



A chewed slipper, puddles on the floor, and squeaky toys strewn around the room. Your new puppy has arrived in the household, and after the morning's play of fun is now looking very cute asleep on your sofa! Life certainly changes when a new pet joins the family. From the time those small paws step through the door, your pet will depend on you for a lifetime of love, food, security and healthcare. This young one will also need your support in experiencing new encounters and some very important socialisation, particularly in those early days of puppyhood.

**Learning Curve** At first everything is a little scary for your puppy, especially being away from Mum and the rest of the litter, but it is usually not too long before they settle into their new home. They become braver and with a naturally inquisitive nature, show little fear at 'testing the ground', even if it is met with a swipe on the nose from the cat. Lesson One....approach the cat less boisterously next time! Under three months of age, they are most responsive to accepting new encounters. So the sooner they have social interaction with people, other animals, supervised meetings with children, exposure to noise, and experience of the world in general.... the better.

## Come Rain or Shine

Even if the sun is not shining, and that's not unusual for a British summer, temperatures can still rise, and affect our pets in the form of heatstroke (hyperthermia), an increase of body temperature. A cloudy humid day can cause a higher heat in our homes, conservatories and gardens. As our pets' cooling system is not as efficient as ours, they can very quickly become overheated and dehydrated.

### **Aim to Prevent**

**Never leave your pet in the car or conservatory**

**Ensure access to shady cool areas in and outdoors**

**Regulate time spent in sun and heat**

**Exercise in cooler morning or evening air**

**Provide fresh cool drinking water**

**Guinea Pigs, Rabbits, Ferrets etc.**

**Position housing, outside run & water in shade**

**Ensure hutch has good ventilation**

**Recognising Heatstroke**

**increased panting - excessive saliva**

**anxiousness - dark gums - vomiting**

**reluctant to rise - dizziness - collapse**

Pets can recover from heatstroke, but it is a serious condition. The key is early recognition and prompt action.....better still prevent it!

If you suspect your pet is **suffering from heatstroke** move them to a cool area and **immediately contact your vet.**

### **Little by Little**

Once your puppy's vaccination course is complete, they can venture outside. Gradually introduce new experiences like lead walking in the town - countryside and park - crowds and traffic - travelling in the car - ducks on the pond. Remember they are only young. At times your puppy may become a little anxious or over-excited. Consider their character. Shy or confident? Just like young children, a puppy's attention span can be short, they tire easily too, and although life is very interesting and thrilling, it may also be overwhelming.

**The Key** Work to establish a positive reaction from the encounter. Negative responses can generate fear, which might be difficult to rectify at a later stage. Familiarising your puppy with a wide range of experiences will help with their development and behaviour, so they mature into happy, socialised adult dogs.



### **Pheromones**

We recommend using pheromone therapy to help your new pup feel at home and settle in.

This therapy is a synthetic version of pheromones that Mum produces when her pups are born and is very comforting to the young ones. It makes them feel more secure, relaxed and can also help your puppy as they learn new things in life. Pheromone therapy is available at our practice, in the form of a collar, plug-in or spray. The collar is particularly helpful for pups, as it provides the comfort of pheromones when on walks in the big outside world!

### **Puppy Club For the new arrivals**

At Hollybank we want to provide your puppy with the very best in pet care right from the start, and offer a special club for all our new pups. After their initial vaccination course with the vet, your puppy can attend appointments with our nurses for the **Hollybank Puppy Club**.

At regular monthly visits until six months of age, they are weighed and checked over. You also have the opportunity to discuss in more detail, feeding and diet, parasite control, microchipping, neutering and socialisation, all of which help your pet remain healthy and happy.

