

Gilbert St Gossip

What's off limits this Easter?



Easter can be a dangerous time for our pets and there's a few things you need to keep off limits. Take note of the following!

1. Chocolate

Chocolate contains theobromine, a derivative of caffeine that cannot be metabolised by our pets (particularly dogs).

Ingestion can cause an increased heart rate, vomiting, diarrhoea, agitation, tremors, seizures and even death. Cooking and dark chocolate are the most toxic but ingestion of ANY chocolate can cause problems.

2. Hot Cross Buns

Many people are not aware that sultanas and raisins (and grapes!) can contain a toxin that causes kidney damage in dogs. Keep these off the menu at all times!

3. Easter lilies

These beautiful fragrant flowers if ingested can cause kidney failure in cats. The stems, leaves, flowers and stamen are all dangerous, as is the water the flowers are stored in.

If your pet ingests any of the above over the Easter period call us immediately for advice. Make sure you have emergency numbers on hand if it is out of our normal opening hours.

Help? My dog just ate my Lindt bunny!

Like us, dogs love chocolate and they are very good at finding it! Not surprisingly, Easter is one of the busiest times of the year for vets when it comes to chocolate toxicities.

We will ask you *how much* and *what type* of chocolate your dog ingested. This helps us work out just how dangerous the ingestion might be. Cooking and dark chocolate are the most toxic, followed by milk and then white chocolate.

The toxicity is also proportional to the *size of your dog*, the *type* and the *amount ingested*. It is important to realise that **any amount of chocolate can cause a problem** so veterinary guidance is always recommended.

Please phone us immediately, even if you only think your dog has ingested chocolate. We will be able to give you the best advice.



Fear Free Veterinary Visits



One of the most exciting recent innovations in our profession is the introduction of the "Fear Free" philosophy when it comes to visiting the Vet. Dr Jenni recently attended an amazing session in Sydney hosted by Dr Marty Becker during which he shared his knowledge and experiences with making veterinary visits an amazing and happy experience.

There is no point in having a hospital full of expensive gadgets if we don't look after the emotional needs of our patients as they walk in the front door. We have some fabulous ideas and concepts that we are excited about implementing at RivaPetz Pet Care

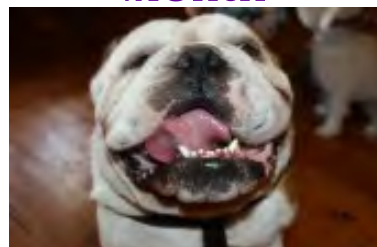
During March we are focusing on creating a positive experience for your dog when you both visit the clinic. We would like to encourage you to make an appointment with Bec or Paige and come in for a "Happy Visit". The aim of these visits is to come in for lots of treats, hugs and attention, but not any of those nasty things that our patients often associate with vet visits (eg injections and tablets!)

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

If you have a suggestion about how we can help your pet have a "Happy Visit" please let us know - we would love to hear your thoughts and ideas.

Call RivaPetz Pet Care on 8582 1344 to book a "Happy Visit" with Bec or Paige.

Patient of the Month



Jack is an adult British Bulldog, who was adopted into his current family as a young adult about 8 months ago. He has settled in really well, and his owners have done a great job of transitioning him into their family.

British Bulldogs can suffer quickly from heat stress. In brachycephalic (short nose) breeds panting is not very efficient, and the throat can become quite swollen, further reducing the amount of air movement.

This is what happened to Jack, on his usual walk, which he'd coped with many times before. He would always flopped on his tummy on the cool floor to recover. This time he just got too hot. He collapsed, started trembling, and had trouble breathing. He was given a cooling bath at home, but it didn't seem to help much. He was brought into the clinic straight away. In hospital Jack was placed on intravenous fluids, given an anti-inflammatory injection, and monitored very carefully. He was very stressed when he came in, but he settled down and his temperature returned to normal. Unfortunately his tummy did not feel normal, because he also developed severe diarrhoea and had a few vomits, both of which happen in heat stress cases. He needed another bath! He also had to go home with tablets to settle his tummy. Jack spent 2 days in hospital, and 3 days after the initial scare he was back to normal. Definitely a reminder for all of us... to exercise with care in the heat!!