



# North Shore Veterinary Hospital

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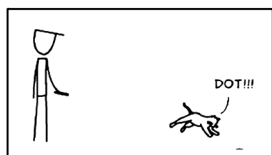
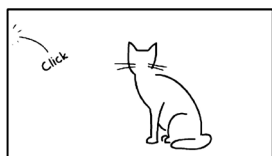
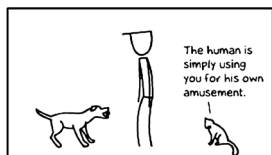
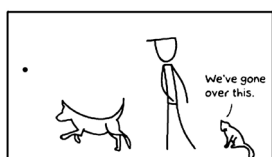
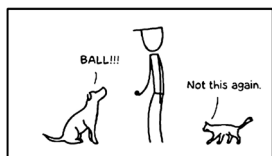
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DOGHOUSEDIARIES

Welcome to our 2016 Christmas newsletter. Isn't it wonderful how our pets (and their owners) perk up as we experience the warmth of the sun and the longer days.

Exams are now a thing of the past and thoughts are turning to the upcoming holidays.

As always, if you are planning a holiday away, do check that arrangements are in place for your pets, that kennel and cattery bookings are confirmed and that all required vaccinations are up to date.

While we have had the services of specialist veterinarians for some time now, primarily in the form of the Veterinary Specialist Group at Carrington, the Shore can now boast its own Specialist Centre, the Animal Referral Centre, which opened on 14 November 2016. I attended an open evening there before the actual opening and was very impressed with the new setup.

The building is very spacious and has had a lot of thought put into the design. The separate reception areas, waiting rooms and consultation rooms for dogs and cats will help reduce stress in both cats and dogs.

The centre is also well equipped boasting a CT scanner which will make getting advanced imaging more accessible for us. They will also be providing an afterhours service to supplement the two that are presently available.

On a personal note our family has had a traumatic time with our pets over the last 3 months.

Tubby, our blind, brain damaged cat has gone missing. He has had a wunderlust, since his injury, over the last 8 years getting lost on countless occasions. In the past we have always managed to find him and bring him home, but, it seems this time he will not be coming home.

Alex, one of our Lonely Miaow rescues, developed a mass in his lower bowel and was quietly euthanased at home with his family around him.

Finally Melissa, our SPCA special. She had to be put to sleep mid November having suffered with arthritis and liver damage for some time. An internal bleed forced us to make the very sad decision. Home and the office are very quiet without her. She was never the ideal clinic dog - varying her welcomes between offering pieces of paper hastily pulled from the nearest bin, to charging out with a loud bark guarding the clinic. She was all bark and no bite but there will be many relieved couriers no doubt.

We do miss them all dearly.



# Skin Itches

Itchiness is frustrating; frustrating for the poor pet involved, frustrating for the owner who has to deal with it and frustrating for the veterinarian who has to solve the problem.

While many of the conditions causing skin problems can be quite easily diagnosed and treated, for example, those with parasitic or infectious causes, there are many that have an underlying allergy base which complicates matters.

Some itches are easy to solve. Flea allergy dermatitis, being one of the most common causes in both dogs and cats, responds well to initial treatment of any secondary damage done and then close attention to flea control.

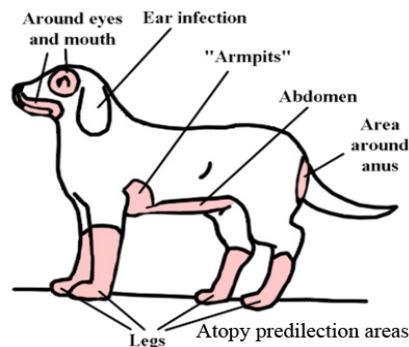
With food allergies we are again blessed with some very good hypoallergenic foods. While this regime is more time consuming (a minimum trial of 10-12 weeks is required) and harder to implement we do get very good results in some cases. A point made at a recent dermatology seminar I attended is that one mustn't always expect 100% success with a hypoallergenic food trial as some pets have multiple allergies. If any improvement is shown it is worth continuing with the hypoallergenic food. In fact the dermatologist went on to say that with any allergic condition it is not always feasible or even possible to get rid of all itchiness. The aim is to reduce the level of discomfort

to an acceptable level for the pet.

More difficult to control or avoid are contact allergies where plants or grasses trigger a localised reaction.

Finally another cause, known as Atopy, is probably the most difficult to deal with as it involves all other airborne allergens present in our environment.

Now thought to enter via a defective skin barrier (rather than being inhaled) these allergens (allergy producing substances) include pollens, yeasts, moulds, house dust and dustmites.



