



# NEWS



WINTER 2020

## Rutland House Veterinary Hospital

**Abbotsfield Road**  
St. Helens WA9 4HU  
**Tel: 01744 853520**

## Haydock Veterinary Surgery

142 Church Road, Haydock,  
St. Helens, Merseyside WA11 0LA  
**Tel: 01942 716640**

## The Village Veterinary Surgery

3 Bryn Road, Bryn,  
Wigan WN4 0AA  
**Tel: 01942 721562**

## Albany Veterinary Surgery

26 Whiston Lane, Huyton,  
Merseyside L36 1TY  
**Tel: 0151 489 4106**

## Windsor Veterinary Surgery

177 Grange Lane, Gateacre,  
Liverpool L25 5JY  
**Tel: 0151 428 5688**

## Freckleton Veterinary Clinic and Aquazone

89-91 Freckleton Road,  
St. Helens WA10 3AS  
**Tel: 01744 453429**

## Also in this issue:

- Winter worries!
- Caring for your guinea pig
- Winter toxic alert!



## Can you pinch an inch?!

With the onset of winter weather, it's very tempting for pets to snuggle up at home, go on less walks, and in the process gain some extra weight – which can lead to a variety of health issues.

### How can I tell if my pet is gaining excess weight?

In dogs a simple test is to run your hands over their chest – you should be able to easily feel (but not see) their ribs without

pressing too hard. They should also have a "waist", when viewed from both above and the side. By contrast, if you can pinch an inch or more, and if your pet's stomach sags down and bulges out, then a diet may be in order. It's also important to keep an eye on your cat's waistline as well!

**So – why is it a problem?** Unfortunately, excess weight places extra demands on many organs of the body. Carrying extra weight can lead to, or worsen, many conditions including: • arthritic joint problems, • heart disease (putting the heart under increased strain), • raised blood pressure, • diabetes (a particular risk factor in cats), • decreased stamina and heat intolerance – to name just a few!

### How can you try to ensure your pet remains the right weight?

Losing weight can be challenging for all of us, and our pets are no exception; so the most important thing is to try to ensure your pet is on the most suitable diet in the first place. Additionally, your pet's dietary requirements change throughout their lives and our knowledgeable team are happy to advise you on the most appropriate diet for your pet.



**We are here to help!** The good news is that if your pet has piled on some extra pounds, either during lockdown, or going into the winter months, please get in touch and we can advise you on their ideal weight. To achieve weight loss, pets need a combination of specially formulated calorie controlled diets and more exercise. There are many health benefits to keeping your pet a healthy weight, so if your pet has added a few pounds or seemed to have slowed down, please give us a call. We can help your pet slim down and tap into a huge range of health benefits associated with weight loss.



## Pesky parasite problems!

As the nights draw in and the weather turns colder, now is NOT the time to drop your guard against pesky pet parasites! Whilst it's definitely the case that ticks are mainly active in the warmer months, the same cannot be said for fleas which are really an all-year-round problem. Similarly – worms represent a persistent issue for our pets, and roundworms can also affect human health in rare cases.

**Fleas** love centrally heated homes and when the weather gets colder outside then moving inside becomes attractive for fleas too! Just one or two fleas in a warm home can easily turn into an infestation. In many cases new flea problems are caused by flea eggs from *old* infestations hatching out and re-infesting your pets!



**Worms** are a hidden problem in most pets and the main ones to consider are: roundworms (spaghetti like in appearance – pictured), tape worms (long, white and segmented) and lungworm (*Angiostrongylus Vasorum*) – where larvae can migrate to the lungs and cause significant lung tissue damage. Roundworm eggs – which may be deposited in parks and gardens, also pose a risk to humans if accidentally ingested.



**So what can be done?** We are here to help! Don't relax your guard this winter – have a chat to our lovely team about how to protect your pet from parasites on a year-round basis!

