



AUG
2026

The Better Pet Gazette

h i g h l a n d s v e t e r i n a r y h o s p i t a l . c o m . a u

the hidden link between

dental disease

and the overall health of your pet

Does your pet have bad breath? While many people think it's just a normal part of owning a dog or cat, persistent bad breath is often one of the first signs of dental disease.

Dental disease affects more than just your pet's mouth. As bacteria build up around the teeth and gums, they can enter the bloodstream and potentially impact vital organs, including the heart, kidneys and liver. Left untreated, dental disease can lead to chronic pain, tooth loss, difficulty eating, and serious health complications.

Pets are experts at hiding discomfort, which means dental problems can often go unnoticed until they become advanced. You may not realise your pet has sore teeth or infected gums because they can continue eating and behaving normally. Regular dental checks allow us to spot issues early, before they become painful or require more extensive treatment.

The good news is that dental disease is largely preventable with regular check-

ups and professional dental care when needed. Our team can assess your pet's oral health, identify any problems early, and recommend the best treatment to keep their teeth and gums healthy.

To help keep your furry family member smiling, we're offering **FREE dental checks throughout August**. It's a quick, no-obligation way to find out how your pet's teeth are doing and whether they would benefit from further treatment.

And there's even more reason to book this month! **Turn the page to discover our special August offer of \$100 OFF any dental procedure.**

A healthy mouth means a healthier pet—book your pet's free dental check with us today at (02) 4872 1144.

This is what low-stress handling looks like at HIGHands — making pets feel safe enough to fully melt into their stay with us (and occasionally smoosh their faces through the cage bars!).



The Better Pet Gazette is a monthly newsletter full of informative articles and tips on pet health as well as updates on what's happening at the practice. We hope you enjoy the read!

Disclaimer: The content contained in this publication is for information purposes only, and may not apply to your situation. Neither the Publisher nor Authors provide any warranty about the content or accuracy of content enclosed. Information provided is subjective.

need an appointment?
BOOK ONLINE



80%

OF DOGS BY AGE 3
HAVE DENTAL DISEASE



70%

OF CATS BY AGE 3
HAVE DENTAL DISEASE

august dental deal: \$100 OFF

Since oral health is so important to the health and wellbeing of your dog or cat, HIGHlands would like to offer **\$100 OFF** any dental procedure for the month of August! Just mention "August Dental Deal" when you book.

Give our team a call to schedule a **FREE** dental check with one of our vet nurses on 4872 1144 or book online [here](#) - select "Nurse- FREE Dental Check" for appointment type.



wet weather, itchy pets

what every owner should know...

With all the wet weather we've been experiencing, it's not just people feeling the effects—our pets are too.

Damp conditions create the perfect environment for skin problems to develop, and we've been seeing a significant increase in itchy, uncomfortable pets visiting the clinic.

Why Wet Weather Causes Skin Problems

When your pet's fur stays damp, they're walking through muddy yards, or they're constantly licking wet paws, bacteria and yeast have the ideal conditions to thrive. Moisture trapped against the skin can quickly lead to irritation and infection, particularly in pets with thick coats or skin folds.

At this time of year, we're commonly treating hot spots, ear infections, itchy paws, yeast infections, and wet dermatitis. While these conditions may start as mild irritation, they can worsen surprisingly quickly if left untreated.

Signs to Watch For

One of the earliest signs is excessive licking or chewing of the paws. You may also notice your pet shaking their head more than usual, scratching persistently, or developing patches of red, inflamed or smelly skin. Fur that remains damp long after coming inside can also increase the risk of infection.

Small Problems Can Become Big Ones

Skin conditions can escalate rapidly.

What begins as a small itchy patch early in the week can develop into a painful, infected wound within just a few days. Early treatment is not only more comfortable for your pet, but it can also prevent more extensive treatment later.

Keeping Your Pet Comfortable

After walks in the rain, take a few extra minutes to dry your pet's paws thoroughly, paying particular attention to the spaces between the toes. If your pet has skin folds or a long coat, make sure these areas are dried well too.

Keeping bedding clean and dry also helps reduce moisture and bacteria, and it's important not to ignore persistent licking or scratching.

If your pet seems itchier than usual this winter, there's often an underlying cause. The sooner we can identify the problem, the sooner we can help them get back to feeling comfortable.

We're Here to Help

If you've noticed your pet scratching more than usual, constantly licking their paws, shaking their head, or developing red, irritated skin, don't wait for the problem to worsen.

If you're concerned your pet may be suffering from a skin problem, book an appointment with our team on 4872 1144.



A big welcome to the world! It was an exciting day at HIGHlands when the beautiful Luna, a gorgeous Maremma Sheepdog, came to us needing an emergency caesarean section.

We're thrilled to report that Luna safely delivered FOUR very large puppies! Mum and babies are all doing wonderfully. Luna has settled into motherhood beautifully, has bonded with her puppies, and is feeding them like a natural.

