

## STARTING FROM JANUARY 2009

### PET FOOD DELIVERY SERVICE

**PET FOOD DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR**

**FREE LOCAL DELIVERY FOR ORDERS OVER £25  
ORDERS UNDER £25 ACCEPTED SUBJECT TO A SMALL  
DELIVERY CHARGE**

**ALL FOOD ORDERS RECEIVED IN JANUARY WILL BE  
ENTERED INTO A FREE PRIZE DRAW SPONSORED BY JAMES WELLBELOVED  
FOR EITHER A 15KG BAG OF DOG FOOD OR A 10KG BAG OF CAT FOOD**

**\*\*SURPRISE GIFT\*\* WITH EVERY ORDER OF JAMES  
WELLBELOVED FOOD PLACED IN JANUARY**

**ALL ORDERS TAKEN AT THE LYNDHURST SURGERY**

**Telephone the Lyndhurst surgery on 023 8028 2358**

**Or email [enquiries@midforestvets.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@midforestvets.co.uk)**

### **FREE Health Checks for the New Forest's Bunnies**

Rabbit owners are being urged to keep their bunnies healthy by taking them for a FREE health check, as part of Burgess National Rabbit Week, which runs from Monday 26th January 2009. Burgess National Rabbit Week aims to improve the health of the nation's pet rabbits and this year, the focus is on fibre. Vets in Lyndhurst and Totton are backing the initiative and want to spread the message that rabbits are "fibrevores" and require extremely high levels of fibre in their diet in order to stay healthy and happy.

Vet Kate Myers-Smith at Lyndhurst said: "Fibrevore" is a perfect term for rabbits, as fibre really is key to their good health and wellbeing. Approximately four out of five rabbits treated by vets are suffering from problems related to poor diet, which are often so far advanced by the time the rabbit is brought in that they are difficult to treat. That is why we are offering FREE health checks during Burgess National Rabbit Week. Even if your rabbit looks fine, it's still a good idea to bring them in for a quick MOT. If the rabbit has any health problems that are still in the early stages with no obvious symptoms, we'll be able to spot them and advise on treatment and the best way to look after your rabbit to prevent any future problems."

Call either the Lyndhurst surgery on 023 8028 2358 or the Totton surgery on 023 8066 0400 to make an appointment for your rabbit's FREE health check.

## Slug Bait Poisoning



There are many household items that are poisonous to our pets. In winter time the two that first spring to mind are ethylene glycol which is in antifreeze and chocolate, which is often in abundance around Christmas time. Recently how-



ever, at Midforest Vets we have had a pair of dogs, Moose and Nelly, who became seriously ill after eating slug pellets. These are something that we might expect in the summer months, but it illustrates how we need to be on our guard throughout the year.

Slug pellets contain an ingredient called Methaldehyde. This is what kills the slugs and snails, but it is also highly toxic to mammals as well. The precise way in which methaldehyde is toxic is not fully understood, but it interferes with the conduction of electrical impulses in the brain as well as being able to cause liver and kidney damage. Methaldehyde is absorbed very quickly once eaten and effects can be seen as little as 15 minutes after ingestion. Signs of slug bait poisoning are varied and any combination of the following may be seen.

- Incoordination, irritability, anxiety, deep and rapid breathing, dilated pupils.
- Salivation, vomiting, diarrhoea, gurgling stomach noises, painful abdomen.
- Wobbly on feet and occasionally drowsiness.
- Increased sensitivity and response to touch, sounds and other stimuli.
- Muscle spasms, twitching and tremors.
- This can progress to collapse, loss of consciousness and seizures followed by difficulty breathing, respiratory depression and death.

If you think your dog may have eaten slug pellets then immediate veterinary attention needs to be sought, even if only a small quantity has been eaten.

In Moose and Nelly's case the slug pellets had been stored in a floor level cupboard. The dogs had opened this and found the slug pellet container. Dog's teeth can make short work of even the toughest plastic container and it was easily chewed open.

The other lesson that this case teaches us is that dogs will eat anything and never trust manufacturer's claims that contents are unpalatable. The slug pellets that Moose and Nelly ate contained a "Proven Pet Repellent" and yet they still ate almost a full container.

On admission both dogs were already having seizures which needed extremely strong sedatives to keep under control. They both required constant veterinary intensive care and supportive treatment. Moose, who had eaten the least, required sedation for 12 hours before regaining consciousness. However Nelly, who'd eaten much more was continually anaesthetised for 48hrs before her seizures stopped and was then monitored for a further 12 hours before being able to stand and go home.

Thankfully, due to the prompt treatment and the dedicated care of our vets and nurses (who had to catch a few hours sleep each night on the kennel room floor) both dogs have made a full recovery. However, they were very lucky as cases of slug bait poisoning have a 10-23% chance of dying. Moose and Nelly's owners have let us tell their story to illustrate the risks and hopefully make sure that you keep the slug bait well away from your pets.

**If you would like our monthly newsletter emailed to you each month then contact us at [enquiries@midforestvets.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@midforestvets.co.uk).**

