



# PETS Passport

An increasing number of pet owners are now enjoying taking their pets with them on holidays abroad. This has been made possible by the PETS passport scheme. However, it is important for owners to realise that seven to eight months are required before being able to embark on the first holiday with their pet.

## To obtain a PETS Passport

- ☛ The process begins by having your pet microchipped. This is placed beneath the animal's skin and allows reliable identification of the animal for the future.
  - ☛ Next a vaccination against rabies is necessary. This must be done after the animal is three months old. One month later, a blood sample is taken and tested to check for a satisfactory level of rabies antibodies following vaccination.
  - ☛ Once this is achieved a passport can be issued, but the animal **may NOT re-enter the UK until six months after the blood test was taken.**
- We recommend that anyone wishing to travel abroad with their pet, call the surgery to discuss this with a vet at least **eight to twelve months before their expected dates of travel.**

# Watch your Pet's Waistline!



**Did you know that an estimated 30-50% of pet cats and dogs in the UK are overweight?**

Obesity is the most common nutritional problem in our pets and is generally due to over-eating or lack of exercise.

Our main concern, are the many diseases that are connected with being overweight. It can cause:

- ❖ Diabetes ❖ Arthritis
- ❖ Heart Disease ❖ Skin Conditions
- ❖ Certain Cancers ❖ Urinary Problems (particularly in cats)

## Two easy steps to check if your pet may be overweight.

1. Stand above them and look for a visible 'waistline'.
2. Run your hands over their sides and you should be able to feel their ribs.

**Unable to do either of these?** Your pet may be overweight. If they have gained a few extra pounds, please call the surgery for an appointment to attend one of our

**Weight Clinics** First a vet will give your pet a thorough examination to check for any possible medical disorders that may be causing the obesity. If none are found, a nurse who is specially trained in nutrition, will then discuss a suitable diet and exercise plan for your pet, followed by **free regular 'weigh-ins'** to help monitor their progress.

# Register your Dog as a Blood Donor and receive Free Vaccinations!

We are always very grateful if any of our clients' dogs are put forward to be blood donors. Blood transfusions are often a key part in the treatment of some life threatening diseases therefore, it is essential to have a number of donors available.

If you are interested in your dog joining our register, please consider these donor requirements.

**Ideally they should be friendly and easy to handle.**

**8 years of age or under and preferably over 25kg.**

Smaller dogs can donate, where less blood is required.

**Healthy and not receiving any drug therapy.**

**Up-to-date with worming and vaccinations.**

**Not had any previous transfusions themselves.**

**Pregnant bitches should not become donors.**

All of our donors have a free health check prior to donating blood and only a safe amount is taken from the donor so that its blood level is not depleted.

If you would like further information please call the surgery where we will be happy to discuss the procedure.



# THE DOWNS Surgery Hours

We are open  
**Monday to Friday**  
8am - 7pm

Consultations by appointment  
8.30am - 10.30am  
4.30pm - 6.30pm

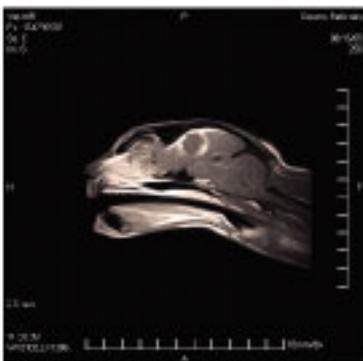
On Saturday we are open  
9am - 12pm for urgent cases

**0117 962 2828**  
**24hr Emergency Cover**

# MRI Scanner

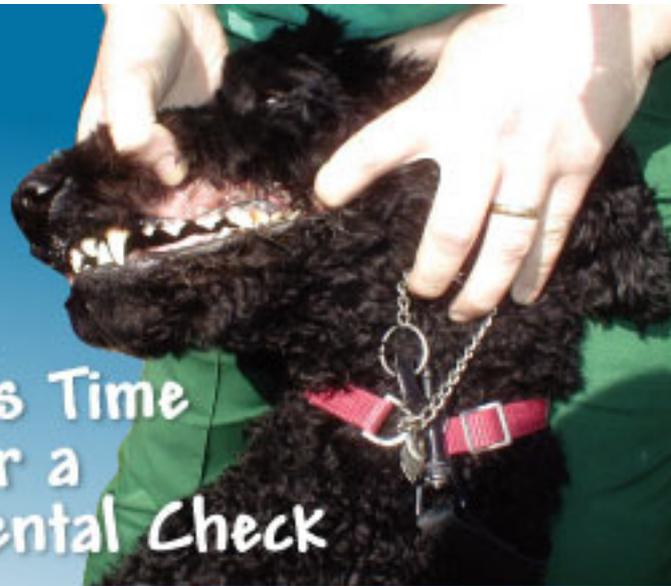
Our fully integrated scanner plays a key part in allowing the Downs Veterinary Practice to provide a quality referral service to the south-west region. The scanner which is on site, is now approaching its second year in use. It has proved extremely successful in aiding the diagnosis of a range of orthopaedic, soft tissue and neurology cases.

An MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scanner, unlike a CT scanner does not use radiation. It combines the use of a large magnet with radio waves, which creates a magnetic field. The hydrogen atoms in the animal's body react to this field. The computer then analyses the signal produced and converts it into an image.



This is an MRI scan of a cat's head (side-on view). In this case the cat had severe neurological deficiencies, therefore the scan was centred on looking at the brain. By using the scanner it enabled us to quickly diagnose that this patient

had a brain tumour, which can be seen in the front section of the brain.



## What would happen if we did not brush our teeth?

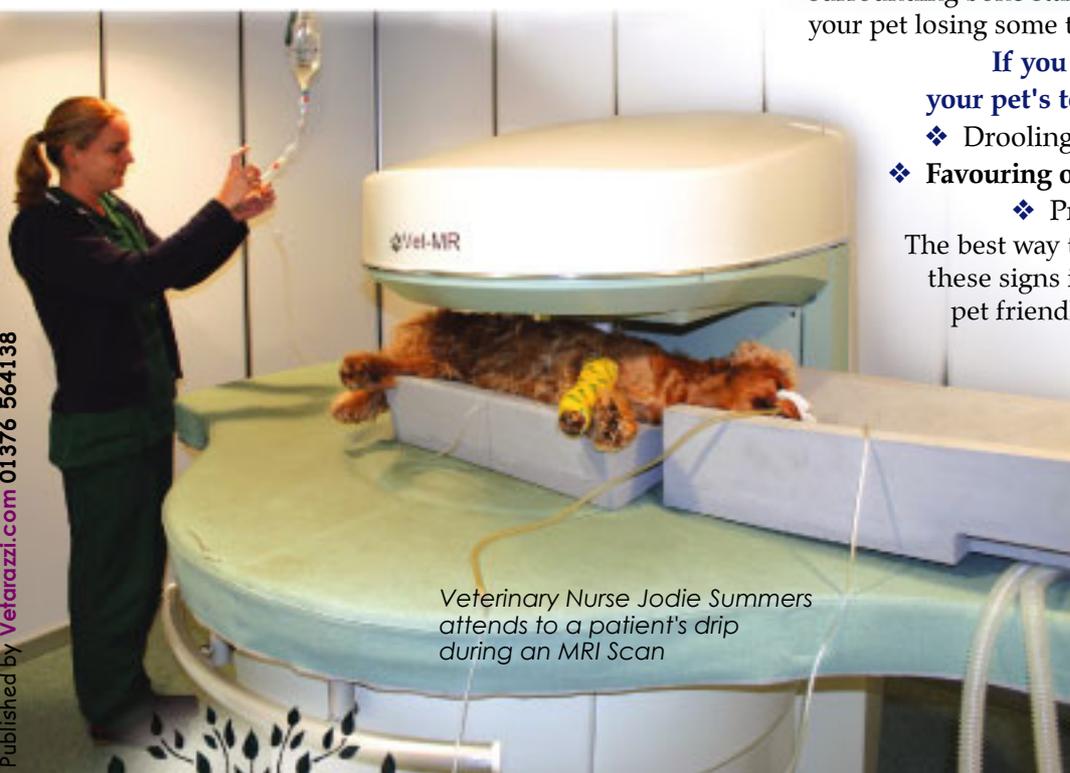
A substance called plaque would build up which can cause many problems. Well our pets' teeth are no different, so it is very important, especially in elderly pets, to clean and have their teeth checked regularly. If not brushed frequently, plaque will eventually harden to form a scale, turning the teeth a yellow colour. The plaque cannot then be removed by normal brushing. The gums surrounding the teeth may become inflamed with a condition called gingivitis. If not treated, this can lead to a more serious, very painful periodontal disease where the gum and surrounding bone start to break down. This could result in your pet losing some teeth.

**If you notice any of these signs, your pet's teeth need checking by your vet**

- ❖ Drooling
- ❖ Bad breath
- ❖ Loose teeth
- ❖ Favouring one side of the mouth when eating
- ❖ Preferring soft food only

The best way to prevent gum disease and any of these signs is by regular brushing using a special pet friendly toothbrush and palatable paste.

This will help prevent the build up of plaque on the teeth. If plaque and scale have formed, a vet can remove this by using special dental equipment to descale and polish your pet's teeth under a general anaesthetic. If you are concerned about your pet's oral health or would like to learn how to brush their teeth, please do not hesitate to contact us. Toothbrushes and paste are available to purchase from our surgery.



*Veterinary Nurse Jodie Summers attends to a patient's drip during an MRI Scan*

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