While C-sections can be stressful, it's so rewarding to see a proud mum cuddled up with her healthy litter just a short time later. We can't wait to watch these little pups grow over the coming weeks.

upcoming f LIVE TALK



indoor cats

responsible and necessary...
or overprotective and limiting?

facebook.com/highlandsveterinaryhospital

f LIVE Highlands Veterinary Hospital
05 AUG • 2026 • 12:30PM

Veterinarian Dr Diederik Gelderman explores the question of whether keeping cats indoors is a responsible way to protect their health and safety, or a restriction that compromises their natural behaviours and wellbeing.



Join us on your lunch break:
05.08.26
@ 12:30pm

Join Dr Diederik for an engaging live talk as he explores one of the biggest debates in cat ownership: should cats be kept indoors, or do they need outdoor access to live a happy, fulfilled life? Dr Diederik will discuss the health, safety and behavioural impacts of both lifestyles, examining how indoor living can protect cats from traffic, disease and other hazards while considering whether it limits their natural instincts to hunt, climb and explore. He'll also share practical tips for creating an enriching indoor environment, helping you make the best decision for your feline companion.

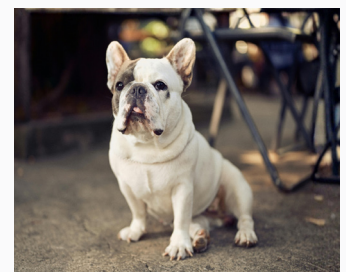
Please listen in on Wed, 5 August at 12.30pm on our Facebook page [here](#). If you are unable to attend this Facebook talk, you can find the recording in the Live section under the More menu for up to one month after the live - or click [here](#).

JULY FACEBOOK LIVE TALK RECAP

"Breeding Ethics: Should Some Breeds Still Exist?"

Dr Diederik explored the ethical issues surrounding selective breeding and the impact it can have on the health and welfare of some modern dog and cat breeds.

He discussed the inherited conditions associated with exaggerated physical features, the responsibilities of breeders and prospective pet owners, and why long-term health should take priority over appearance. The session also highlighted how informed breeding choices and greater public awareness can help improve the wellbeing of future generations of companion animals.



This livestream video is available until the 31 July, to watch [click here](#). To view any of the clinic's videos, just go [here](#).



Just like us, our dogs feel the effects of winter. Cold weather, shorter days and changes to their daily routine can impact their comfort and overall wellbeing.

We've put together a list of our top winter considerations to help keep your dog comfortable and thriving:

✓ Adjust Their Nutrition

It's important to review your dog's nutrition throughout the year, particularly during winter when activity levels may naturally decrease. To help maintain a healthy weight, consider adjusting food portions to match their activity level. Colder weather can trigger arthritis flares and joint discomfort in some dogs, making it a good time to consider a mobility or metabolic diet.

Regardless of the weather, always ensure your dog has access to fresh, clean water to maintain their hydration levels.

✓ Maintain Regular Exercise

Regular exercise remains important throughout winter, but ensure you take extra care to keep your dog comfortable and safe. Frosty footpaths and wet grass can become slippery, while also being uncomfortable for your dog's paws. Short-haired, small and senior dogs may also benefit from wearing a coat while walking.

Adjust the length and intensity of walks to suit these conditions and consider indoor enrichment activities **such as toys** and training sessions to keep your dog mentally stimulated and active.

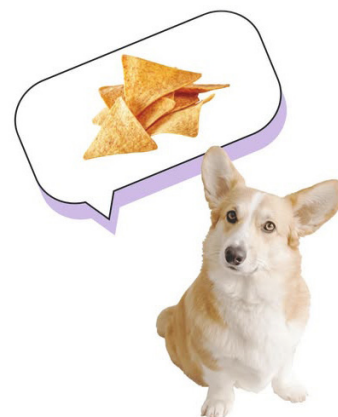
✓ Continue Your Dog's Parasite Prevention

Harmful parasites don't disappear in winter. Fleas and ticks often seek warmth indoors and can live in your home until the warm weather brings them back out. This is why we always recommend using a parasite prevention year-round. In-clinic, we can recommend the best course of prevention for your dog.

✓ Prepare Their Space for Colder Weather

Simple changes can make a big difference to your dog's comfort during the colder months. Raised beds can help reduce exposure to cold drafts, while extra bedding provides a warm, cosy place to rest. For older pets, non-slip mats or rugs can improve stability on hard floors and help stop any slipping.

If your pet is going to spend more time indoors, it's also a good opportunity to review your home's pet-proofing. Ensure household poisons, rodenticides, and other potentially harmful substances are put out of reach.



does your dog smell like cornchips?

No, your pet shouldn't smell like corn chips! That funny popcorn/corn chip smell from your dog's paws is usually caused by yeast and bacteria building up between the toes.

A mild smell can be normal... but strong odour, licking, redness, or brown staining can signal:

- Allergies
- Skin infections
- Moisture trapped in fur
- Yeast overgrowth

Winter weather can make it worse because paws stay damp for longer after rain and morning grass.

If your dog constantly licks their feet, it's worth getting checked — because most pets don't stop until they're REALLY uncomfortable. Give us a call at (02) 4872 1144.