

Frequently asked questions



How frequently should I give flea/ worm products to my cat and dog? As a general rule, we advise treating kittens and puppies for fleas and worms every month until they are 6 months of age. After this age, most cats and dogs are treated for worms every 3 months. We offer a variety of flea products, some of which are given monthly whilst some last for 3 months. Advice is tailored to the age and lifestyle of each pet, and whether tick prevention is required. Ticks can carry diseases so if an animal spends time in areas where ticks are present it is important that we use a preventative tick treatment. We also need to consider the type of product used, for example some pets are difficult to give tablets to so we may use a spot-on, and some dogs are keen swimmers so we would use a tablet instead.

I've heard the vet mention anal glands- what are they? The 'anal glands', officially called 'anal sacs' are rounded structures that sit beneath the skin close to the anus in cats and dogs. They produce a smelly material that empties via narrow openings onto the animal's stool as it is passed. This allows scent communication to other animals. In some animals, this liquid can build up in the anal sac, which can feel uncomfortable for the pet and can cause them to scoot their bottom or lick this area. Reasons for this build up include passing soft stools that haven't emptied the anal sacs on their way past, or could be due to their individual anatomy and the position of their anal sacs. If a pet is uncomfortable due to full anal sacs, a vet or veterinary nurse is able to gently empty them. We assess the liquid and the anal sacs for any abnormalities such as infection or inflammation. Some pets are prone to anal sac issues and require regular trips to visit us to empty them, but for most animals the anal sacs are emptied naturally when they go to the toilet.

I'm thinking of getting a new pet. What do I need to consider? Getting a new pet is an exciting time, with lots to think about. Your lifestyle, home, future plans, time constraints and financial situation are all important considerations. What kind of pet to choose, and even which breed, is a very individual choice, but we are always available to offer advice on this. Our Registered Veterinary Nurses offer 'pre-ownership appointments' to discuss your situation and how appropriate different pets may be. They ask that you initially complete a questionnaire so they can tailor their suggestions to your circumstances. This can then be discussed over the phone, to comply with current COVID advice.

My dog is scared of fireworks, what can I do? It surprises many people that now is a good time of year to think about fear of fireworks in dogs, and reducing what we would call 'noise phobia'. One way that this can be done at home is by gradually desensitising the dog to certain noises. The Dogs Trust website offers free access to the 'Sounds Scary' program (<https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/dog-behaviour-health/sound-therapy-for-pets>) which is a good place to start. If you would like to talk to one of our nurses about what else you can do to reduce noise phobia in your pet, call your local surgery.