

JANUARY
2025

The Better Pet Gazette

highlandsveterinaryhospital.com.au

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SIGNS YOUR
DOG'S DIET
IS ON THE
RIGHT TRACK



1. **A glossy coat and healthy skin.** Your dog's skin is their largest organ, so ensuring your dog's routine is supporting their skin health is vital. If you notice any itchiness, irritation, dryness, or flakiness, book an appointment with us. You can also support your dog's skin and coat health with supplements rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

2. **Good dental health.** Dental disease is one of the most common health issues we see in dogs, with many developing periodontal disease before the age of two. A good diet helps keep your dog's teeth and gums healthy, plus regular dental checks help us detect problems early.

3. **A stable and healthy weight.** Helping your dog maintain a healthy weight helps them stay active, comfortable, and feeling their best. Sudden weight gain or loss can signal underlying issues and shouldn't be ignored. If you notice any changes, please book in an appointment with us as soon as possible.

4. **Consistent energy and behaviour for their life stage.** Noticeable changes in energy or behaviour can be a sign that something's not quite right. If your dog is slowing down or becoming less active with age, a senior check-up can help us assess their health and provide advice to keep them comfortable and happy in their golden years.

We stock a variety of dog and cat food here at the clinic. If you're undecided which one would be best for your pet, please have a chat with our knowledgeable staff for recommendations.



January is
peak time
for fledgling
confusion!

Young magpies, kookaburras and crimson rosellas often leave the nest before they can fully fly — this is normal.

If a fledgling is bright, uninjured and has attentive parents nearby, it should be left where it is (or moved only to a safe nearby perch).

Rescue is needed only if the bird is injured, truly abandoned, or in immediate danger from traffic or pets.

When in doubt, give us a call before bringing them in — many "rescues" are healthy youngsters simply learning how to be a bird!



PAMPER YOUR PUP

the soothing benefits of a hydro bath

Now that summer's heating up, there's no better way to help your furry friend cool down, relax, and feel pampered than with our soothing hydro bath! Our hydro bath is available to dog owners at our hospital for a small fee. It is an ideal soothing treat to clean your dog after a hot, dusty day.

The warm water and movement of the hydro bath help to relieve discomfort, while a massaging action is relaxing, especially on a hot dusty day. Check [here](#) for more details.

Plan for summer, and you can help your pets enjoy summer safely. Remember, a little extra care goes a long way in keeping tails wagging and paws happy all season long!

BEAT the HEAT



keeping pets safe in the summer heat

Summer in Australia means longer days, warmer weather, and more outdoor fun with your pets — but rising temperatures also bring increased risks. Heat can quickly become dangerous, so it's essential to take extra precautions to keep your companions safe and comfortable.

Walk Smart

Avoid walking or exercising your pet during the hottest parts of the day (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Choose early morning or late evening instead, when the sun is lower and surfaces are cooler. Always test the pavement with your hand — if it's too hot for you, it's too hot for their paws. Paw burns from sun-baked concrete and asphalt are common, so stick to grassy areas whenever possible.

Hydration Matters

Pets can become dehydrated quickly in hot weather. Ensure fresh, cool water is always available, both indoors and outside. Carry a portable bowl on walks and encourage regular drinks. Watch for signs of dehydration such as heavy panting, dry gums, lethargy, or sunken eyes. If you notice any of these, move your pet to a cool place and offer water immediately.

Provide Shade and Never Leave Pets in Cars

Whether at home or out and about, make sure your pet has access to shade. Never leave animals in parked cars — even a few minutes can be life-threatening. At home, create shaded outdoor areas and keep indoor spaces cool with fans or air conditioning, ensuring your pet always has a comfortable place to escape the heat.

Know the Signs of Heat Stress

Heavy panting, drooling, weakness, vomiting, or collapse can indicate heat stress or heatstroke, and these symptoms can escalate rapidly. Flat-faced breeds, seniors, and pets with existing health conditions are especially vulnerable. If you suspect heatstroke, move your pet to a cool area, offer water, and contact Highlands immediately for urgent guidance.



HERO

OF THE MONTH

JANUARY 2026



We were so privileged to assist a beautiful cat called "Autum" during an emergency caesarean section.

