

**August
2021**

Rhodes Vet Clinic

**Volume 11
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Newsletter

Roughage In Winter

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What is a ruminant? It is an animal with a cloven foot. This includes cows, sheep, alpacas, llamas and elephants. What makes them special is that they have four stomachs and it is the second stomach that is the most important.

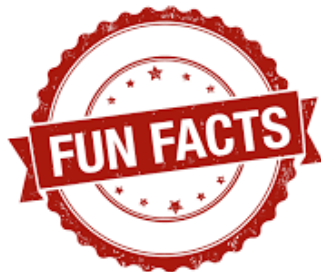
This stomach is the rumen and it acts as a very large fermentation tank. This tank contains water, bacteria and dry matter. It is very important to have a balance of all ingredients. Too much water and a diarrhoea occurs. Too much dry matter and constipation occurs.

At this time of the year the grass is very green and contains a lot of water. It is really important that there is enough non digestible fibre (roughage) in the ruminants diet. This non digestible fibre (NDF) acts as a raft to which the bacteria grow on. Without this raft of NDF there is insufficient surface area for the bacteria to grow. This means a reduction of bacteria protein in the ruminants diet and so weight loss occurs. The water content is pushed through the bowel and diarrhoea occurs. All of this can lead to ill thrift and often the untimely death of the animal.

NDF is hay NOT silage, lucerne, vetch or crop. These are all too digestible where as poor quality hay and straw are undigestible (high in NDF) and perfect to make these bacteria rafts. So get that hay / straw out to your animals now!

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



ANIMAL FUN FACTS:

- Your dog's sense of smell is approximately 100,000 times better than yours
- Cats have five toes on each front paw, but only four toes on each back paw.
- Approximately 50% of dogs sleep in their owner's beds.
- Whale's can pee up to 975 litres in one day

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

Pet Dental Health Month

August is celebrated as the Australian Veterinarian Association (AVA) Pet Dental Health Month. It focuses on all pets such as dogs, cats, rabbits, and horses. 80% of cats and dogs over 3 years old will have some sort of dental disease which becomes more severe with age. Dental disease can lead to serious problems that can affect the heart, liver, and kidneys. Dental disease and mouth pain can affect a pet's quality of life, appetite, behaviour and general wellbeing. Common signs that can indicate dental disease in your pet, include:

- Bad breath
- Drooling
- Loss of appetite
- Pawing at the mouth
- Mouth hanging open with their tongue out
- Using one side of the mouth
- Dropping food while chewing
- Build-up of plaque and stains on teeth
- Red swollen gums



Every year when your pet comes in to see us for their annual health check and vaccination, we examine their teeth and gums to assess their health. It is the equivalent of you visiting the dentist once every seven years. It is very common that we note dental disease. It is categorised into stages from 1 being minor to 4 requiring major dental work. All dental procedures (i.e. Scale and Polish +/- extractions) are done under a general anaesthetic and will require your pet to stay for the day. There are additional things you can do at home to keep your pet's teeth and gums nice and clean.

Control the build-up of plaque bacteria on the teeth and gums by:

- Dental diets (i.e. Hills T/D, Royal Canin Dental) - act as an edible toothbrush, and are clinically proven to reduce gingivitis, stains, plaque and tartar accumulation.
- Dental Chews (i.e. Greenies) - designed to be chewed over several minutes and contain a compound (delmopinol) which forms a barrier stopping bacteria attaching to the teeth.
- Raw bones - should be used with caution as they can be associated with fractured teeth or gastrointestinal problems. Never feed cooked bones to your pet.
- Toothbrushing - using a specially designed dog or cat toothbrush, combined with pet toothpaste. Human toothpaste is not safe for pets.

Don't wait for an annual check up if you are concerned about your pet's teeth.

For the month of August we are offering a FREE VET NURSE DENTAL CHECK for our clients. Please phone us on 5232 2111 to arrange a consult with our nurses.