*If you would like to learn more, please call the practice, and a member of our friendly team will be more than happy to help you.*



## Surgery Hours

*Our friendly support staff are available all day for pet healthcare and advice*

**Monday, Wednesday & Friday**

**8.30am - 6.30pm**

**Tuesday & Thursday**

**9.30am - 7.30pm**

**Saturday 9am - 12 noon**

*Consultations with the vets & nurses are by appointment only*

**24hr Emergency Service**

here at the surgery and with your usual vets

**Call day or night**

**01606 880 890**

# ★★★★★ Five Star Accommodation for your Rabbits

At local DIY stores people are found buying anything from comfy cushions to draught excluder, to help make their homes a more pleasant environment to live in. For those pet rabbits living outdoors, they require basic comforts too, plus a whole lot more!

★ **Natures Needs** Rabbits are inquisitive, active, intelligent and sociable. In the wild they always live with other rabbits. So one pet rabbit kept in a cramped wooden hutch at the bottom of a garden, is leading a very lonely and unhappy life indeed. Rabbits need company, and in captivity male and female pairs work well, provided they are neutered. They also need to forage for food, dig, feel secure, hide, hop, stand on their hind legs and explore.

## ★ Just a hutch?

A rabbits' accommodation must provide opportunities to allow expression of natural behaviour. They require choice and control within their own home. All of this can be achieved through quantity and quality of space, plus environmental enrichment.

★ **The Ideal Home** This must suit the number of rabbits you are planning to keep, their size, age and any medical conditions. They will require - **Raised, secure and**

**adequate sized housing** for privacy and safety,

together with an **outdoor enclosure**. Both must allow your rabbits to:

- ✓ **easily stand up on their hind legs**
- ✓ **lie fully outstretched**
- ✓ **make at least 3 consecutive hops**
- ✓ **turn around unhindered**

Visit [www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk](http://www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk) for full information on housing and run size.

★ **During building consider** - The type of materials/preservation treatments are **not toxic** or will cause injury to your rabbits.

**Ventilation and provision of shade** for both in and outdoor areas, as they can suffer heatstroke in the summer. Will the housing be **warm and draught free in winter**; dry, strong and **escape/predator proof**?

Positioning of outside enclosure, as **some plants are poisonous** to rabbits.

**Hiding places** like cardboard boxes, large tubes etc. plus platforms, separate areas for eating, sleeping and toileting.

★ **Environmental Enrichments** will help your rabbits express their natural behaviour. **An earth pit** - rabbits love to dig! Provide tree stumps, twigs and suitable toys. **Encourage 'foraging of food'** by filling boxes, cardboard tubes or racks with hay. Place food in puzzle feeders or scatter the pellets amongst hay.

**By providing a suitable home to meet all your rabbits' needs mentally and physically, you are helping to keep your pets healthy and happy.**

**It is also important to regularly clean out your rabbits' hutch**

Mucky bedding attracts flies, which can lay eggs. Hatching maggots then pose a great risk to your pet rabbit from the potentially fatal condition **flystrike**. This is very unpleasant and distressing for rabbits, and requires immediate veterinary treatment. Please ask our staff for more details, **and if you suspect that your rabbit has flystrike, contact us immediately.**

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## BEWARE! Rat Poison

Dogs are naturally inquisitive creatures, and often eat things they really should not! From snacking on a child's toy to chocolate, or even socks, they can get themselves into all kinds of trouble.

One substance that can have devastating effects however, is **rat poison**, which is an anticoagulant and so stops the blood from clotting. The effects are not normally noticed for several days to weeks after ingestion, so unless you see your pet eating the rat poison, the first clue that something is wrong, is when they become very ill. Bleeding can occur spontaneously into the abdomen or chest causing weakness, collapse and breathing difficulties. It can also show as multiple bruises on the skin.

**Treatment is available** in the form of supplementation with Vitamin K, which is essential to help blood clot. Severely affected dogs may need blood transfusions and ongoing supportive care.

### Top Safety Tips

- Ensure your pet has no access to poison anywhere in your house, garden, shed or garage.
- If you move into a new home, check for any poison that might have been left by the previous owners, **before** your pet is allowed to investigate the house, outdoor buildings and garden.
- If you do see your pet eating rat poison then contact us **immediately**.

In most cases if seen quickly, we can induce vomiting and often no further treatment is required. *Please contact us for further details on keeping your pet safe from poison.*



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