

# Gilbert St Gossip

## Patient of the Month



### FREE "Happy Visits"!

During March we are focusing on pet behaviour. We would like to create a positive experience for both you and your dog when you visit the vet. FREE "Happy Visits" can be arranged during the afternoon with one of our trained vet nurses.

We know that these visits make a big difference to our worried patients, particularly when done on a regular basis. For all our patients who come in for a "Happy Visit" we will offer a \$5.00 credit on your account, up to a maximum of 4 visits.

We aim during these visits to offer lots of treats, hugs and attention. No injections or tablets will be done at this time.

Please Call RivaPetz Pet Care on 85821344 to book your "Happy Visit" with Bec or Paige.

### When good behaviour goes bad!

Has your pet always been well behaved but all of a sudden things have changed?

Has toilet training gone out the window?

Is your dog suddenly digging up the garden or barking non stop?

Is your cat clawing at your favourite piece of furniture?

**Behavioural problems in our pets are very common and they can begin at any point during your pet's life.**

This is where a medical examination with us is absolutely essential. For example, if your pet is suddenly urinating in the house, we need to rule out medical problems such as a urinary tract infection or urinary incontinence.

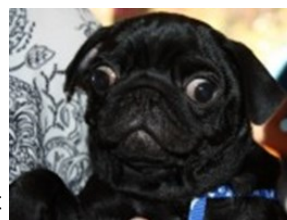
Perhaps your dog has started growling at you when he is picked up - have you thought that your dog might be in pain due to the onset of arthritis?

If your pet's behaviour has gone to the dogs you should arrange an appointment with us as soon as possible so we can get to the bottom of the problem. If we are able to rule out any medical problems we have plenty of tools up our sleeve to help treat and manage behavioural issues.

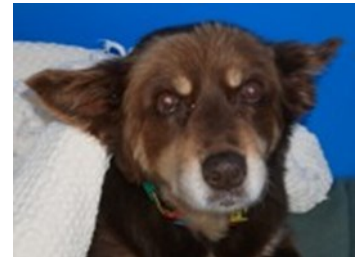
*If you want to improve your pet's behaviour, start by giving us a call.*

### Total Wellness Plan!

Murphy visited us at RivaPetz as a 12 week old puppy in September 2015. Since then he has been part of the RivaPetz family. His owner has always looked after him extremely well and taken advice on all his health care and prevention. Murphy has had a few extra visits over the last year and a half. When his owner heard about the great savings and FREE Primary Health visits offered to all patients on a Total Wellness Plan she was quick to sign up both her four legged canine kids.



When Murphy came in for his Proheart Injection last week Paige gave him a little check and was happy to give him his yearly heartworm injection. We also noticed he had gained some extra weight, so his family will be watching what he eats from now on. We look forward to seeing Murphy again soon.



Jackie is a really sweet older Kelpie. She has had her fair share of health challenges recently! A month ago she was out camping and found some old bones to eat, and needed an enema under anaesthetic to remove the sharp fragments.

Four weeks later she was suddenly ill, with a lot of discharge coming from her vulva.

She came in to see Doctor Jenni, and was admitted quickly for treatment.

Jackie had a pyometra, an infection of the uterus, which is common in girl dogs that have not been desexed. It is a condition that can make a dog really ill, and can even be fatal.

Treatment consists of an ovariohysterectomy, which is the surgery performed for a routine bitch desexing. But in the case of a pyometra it is no longer routine, and is a much riskier procedure.

Fortunately Jackie coped really well with the anaesthetic and surgery, and the following day had recovered well enough to go home, even wagging her tail as she walked out!

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## Common Behaviour Questions!

Here are a few of the behavioural issues we talk about with our clients on a daily basis.



### *Dog Behaviour*

**Barking:** It's important to understand that barking is a normal way that dogs communicate with others. Dogs might bark to get attention, during play, hunting, territorial defence, and in fearful and anxious situations. We can help you identify the reason your dog is barking and provide advice about how to control it.

**Aggression:** Many clients ask how to control aggressive behaviour in their dog. Remember that aggression is a normal behaviour expressed by dogs in a variety of situations. All questions about aggressive behaviour need to be dealt with professionally by us so that a full work-up can be performed and treatment plan formulated.



**Destructive behaviour:** Dogs do not destroy things vindictively and there are many other reasons your dog may be destructive including boredom, inadequate exercise, investigation, anxiety, fear or phobias. We'll try to determine the cause of your dog's destructive behaviour and what to do about it.

### *Cat Behaviour*

**Scratching:** Scratching is normal cat behaviour that is used to communicate or mark territory. It's something they must do and it can be easier to direct their scratching towards an acceptable surface, especially in the early stages, rather than trying to stop the damage later. Ask us for tips.

**Yowling:** Owners can find that this is a common problem, particularly early in the morning. This might occur because your cat is hungry, in pain, seeking attention, demanding food or defending his territory.

**Spraying:** This problem is frequently reported to us by cat owners. You can read more about this issue in the article below.

*If you have a question about your pet's behaviour, we are the best people to ask.*

## Urine Spraying in Cats!

If you've ever seen a cat spraying you may have been intrigued. It's a strange looking activity where the cat stands with a vertical tail (sometimes quivering at the tip) and delivers a squirt of urine against a vertical surface.

Urine spraying is considered a normal part of a cat's scent-marking. It is thought that the spray contains information about sex, age, hormonal state and general health and it may also deter other cats from coming into a cat's territory.

Both male and female cats will spray - cats that are not desexed may spray more often.

Cats will also spray when they are frustrated, upset or feel threatened by another cat. It's fascinating feline psychology and by marking with a squirt of urine and leaving a familiar smell, a cat feels a greater sense of security in his or her territory.

Most cats won't spray indoors as they feel sufficiently comfortable in their own territory. Sometimes this can, however go out the window and simple changes may rock the boat.

### *Why might a cat start spraying indoors? Triggers include:*

The arrival (or departure) of a new cat, dog or person in the family (or next door!)

Changes in the home area such as a new piece of furniture or new carpets

Disruptions such as building construction next door

An addition of a cat flap which can suddenly make the cat feel insecure indoors

Medical problems such as urinary tract infections or inflammation can also cause a cat to suddenly start spraying urine indoors. This highlights the importance of getting your cat checked with us as the treatment for a urinary tract infection will be very different to the management of behavioural spraying.

