. However, they still should have as much freedom as possible, so do keep allowing them outdoor access in a secure run, they are active creatures and will be miserable cooped up for months.

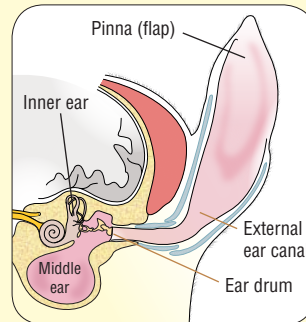
Finally, watch out for **conkers!** For some dogs they can seem like fun play things or tasty snacks! However, they are poisonous, causing nasty tummy upsets, and can potentially lead to dangerous blockages in the intestines.



A word in your ear!

Ear disease is common in our pets and being able to quickly recognise the signs is very important.

Anatomically, our pets' ears are very similar to ours, with a canal extending from the ear flap into the skull with a drum at the base protecting the middle ear. The main difference is that their ears are positioned towards the top of their heads, rather than the sides, and the ear canals are longer. Sound travels down the ear canal and vibrates the ear drum, stimulating tiny bones in the middle ear, which in turn transmits sounds onto the inner ear and brain.



A dog's ear in cross section. Most ear problems occur in the external ear canal

The vast majority of ear problems affect only the external ear canal but repeated infections and some growths will cause middle ear disease. Middle ear disease (which is more common in cats) can be a challenge to diagnose, and treatment is difficult owing to the depth of the middle ear.

Signs of ear problems include: head shaking and scratching or rubbing at their ears. Discharge is common and can be black and waxy or creamy or pus-like and is often very smelly. You might also notice inflammation and reddening.

Ear infections can be triggered by objects getting into the canal (grass seeds are a common culprit), skin allergies, excessive wetness after swimming (but not for all pets, so if your dog enjoys a dip, you don't necessarily need to stop them!), bacterial infections or ear mite infestations (seen commonly in cats). Sometimes we might recommend sedating your pet so we can fully examine their ears, and run tests such as swabs, bloods or X-rays.

Treatment of ear problems usually involves topical liquids but these can be a challenge in some pets! If you think you might struggle, please ask us about other options. Some drops only require once daily, or even once weekly application, which we can always do for you, and occasionally we will prescribe tablets.

To prevent or reduce ear problems it is important to promptly identify the cause and start treatment as soon as possible to avoid longer term problems. In addition, regular cleaning will help affected pets – once or twice a week is enough and always use a veterinary standard ear cleaner. Ask us and we can show you what to use and how to do it effectively.



Otitis externa in a cat with ear mites with a typical crusty brown discharge.



Photo of a grass awn lodged at the base of the external ear canal. Pets with trapped grass awns will usually present with severe head shaking.



Spilt antifreeze is sweet but also **deadly** to pets