While most cats deliver their kittens naturally, there are times when complications make a C-section a necessity. Sometimes it's a difficult labour, a kitten positioned incorrectly, exhaustion or prolonged straining, large or unusually shaped kittens or an underlying medical issue. In these situations, acting quickly is crucial to ensure the safety of both the mother and her kittens. Thanks to the quick actions of our team, both the mother and her babies are healthy and are being closely monitored as they recover.

If your cat is in labour and experiencing any problems, it's important to contact us right away. A little help can go a long way for your kittie.

upcoming

f LIVE TALK

cost vs care

why vet bills aren't just about money

@facebook.com/highlands-veterinary-hospital

f LIVE Highlands Veterinary Hospital

07 JAN · 2026 · 12:30PM

Veterinarian Dr Diederik Gelderman talks about value, pricing transparency, and what goes into providing safe, quality care for your pets — with compassion at the centre.



Join us on your lunch break:
07.01.26
@ 12:30pm



Tune into this eye-opening talk with Dr Diederik as he lifts the curtain on the care, expertise and behind-the-scenes work that keeps our pets healthy. From the moment your pet walks through the door to the support systems running in the background, there's more to a vet visit than most people realise. You might be surprised by what you learn — tune in and find out!

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](#).

DECEMBER FACEBOOK LIVE TALK RECAP

“Silent Nights: Calming Pets Through Holiday Noise”

We all know that early spring and summer can bring on some thunderous lightning displays, which can be a real spectacle for us, but often quite overwhelming for our furry mates. Remember, your own response to these surprises can influence how your pet feels. If the pavlova collapses, thunder cracks, fireworks explode, and the house is filled with unfamiliar voices all at once, it's no wonder pets can become anxious.



Dr Diederik explains how to spot signs of stress in your animal and recommends a few simple tricks to soothe them. Creating a safe retreat, like a quiet bedroom with gentle lighting and calming music, can work wonders. You might also try a thunder jacket to gently 'hug' your dog or a food puzzle to distract them from the chaos. For more handy tips on keeping your pet safe and settled, go [here](#).

To view any of Dr Diederik's past live sessions, just go [here](#) - it will be available for one month after the live.



new year new gut

how holiday
leftovers trigger
pancreatitis
in pets

The holidays are a time for feasting, laughter, and sharing—but when it comes to sharing leftovers with our pets, things can get tricky! While those extra slices of ham, turkey skin, or buttery potatoes might seem like a treat, they can spell trouble for your furry friend's digestive system.

Why Rich Foods Are Risky for Pets

One of the biggest risks? Pancreatitis—a painful and potentially dangerous inflammation of the pancreas in your pet.

Picture this: your dog's eyes light up as you sneak them a bit of roast beef under the table. It's adorable, and dogs will beg or steal anything within their reach. They are masters at begging.

But here's the deal: rich, fatty foods can overwhelm the pancreas, leading to vomiting, abdominal pain, and lethargy.

Cats aren't immune either; even a small taste of gravy or cheese can trigger a flare-up. Pancreatitis isn't just a tummy ache—it can require emergency vet care and days of recovery.

What Pancreatitis Looks Like

Pets' digestive systems aren't built for high-fat, seasoned, or sugary foods. The pancreas works overtime to process these treats, and sometimes it just can't keep up. Symptoms include loss of appetite, diarrhea, and a hunched posture. If you notice these signs after a holiday meal, call us right away on 4872 1144!

Keeping Your Pet Safe During the Festive Season

Stick to their regular diet and resist those pleading eyes. If you want to include them in the celebration, offer pet-safe treats or toys instead. Remind guests not to slip snacks to your pets, no matter how cute they look.

A Happy and Healthy Holiday

The holidays are about making memories—not emergency vet visits! By keeping leftovers out of reach and focusing on safe ways to spoil your pets, you'll ensure a happy, healthy start to the new year. Remember: a little prevention goes a long way, and your pet's wagging tail or gentle purr is the best holiday gift of all.



Helping Paws
HIGHLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

No one should have to withhold essential health care from a pet due to financial hardship. That is why we started Helping Paws. And people enjoy buying a raffle ticket in hopes of winning a hamper of surprises, treats, and all good things.

Our December Hamper raffle is now going to be held at the end of January, so there is still time to get in on the draw! This hamper will have even more added to it, so don't miss out.

Our next draw will be at Easter, so grab a stack of raffle tickets from our reception here at HIGHLANDS, as the Easter Bunny's visit isn't far off!

Thanks to all the local businesses and locals who have donated prizes or bought tickets, your help has truly been amazing.



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



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