



## YOUR PETS AND COVID-19

**Your pets are safe from the Novel Corona Virus COVID-19 that is causing the current pandemic.**

As the pandemic caused by COVID-19 spreads around the world it is being followed by a plague of misinformation and fake news about the causes, effects, treatments and trajectories of the virus, many of which could do more harm than the actual virus.

One story that circulated in late February and created some concern was the story of a dog in Hong Kong who seemed to have contracted the COVID-19 virus. This caused many to worry that our pets may help the virus transmit.

However, further examination of this case by specialist veterinarians has shown that the dog in question was probably not in any danger of becoming sick.

Specialists from Hong Kong Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department reported the case of a pet dog testing "weak positive to Covid-19 virus" on the 28 February. The dog had no symptoms and was put into quarantine.

The dog in question lived with an individual already infected and diagnosed with COVID-19, who was undergoing home isolation at the time.

After monitoring the dog's health for a week, the Department concluded that the dog had a "low-level infection, likely



World Health Organisation advice is that your pets will not get sick from the Novel Corona Virus COVID-19

caused by human-to-animal transfer" – i.e. the dog may have picked up traces of the virus from its owner, possibly by licking contaminated surfaces around the house.

However, the dog's health was unaffected, leading the WHO to conclude that there is no evidence of risk that your pet will contract or suffer ill effects from COVID-19.

This is in line with previous experience from similar virus outbreaks in the past. For example, some domestic pets tested positive for a low level of SARS infection back in 2003, but none became sick or transmitted the disease to humans.

So your pets are safe from the effects of COVID-19.

But the weak positive test on the dog in Hong Kong should urge us all to be cautious around pets that may have been exposed to people who have become infected with COVID-19.

### Can my pet pass the virus on?

As the Hong Kong case shows, it is possible for your pet to become contaminated with the virus. This means that although they will not contract the virus themselves, they may be able to transmit it via their fur or saliva.

As the COVID-19 virus spreads through fluid droplets (e.g. from coughs, sneezes, etc), a dog that licks an infected person or surface, and then licks an uncontaminated person could pass the infection on.

To avoid this, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that "You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick with COVID-19, just like you would around other people".

Similarly, you should always practice good hygiene with your pets, washing your hands after contact. And it's probably not a great idea to let them kiss or lick you on the mouth.

The take away message is that your pets are just like the other members of your family when it comes to stopping the spread of COVID-19. If they've been in contact with someone sick, they could pass the virus on, so protect them just like the rest of your family – with social distancing, good hygiene and a calm head.

*NOTE: This information is in line with current advice from the RSPCA, the Australian Veterinary Association and the NSW Dept of Health.*



There have been no recorded incidents of a pet cat being infected or passing on the COVID-19 Virus

# COVID-19, YOU AND US

There is no need to panic. Essential services aren't going to stop, our nation's food security is good and we make toilet paper in South Australia. Here at Gawler Veterinary Services

our established hygiene policies entail mandatory hand-washing and disinfection after each consult/appointment. Clinic and consult rooms are cleaned with a total spectrum disinfectant that is confirmed to kill the COVID-19 virus.

We will be maintaining our high standards of hygiene and cleanliness, and, where required, we will not hesitate to implement further measures to ensure you, our clients, are kept safe.

## WAITING IN THE CAR?

In the current environment, when you arrive at one of our clinics for an appointment you may feel more comfortable waiting in your car rather than the waiting room. If you have a consultation or appointment booked and would rather wait in your car, simply give us a call from your mobile

when you arrive. When the vet is ready to see your pet, one of our staff will come out to the car park to let you know. Doing this will help the national campaign of "social distancing" and so contribute to protecting both our clients and our staff.



## I'M IN ISOLATION AND NEED A VET WHAT CAN I DO?

We can help. If you are in isolation or quarantine and your pet needs a vet, please give us a call. We will work with you on a case by case basis to ensure your pet gets the treatment they need. Due to understandable health and safety restrictions, we would not be able to visit your pet at home, but with our high standards of hygiene and stringent disinfection procedures we feel confident in minimising any chance of infection via your pet if they were required to present at the clinic.



With options including phone appointments or video links, we will work with each of you on a case by case basis to make sure that your pet doesn't miss out on crucial health care during times of quarantine or self-imposed isolation.

## REGULAR MEDICATIONS

If your pet is on regular medications that will need to be filled, we can help with that too. We're determined to work with any and all of our clients to help you and your pets through the next few months with as little stress as possible.

If you find your pet is coming close to the end of their regular medications, please contact us.

We can organise to make sure the supplies are in, and an appropriate way for the medications to make it to you. The important thing from your perspective is just to let us know early, then we'll do everything we can to ensure that the medications your pet needs are in stock and available for pick-up and/or delivery.

