

**April  
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# Rhodes Vet Clinic

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**Newsletter**

## Flea Allergy Dermatitis

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Flea allergy dermatitis is a very itchy (and annoying!) skin condition that occurs in pets that are allergic to fleas. Typically you can see hair loss and redness of the skin on the back around the top of the tail but hair loss and redness can occur in other areas too. This is a very itchy condition for your pet and they will often scratch, rub and chew at their skin.

### **How can my pet have this when I haven't seen any fleas on them?**

If your pet has flea allergy dermatitis they can have a large reaction to even a single flea bite. Your pet does not necessarily have an infestation of fleas and it's not unusual that you haven't noticed them at home in their small numbers. Most fleas don't live on the animal. The majority of the flea population lives in the environment and only jumps on the animal for a short time to feed.

### **How do we treat it?**

Unfortunately allergies are a lifelong problem. Continuous (on time) use of a flea treatment for your pet's life is incredibly important in preventing this annoying problem. Some pets require additional treatment on top of this if they have particularly bad allergic skin disease. It's also important if your pet is having a flare up to get them checked by the vet as they may have a secondary infection making things worse that also needs treatment.



### **What flea product should I use?**

All flea products are not equal. Some take longer to kill the fleas than others. If your pet is not allergic this isn't a problem but for pets sensitive to fleas this can cause them a lot of discomfort. Flea powder is not going to be sufficient if your pet has flea allergy dermatitis. Have a chat in Clinic to see which product will work for you.

### **We provide:**

- Surgery & Medicine for small and large animals
- Herd Health Advice
- Cattle Pregnancy Testing
- Bull Fertility Testing
- Lameness in Cattle
- Equine Consults
- Soft Tissue & Orthopaedic Surgery
- Dentistry
- Digital X-ray
- Ultrasound
- In House Blood Testing
- Nutrition

**Simpson Office:**  
Please call 5232 2111

**Colac Office:**  
Our Colac Office is open  
Monday to Friday  
8am to 6pm  
Saturday 9am to 12 noon

**We are available 24/7  
for emergencies.  
Our emergency number  
is:  
5232 2111**

## Polioencephalomalacia (PEM)

This is a syndrome that occurs in all ruminants (cows, sheep, goats etc) and it tends to be seasonal and more common in the spring and autumn. The most common cause of PEM is the lack of Vitamin B1 (thiamine). Thiamine is a very important Vitamin B that is involved in the metabolism of glucose. Thiamine is especially important for proper brain function. We know the brain requires glucose and so anything that upsets the metabolism of glucose will directly affect the brain.

Thiamine is not produced in animal cells but rather it is produced by ruminal microbes. If the ruminant is deficient in thiamine there is destruction of brain cells and swelling of the brain occurs. It is this swelling that causes the problems.

It is very important to know the early symptoms because PEM can be treated if you diagnose the problem early.

The first major problem is the partial or complete loss of sight with the head held erect. The gait of the animal will be exaggerated or non-existent and it may not be able to stand. The eyes will be dilated and tend to tear up. There also may be seizures like events.

The cause of lack of thiamine is often a change of forage diet, especially when going onto new pastures / re-grazing crops that have young shoots / grains. It is important that animals have enough ruminant fibre to help prevent the lack of thiamine.

Treatment is simple. Vitamin B1 injections, given daily over 2 to 5 days will cure the disease. Changing paddocks and increasing fibre (good quality hay) will help reduce the thiamine deficiency.

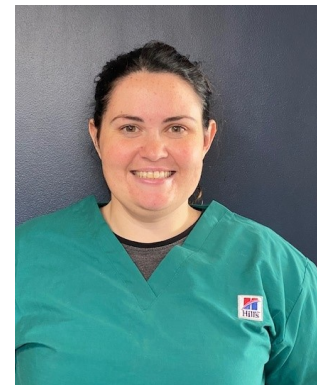


## Welcome Alyce!

We have recently welcomed Dr Alyce Ryan to our team!

Alyce was raised on a local dairy farm and has just completed her veterinary studies in sunny Townsville.

Her out of hours interests include performing arts, swimming and baking.



2021 AFL is up and running!

Our ladder at the end of Round 4:

1. Shannon 26
2. Tim 26
3. Kay 26
4. Duane 25
5. Cindy 25

