

**March
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Rhodes Vet Clinic

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Newsletter

Stress

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Storm phobias (noise phobias) and separation anxiety are common behavioural problems seen in dogs. Separation anxiety isn't usually seen in cats (although it has been documented), as cats tend to not be too stressed if their owner is at work, if there is food in the bowl.

Phobias

Dogs are naturally adverse to loud noises (be it fireworks or thunder), but unlike us who jump and try not to say any bad words when a car backfires nearby, dogs can fret for long periods of time. As with all diseases there can be a range of symptoms seen that differ per animal. Signs of distress can be: cowering/hiding, not wanting to move, trying to escape, destructiveness, inappropriate urination, panting and drooling and can lead to self trauma.

Treatment for phobias vary. Some dogs can calm down with a cuddle or a tight fitting coat, others need medication.

At Rhodes we can discuss treatments for phobias and we have started stocking some new drugs that can help an animal stay calm and relaxed throughout the ordeal. Most dogs do really well on short acting anti anxiety drugs that can be given before the phobia. The great thing about these drugs is they don't cause sedation, allowing our furry friends to be themselves but more relaxed. This can also be a great medication for dogs that hate the Vet, making the experience more enjoyable for the animal, owner and the Vet.

Separation anxiety

Your best friend really misses you and loves to know where you are at all times, too much so. Some dogs will become dependent on their owner's presence and become stressed when they leave. This can start even before the owner has left and is just getting ready, as dogs can recognise your routine before you leave. Separation anxiety can involve: being agitated, vocalising, inappropriate urination and destructive behaviour while you are away. Dogs learn to be dependent on the company of their humans overtime so the best treatment is training to change this behaviour, but anxious dogs struggle to learn (remember studying for high school exams the day before the test and nothing would stick?). To counteract this a drug called an SSRI can be used. This drug keeps the hormones that relax dogs in the brain for longer. A calm dog has a much better ability to learn. Some animals need to stay on medication for their life, but luckily the medication generally used is one of the cheapest and safest drugs available.

If you have any concerns with your pets behaviour an appointment with one of our Vets will shed some light on the issue and allow us to come up with a plan to manage your furry friends worries.



We provide:

- Surgery & Medicine for small and large animals
- Herd Health Advice
- Bull Fertility Testing
- Soft Tissue & Orthopaedic Surgery
- Dentistry
- Digital X-ray
- Ultrasound
- In House Blood Testing
- Nutrition
- Prescription Diets
- Microchip Identification

Simpson Office:

Please call 5232 2111

Orders will
be delivered to the
Simpson Clinic daily

Colac Office:

Our Colac Office is open

Monday to Friday

8am to 6pm

Saturday 9am to 12 noon

www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au

**We are available 24/7
for emergencies.
Our emergency number
is:**

5232 2111

Transitioning Cows

The definition of a transitioning cow is a cow that is transitioning from late pregnancy to early lactation (3 weeks prior and post calving). When talking about stages in lactation this is from dry/pregnant to lactating. This is a high risk time in the cow's life, as metabolic and reproduction disorders are most likely to occur at this time.

Metabolic diseases include:

- Milk fever (hypocalcaemia)
- Grass tetany (hypomagnesium)
- Both of the previous at once
- Ketosis
- Abomasal disorders (displacement)

Reproductive disorders seen involve:

- Retained membranes (RFM)
- Problem calving (dystocia)
- Uterine infections (metritis)



As always in farming the main way to control these diseases is nutrition.

Nutrition during the transition phase is almost as important as colostrum in calves, but more finicky (to be honest it even confuses me on occasion, so we'll keep it simple). Basically, the cow goes from using the feed to fuel herself to supplying a rapidly growing calf. She will do this at the expense of her own body's maintenance, so goes into a negative energy balance (losing more energy than she can ingest, similar to starvation).

At transition an ideal cow (say 500kg) during this time is at body condition score (BCS) 3-3.5/5 and on a top quality feed. The scientists will say 8-10kg dry matter of feed at 10MJ/kg DM – you'll need to have your feed tested to be precise. We do not want her too fat as she'll have difficulty calving or lose condition quick, as fat cows have a greater change in metabolism compared to non-fat cows. Top quality feed will allow them the best chance of saving some nutrition for themselves over the calf. Another point to keep in mind with nutrition is not only energy but the availability of the elements and minerals involved. Yes for those of you who have experience in this, DCAD (dietary cation-anion difference) but, we are going to gloss well over this and call it...

Lead feeding

Lead feed allows the nutrients a cow will run low on during the transition period to be metabolically available to help her meet energy requirements. This takes into consideration not only DCAD and calcium for milk fever the nutrients everyone usually talks about but all nutrients that prevent other diseases are also made available with lead feeds. A lead feed will also increase milk production and gains in the cow post calving. There are many lead feeds and feeding protocols used, this is best discussed with your supplier.

Cows in ideal condition, both body condition and metabolic condition are significantly less likely to have calving problems making nutrition the best way to prevent all the disorders discussed above. If you are having problems with cows in their transition time, call us at Rhodes Vets and we will be more than happy to help get to the bottom of the causes.



2020 AFL Footy is back this month....

If you would like to join us for our 2020 weekly AFL tipping competition please let Cindy know by Monday, 16th March

**Tips must be either emailed (cindy@rhodesvet.com.au), or delivered to the clinic by 5pm on the day of the first game of each round.
Tips will not be accepted by telephone.**

We will accept several entries from each house if more than one person wishes to participate ... just ensure the tips are named.

There is a small cost of \$1/round (\$23 for the season).

As per other seasons we will have a small get together at the end of the season to present the winning tippers with their rewards