

**December  
2025**

# Rhodes Vet Clinic



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**Newsletter**

Rhodes Veterinary Clinic  
74 Gellibrand Street  
COLAC 3250  
P: 03 5232 2111  
E: [info@rhodesvet.com.au](mailto:info@rhodesvet.com.au)

**Veterinarians:**  
Dr Michael Rhodes  
Dr Ness Edwards  
Dr Caz Simpson  
Dr Ben Rhodes

**Practice Manager:**  
Jo McCrickard

**Nurses:**  
Kirsty Paton  
Amanda Fisk  
Beth Callahan



## Photosensitisation in Animals

Photosensitisation is a skin condition triggered when certain compounds in the body react with sunlight, leading to redness, swelling, and sometimes severe skin damage — especially on lightly pigmented areas like noses, ears, and white patches. There are two main types. Type I (Primary Photosensitisation) occurs when animals ingest plants or medications that contain light-reactive chemicals, such as St. John's wort, buckwheat, or certain antibiotics. Type II (Secondary or Hepatic Photosensitisation) is far more common and develops when the liver is unable to process phyloerythrin, a chlorophyll by-product. This buildup makes the skin extremely sensitive to sunlight and is often linked to liver damage from toxic plants like lantana, ragwort, and blue-green algae. Signs to watch for include painful red skin, crusting, peeling, swelling around the face, reluctance to go outside, and — in liver-related cases — jaundice or lethargy.

Prompt treatment is crucial. Animals should be moved out of sunlight immediately and your veterinarian may provide anti-inflammatories and antibiotics for secondary infections, liver support, wound care, or fluids for severe cases. Prevention focuses on good pasture and feed management, removing toxic plants, providing adequate shade, and monitoring the use of medications known to cause photosensitivity. Regular health checks — especially for animals at risk of liver disease — also reduce the likelihood of photosensitisation. With early recognition and proper care, most animals recover well and can safely enjoy the sunnier months.



## 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



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new practice manager Jo McCrickard. Jo grew up in Paraparap on her families farm. Jo's childhood was almost dream like, constantly surrounded by horses, sheep, cattle, ferrets, dogs, cats, chickens and wonderful people! Jo found her love for horses early whether it was out competing, recreational and drafting. Jo also spent time, rounding up sheep by foot, motorbike riding, driving cars, camping and loving her dogs unconditionally.

Jo's adult working career has been one amazing adventure. From working in supermarkets, the corporate world, the motorbike industry, running fibre optic cable underground and even having her own business.

**Simpson Office:**  
Please call 5232 2111

[www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au](http://www.rhodesveterinaryclinic.com.au)

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

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

## Protecting Your Dog From Snake Bites

As summer approaches, warm weather brings increased outdoor activity—not just for our pets, but for snakes as well. At **Rhodes Veterinary Clinic**, we want to ensure every pet owner is informed, prepared, and confident in keeping their dogs safe this snake season. During the hot months, snakes are more active as they bask in the sun and search for food. Dogs, driven by curiosity, may wander into tall grass, woodpiles, rocky areas, or dense shrubs where snakes often hide. Because encounters can happen quickly, being aware of the risks is essential for prevention and early action if a snake bite was to occur.

### Recognizing the Signs of a Snake Bite

Snake bites may not always be witnessed, but early recognition is crucial. Many dogs cry out, show discomfort, or begin to pant or drool. In more serious cases, weakness or collapse can occur as symptoms progress.

Bruising, bleeding, or subtle puncture marks may be present, though often hidden beneath the fur.

### Symptoms of Venomous Snake Bites

Venomous bites can include symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, tremors, and dilated pupils. Dogs may also experience difficulty breathing, abnormal heart rhythms, or sudden collapse. After sudden collapse they may seem to drastically recover, this is usually a sign your dog has received a lethal dose of venom. Even bites from nonvenomous snakes pose risks, as they can lead to painful infections and require veterinary attention.

If your dog suffers a snake bite, **immediate veterinary care is essential**. Treatment may involve administration of antivenom when appropriate, as well as pain management, intravenous fluids to stabilize blood pressure, wound care, and antibiotics if needed. Each case is closely monitored for signs of shock or organ involvement. The overall outcome depends on how quickly treatment begins and the nature of the snake involved.

### Tips to Reduce the Risk

Prevention is key. Keep your dog on a short leash during walks and avoid areas with heavy brush, tall grass, or stacked firewood. Maintaining a tidy yard can greatly reduce snake hiding spots. In some areas, snake-avoidance training can also be a helpful preventative tool. Staying aware of which snakes are common locally can further support safe outdoor adventures.

If you suspect your dog has encountered a snake, please contact the closest veterinary clinic. Prompt care can make a life-saving difference.



**Please note that we will be CLOSED on Saturday, 13th December for our festive celebrations. This closure will allow us to spoil all our hard working staff. We will have Vet available for emergencies from after lunch on Sunday, 14th December.**  
**Thanks you for understanding.**

### IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please pre-order any repeat scripts over the Christmas period. This ensures your pets won't go without.

Also as a reminder, if your pet is due for their 6 monthly health check, appointments will need to be booked in advance.

**Mike, Cindy, Ben, Kirsty, Amanda, Beth, Ness, Caz and Jo would like to wish all our valued clients and their pets a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

#### Christmas Trading Hours

Thursday 25th December - Closed

Friday 26th December - Closed

Saturday 27th December - Wednesday 31st December

Normal Trading

Thursday 1st January - Closed

Normal Trading to resume from Friday 2nd January

**We will be available on 5232 2111  
for any emergencies**

