

**May
2021**

Rhodes Vet Clinic

**Volume 11
Issue 5**

Newsletter

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Snake bite—AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR!

This is a friendly reminder that even though it is getting colder snakes are still about and active.

I am bringing this to your attention because we have attended four cows recently showing all the signs of envenomation. These occurred in the middle of April when night time temperatures are cool BUT our day time temperatures are still in the ambient range of 15 to 20 degrees. Snakes are still active in these temperatures.

All four cases presented in the same way. The cows were unable to stand and if they did they were extremely ataxic (wobbly on their feet) and moved very slowly. The cows all had very low temperatures and they had racing heart beats. The heart beat was double the normal rate. The cows had very dilated pupils that did not respond to light shone in their eyes. All of the cows were blown up with gas and their ruminal functions had ceased.

The definitive sign was when a blood sample, taken from the cow, failed to clot within thirty seconds. All cows had blood that did not clot for five to ten minutes. The toxin from the snake STOPS the blood from clotting.

When all of the above symptoms occur it is usually too late to provide treatment. To use anti venom the cow really should still be standing and moving. Once the cow is on the ground the toxin has already irreparably damaged blood cells, kidneys and other major organs. Unfortunately this dooms the animal.

BE AWARE— snakes are still about!



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

www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au

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

5232 2111

Rat Bait

The recent “mouse plague” has caused an increase in the use of rat bait. It has resulted in more cats and dogs being brought to the clinic for ingestion of rat bait. Dogs typically ingest the rat bait block while cats typically hunt and eat poisoned rats and mice resulting in them being secondarily poisoned. Rat bait works by preventing blood from clotting (anticoagulant) and affecting the production of blood clotting factors.

Signs present once a clotting factor reserves have been used; they include:

- Weakness
- Pale cold gums
- Blood in the faeces (or black tarry faeces)
- Blood in the urine
- Difficulty walking



If you suspect your pet has gotten into and/or ingested rat bait, please seek veterinary advice immediately.

Once your pet has ingested rat bait, you have 4 – 6 hrs to get the animal to vomit because after that time the rat bait has left the stomach. At the clinic we induce vomiting with drugs injected under the skin of your pet.

However, if you are too far away from the clinic or it happens at an annoying time of day you can induce vomiting at home by orally giving your pet soda crystals (found in the supermarket).

Please contact the clinic to get the ok to do this.



The signs of rat bait poisoning do not present until a few days to a few weeks after. It is better to give the antidote (Vitamin K) as soon as possible rather than manage a dog or cat with uncontrollable bleeding. It is NEVER recommended to waiting for signs before seeking treatment.

Vitamin K is given for 21 days and after that period, we take a blood sample to make sure that the platelet levels are adequate, no signs of low red blood cells and appropriate clotting times.

If you are using or planning on using rat bait, please consider the following that it is:

- Placed out of reach of your pets and regularly checked
- Enclosing rat poison in a cage (bait stations)– these are large enough for rodents to enter but small enough so cats and dogs cannot enter



ANIMAL FUN FACTS:

- Each dog has its own unique nose print
- A cat has 32 muscles in each ear
- Only female mosquitoes bite

2021 RVC AFL Ladder at the end of Round 7:

1.	Tim	44
2.	Shannon	44
3.	Alan	42
4.	Ellis	42
5.	Scott	42

