

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



santa paws *approved holiday* **dog** **biscuits**

*Get ready to sprinkle some holiday magic into your pup's life this Christmas!
These homemade dog biscuits are not only delicious – they are healthy, too.*

INGREDIENTS

2½ cups whole wheat flour (or oat flour for sensitive tummies)
2 large eggs
½ cup canned pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)
2 tablespoons natural peanut butter (xylitol-free!)
Optional: ½ teaspoon cinnamon (check with your vet first)

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F). Line a baking tray with parchment paper.
In a large bowl, mix pumpkin, peanut butter, and eggs until smooth.
Gradually add flour, stirring until a stiff dough forms. Roll out the dough to about 6mm (about ¼ inch) thick. Use festive cookie cutters—bone, star, or tree shapes! Place biscuits on tray and bake for 20–25 minutes for chewy treats, or up to 35 minutes for crunchier ones. Let cool completely. Storage: Keep in an airtight container for up to a week or freeze for a longer shelf life.

ADD ICING

This icing is made with ingredients that are safe and tasty for dogs, and it dries to a smooth finish. Mix in 1 tablespoon plain Greek yogurt (unsweetened, xylitol-free). Add 1 tablespoon tapioca starch (helps it set and dry). Mix yogurt and tapioca starch in a small bowl until smooth. Decorate the biscuits and let them dry at room temperature before storage.



Wishing you joy, love,
wagging tails and a
Merry Christmas!

Thank you for your
wonderful support
throughout the year!

HOLIDAY HOURS

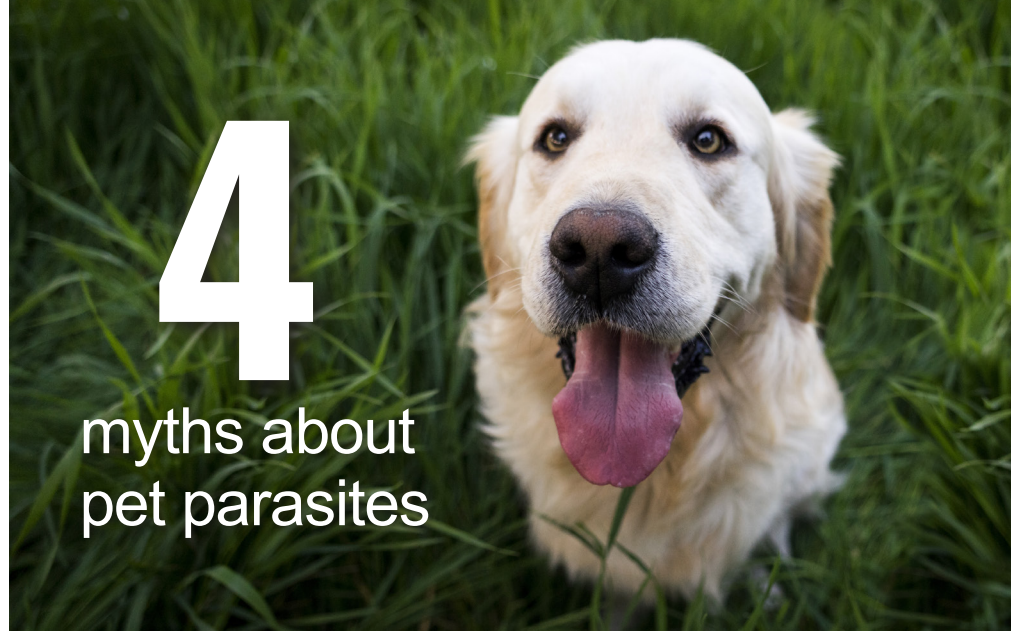
*HIGHLANDS will be open over the
Christmas/New Years break with the
exception of the public holidays:
25 & 26 Dec and 1 Jan. If you have
an emergency with your pet when
we're closed, please call the Animal
Referral Hospital in Wollongong
at 4283 8432.*



With holiday plans coming up, many dogs may be heading to boarding facilities, groomers, or doggy day care. Even fully vaccinated dogs can still catch kennel cough—though symptoms are usually milder. This highly contagious, airborne illness can spread quickly in places where dogs gather. Watch for these signs: dry, hacking cough; sneezing or nasal discharge; lethargy or reduced energy; loss of appetite; or mild fever.

If your dog shows any of these symptoms, call us at 4872 1144 and book an appointment. Early treatment helps your pup recover faster, prevents the spread to other dogs, and ensures vaccinations are up to date.

Let's work together to keep our furry friends healthy this festive season. Please share to help spread awareness—not the cough!



Parasite season is well and truly upon us! Fleas, ticks, and worms are more active at this time of year, and these pests can do more than just cause discomfort: they can pose serious risks to your dog's health.

Now is the perfect time to refresh your parasite prevention knowledge and make sure your dog gets the protection they need this season.

MYTH 1: Protection is only needed if my pet goes outside

While parasites are more common in warmer months, they are a risk all year round. Even indoor dogs aren't fully protected, as fleas and ticks can be carried inside on shoes, clothing, or other pets. That's why we recommend year-round prevention.