The frequent bathing of young dogs is now discouraged as it is suspected that this strips away the skin's protective layers and allows allergens to penetrate the skin. The allergens are then exposed to our immune system and an inappropriate sensitivity occurs. A genetic basis also plays a part in the development of atopy and it is usually seen in young dogs typically from about a year of age.

Treatments include limiting exposure to allergens although this is not usually practical. Other treatments include immunotherapy

## Cornered

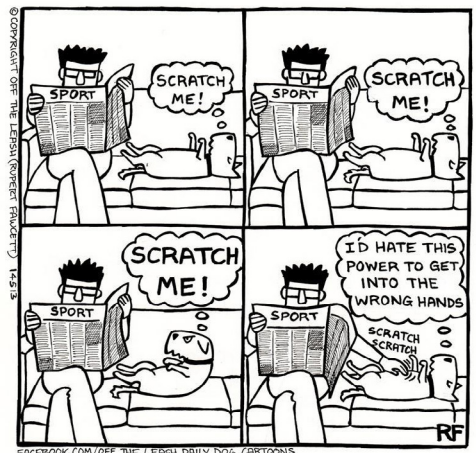
by Mike Baldwin



(hyposensitisation), anti – inflammatory medications (apoquel, atopica, prednisone and fatty acid supplements) and topical treatments in the form of shampoos. Bathing removes the allergens that are adhering to the surface of the skin, and the medicated ingredients also help to reduce itching and control secondary infections.

Using lukewarm water cools the skin to reduce itching.

Repairing the skin barrier seems the logical way to help treat or control atopy and in the past we have used a topical fatty acid preparation called Essential 6®. A recently launched food by Hills Science called Derm Defence® should go a long way to helping relieve those annoying itches.



# When Your Cat Gets the “Midnight Crazies”

Here is an article I came across recently - a situation I'm sure all cat owners have experienced.

It's 1 a.m. and you're jolted awake by the sound of a trash can lid hitting the floor. You shuffle into your kitchen and there's your cat perched on the kitchen counter - you swear she's grinning at you. She lets out a howl, leaps to the floor, runs sideways, leaps into the air, and pounces on nothing with all her might. Your cat has been gripped by the “midnight crazies.”

The “midnight crazies” is a popular name for a cat's behaviour when she plays and roughhouses in short spurts in the middle of the night. She may jump on your bed and paw at your feet, elbows, hair and face to get you to join in.



What motivates a cat to such boisterous and disruptive behaviour? One theory is that the cat is simply practising hunting methods, fighting manoeuvres, and escape techniques.

“Cats in the wild are active at times when rodents come out, typically after dark,” says Sandy Myers, an animal behaviour consultant with Narnia Pet Behaviour Clinic in Naperville, Ill. “A cat naturally wants to spend her evenings hunting and playing predator games, even if she is a well-fed house pet.”

Another theory is that house cats become active at night simply because they aren't getting enough play and exercise during the day. Many house cats spend the days alone while their owners are at work and when the owner comes home in the evening, the cat wants to play and will be very active.

Late-night activity is especially common in young cats with a lot of energy to

spare, and in new kittens who simply do not know any better. “The kitten may never have lived with a human family before and not know that she is expected to sleep through the night,” Myers says. “She may also feel a little unsure of her new human family and be uncomfortable about living in unfamiliar surroundings.”

Here are some suggestions for coping with a nocturnally active cat.

## Provide More Opportunities for Play

Make sure you're meeting your cat's needs for play at appropriate times during the day and early evening. If you're home during the day, take breaks with your cat by spending a few minutes tossing cat toys for her. Try to keep your cat busy and active so that she doesn't sleep for too long during the daytime, at least until she is in the habit of sleeping at night.

If you're away at work from 9 to 5, try to spend some time playing with your cat before you leave for work, and then have another play session after you get home in the evening. Have your last play session about an hour before you go to bed. “If you play a lot with your cat immediately before you go to bed, you will get her all charged up and she won't be able to fall asleep,” Meyers notes.

## ‘Evening Proof’ Your Home

Try to anticipate the mischief your cat might want to get into while you're asleep and plan accordingly. Put garbage pails, kitchen glassware, lamp cords, computer keyboards, books, and clothing out of harm's way before going to bed.

## Confine Your Cat for the Evening

If your cat is especially boisterous or destructive at night, you may need to confine her to a spare bedroom or bathroom for the evening. Make sure your cat is in a big enough space so that she's able to walk around. Provide food, water, a litter box, and scratching post in the same room. If your cat starts whining because she wants to come out, don't give in. “If you do, you will be rewarding the cat for vocalizing and scratching at the door,” Simpson says. That means she'll learn that she'll get what she wants if she cries long enough.

## Interrupt Bad Behaviours

If you allow your cat to sleep in your bedroom or have free reign of the house at night, you may want to have either a spray bottle or a gun-shaped hair dryer on hand so if your cat wakes you up with her meowing, you can just reach for the hair dryer and blast the cat with some air or water. “Doing so won't hurt the cat, but will simply startle and discourage her from doing the same thing again,” Simpson notes.

Punish the specific action, and do it at the beginning of the behaviour. “Then once the cat stops meowing in your face, you can then pick her up and snuggle,” Myers says. But don't give any attention during the actual bad behaviour.

“Sometimes pet owners pick up the cat while she is saying ‘meow’ and in effect they are just reinforcing the meowing,” Meyers says.

Keep in mind that it's unrealistic to think your cat should sleep all night if you haven't taught her to do so or if you haven't met her need for play during other times in the day. Remember, cats need recreation and sleep, just as humans do. The trick is coordinating your schedules so both you and your pet can be happy.





# Microchips

These have been around for some time now and are a great aid in reuniting lost pets with their owners. We see a growing trend of cats being microchipped, mainly for identification purposes but also to

support the growing popularity of microchip activated cat doors. This is pleasing as it allows lost cats to be reunited with their owners very quickly. Please do remember to register them on the NZCAR database

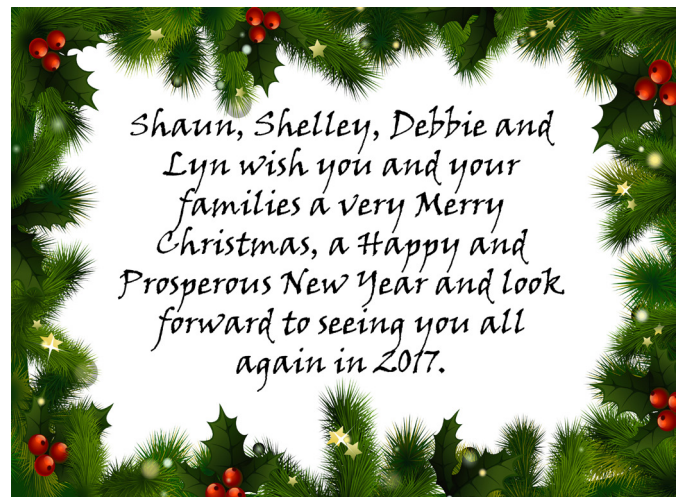
and to keep contact details current. A microchip, as a permanent form of identification, is also a legal requirement for the import or export of any animal.



## New Products

Recently arrived is a new flea treatment from MSD called Bravecto(R) Spot-On. This topical will provide 3 months protection against fleas and will complement the 3 monthly tablet Bravecto(R) that we have for dogs. Note that whereas the dog's treatment is by tablet (a topical is also on the horizon) this will be a topical applied to the skin. This should help us in the fight against fleas and comes at a good time when fleas are at their most active.

Semintra(R) by Boehringer Ingelheim is a new oral treatment for cats suffering from chronic kidney disease and protein loss in their urine. This will be an alternative to the tablet Fortekor. It reportedly has a sugary taste so should be well tolerated.



## Christmas and New Year Hours

Dec 23 Fri	8am - 6.00pm
Dec 24 Sat	Closed
Dec 25 Sun	Closed
Dec 26 Mon	Closed
Dec 27 Tues	Closed
Dec 28 Wed	8am - 6.00pm
Dec 29 Thur	8am - 6.00pm
Dec 30 Fri	8am - 6.00pm
Dec 31 Sat	Closed
Jan 1 Sun	Closed
Jan 2 Mon	Closed
Jan 3 Tue	Closed
Jan 4 Wed	8am - 6.00pm

Our usual hours will apply on other days.

The North Shore Veterinary Hospital is open from 8am to 6.00pm weekdays and 9am to noon on Saturdays. Our receptionists will be happy to assist you during those times, and are qualified to advise you on pet nutrition and flea control.

For a veterinary consultation, please telephone first (phone 4899759) to make an appointment, as a vet may not always be immediately available.

When we are closed, please contact either of the following clinics.

After Hours Veterinary Clinic in Glenfield (Phone 443 5640)

The Animal Referral Centre at 224 Albany Highway (phone 281 5815)

Animal Emergency Centre in Carrington Road, Mt Albert (Phone 849 2121) and they will be happy to assist in any emergency.