MYTH 2: Scratching is the only symptom my dog has

Itching is a common sign of parasites, but it's not the only one. Parasite infestations can also cause hair loss, skin irritation, changes in appetite, and even weight loss if left untreated. Spotting these signs early and keeping up with prevention is key to protecting your dog's long-term health. If you notice any of these symptoms in your dog, please come in for a check-up so we can identify the cause and provide the right treatment.

MYTH 3: Topical parasite protection is the only option

While spot-on treatments are a popular choice (especially for fussy dogs), they're not the only way to keep a dog safe from parasites. Chewable treats, tablets and protective collars are also great choices and give you flexibility to match your dog's needs as well as your lifestyle. The best choice depends on your dog, and we're here to help you decide what will work best for them.

MYTH 4: If I suspect parasites, I can just deal with it at home

Over-the-counter treatments might seem convenient, but they often don't fully solve the problem. In-clinic care allows us to properly diagnose the issue and create a treatment plan that clears parasites effectively while safeguarding your dog's overall health. If you're ever unsure, it's always best to book a visit so we can provide the right care for your pet.



why every pet is a hero at the vets

Every visit to the vet takes courage. Pets face unfamiliar sights, sounds, and smells, along with the stress they sense from their owners. Bright lights, slippery floors, and past experiences with vaccinations or exams can make the visit overwhelming. Being handled by strangers and separated from their loved ones adds to the challenge—especially for pets sensitive to touch or sound.

Yet, despite all this, they stay calm, endure discomfort, and trust us to care for them. In doing so, every pet shows true bravery, earning the title of a hero every time they visit.

P.S. Dogs can enjoy our sensory garden next door before their appointment—a soothing space designed to help them relax.

upcoming f LIVE TALK

silent nights

calming pets through holiday noise

@ facebook.com / highlandsveterinaryhospital

f LIVE Highlands Veterinary Hospital
03 · DEC · 2025 · 12:30PM

Veterinarian Dr Diederik Gelderman offers practical tips to help your pets stay calm and comfortable amid the fireworks, parties, and festive noise of the holiday season.

Join us on your lunch break:
03.12.25 @ 12:30pm

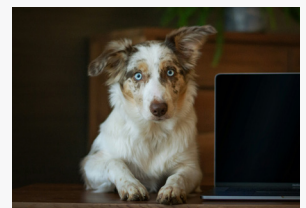
The holidays can be stressful for pets. Keep routines, use calming aids, and give reassurance—but what else can help them stay calm? Join Dr. Diederik’s upcoming live talk for practical tips on managing holiday stress, from walks and toys to anxiety wraps and soothing environments. With his advice, you can help your furry friends enjoy a peaceful, happy Christmas.

Please listen in on Wed, 3 Dec 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**.

NOVEMBER FACEBOOK LIVE TALK RECAP

“The Dangers of Dr Google: the Risks of Online Pet Advice”

While the internet offers a wealth of information, relying on “Dr Google” for pet health advice can be risky. In this talk, Dr Diederik explained how online sources may not be accurate, and symptoms can easily be misinterpreted, leading to unnecessary worry or incorrect treatment. Many websites lack veterinary expertise, and some may promote unsafe remedies or outdated practices. Dr Diederik expressed how each pet is unique, and what works for one may not be suitable for another. Self-diagnosing of your pet can delay proper care, potentially worsening your pet’s condition. If you’re concerned about your pet’s health, always consult your vet rather than searching online.



To watch this talk, click [here](#). If you mention to our staff that you have watched this video, you may be eligible for a special reward for you and your pet!

To view any of Dr Deiderik's past live sessions, just go **here** - it will be available for one month after the live.

SNAP AND WIN

\$500
IN PRIZES
TO BE WON!

1ST = \$250
2ND = \$150
3RD = \$100

HOW TO ENTER:

- 1 Vaccinate Your Dog/Cat or purchase a pack of Nexgard Spectra (3 or 6) (from 1 Nov-15 Dec 2025)
- 2 Pose for a picture with your pet (taken at the clinic)
- 3 Winners will be drawn and notified prior to Christmas*

paws, pose & win cash!

HIGHlands is again having a Snap 'N' Win promotion through the 15 December 2025. Win some great cash prizes, just in time for the holidays!

Just bring your pet in to be vaccinated or purchase a pack of Nexgard Spectra (3 or 6 months). We'll take a pic of you with your adorable cat or dog, you fill in the entry form and we'll put you in the draw for a cash prize. It's that easy!



* Terms and conditions apply.



Helping Paws

HIGHLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Christmas and New Years are busy times, and requests for financial help are often at their highest. Our Helping Paws initiative is here to provide vital support for pets needing lifesaving treatments and medications, ensuring no pet has to suffer due to lack of funds.

You can help make a difference by purchasing a raffle ticket for a chance to win fantastic prizes, many generously donated by local businesses. Tickets are \$4 each or 3 for \$10 and can be purchased at our reception. With Santa soon dancing his way around the area, a wonderful basket of pet treats is sure to be a hit! Talk to our friendly staff at Highlands Reception to donate or grab your tickets, and keep watching for the date of our next draw—coming around Christmas!



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!

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need an appointment?
BOOK ONLINE