Please remember that at this stage there are no shortages of veterinary medications, there is no need to panic buy or stock up. Just give us a call and we'll work together to ensure you and your pet have got the medicines you need.



# THE KITTEN KABOODLE WITH HUGO



Kittens might be incredibly cute, but seeing so many recently has brought home to me that we need to keep spreading the message about desexing our cats

My humans have spent the last few weeks fussing and cooing over kittens. Now don't get me wrong, I love the little furballs, but they are living proof we need to work harder to get the desexing message across.

Over the last month we have played host to three cute little fluffballs, one that seems to have lost its home and doesn't know where to find it, and two that never seem to have had a home at all.

We had hoped to hand these little ones over to the Cat Adoption Foundation, but unfortunately this wonderful organisation is already swamped by demand and have been unable to find any volunteers to take these kittens of our hands.

So my humans have stepped into the breach, taking turns caring for each of the little ones, making sure they are healthy, happy and ready for a forever home when the time comes.

But it has brought the issue of desexing to the forefront of my moggy mind.

These cute little guys are the innocent victims of the situation they find themselves in, and while we and so many great volunteer organisations around the state will do our best to ensure that these kittens are well raised, healthy and adopted into a loving home, they should never have been in this situation in the first place.

Our Australian cat population is very large. It has increased over years and years of unwanted litters being abandoned and a huge feral population of cats has come to



Left to their own devices these three cuties may have grown up to kill a combined total of over 2000 native animals per year!

threaten our native wildlife. Obviously, we have to deal with this major threat to our native wildlife, and we have to do it by reducing the number of cats roaming free in our country.

Each of these three little kittens, if not found and handed in to us or another organisation, would have grown up to become part of a 2-4 million feral population of cats that roam across our country - each one killing about 750 native animals a year.

In addition, if the ginger boy and worried looking girl above got together in the wild, they could produce up to four litters a year, with their children then doing the same from just 4 months old. In just seven years, those two cute little faces could cause over 420,000 cats to be born!

Now while governments and other organisations are attempting to deal with the the feral feline population through a range of measures, including trapping, exclusion fencing, baiting, re-wilding, guardian dogs, conservation sniffer dogs, and even traditional Indigenous hunting, we need to do everything we can to make sure we are not adding to the problem by creating more cats without homes.

If you are a cat owner, I say to you as a cat myself, the best thing you can do to help keep our native animals safe and avoid cute little faces like those above from being abandoned into the wild



to fend for themselves is to get your cat desexed. it only takes one night where your Tom stays out or your furry girl doesn't come home and you could be getting ready to pick up the litter!

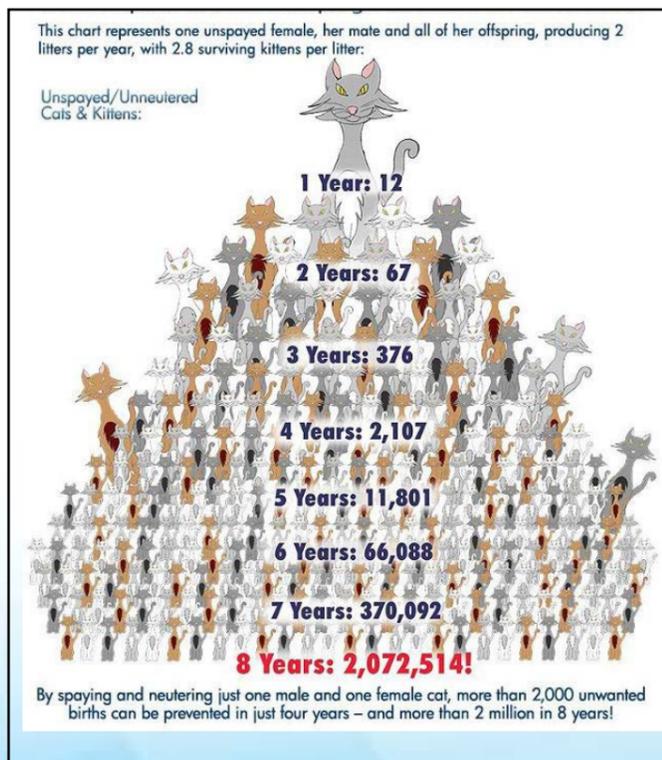
Desexing also comes with a range of other benefits for your cat. It can reduce roaming and aggression which will help protect them from Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and reduce the number of fights they are likely to get themselves into.

As much as my humans love these little kittens, each one is living proof that we are not doing enough to get the message about desexing across.

It's not fair to these little ones that they were born and left to make their own way in the world - they're too young!

Just before I go, please let me draw your attention to the pyramid picture on the left. Just a couple of my species, left to their own devices can conceivably lead to over 2 million new cats in 8 years!!

So please, if you own a cat, get them desexed.



# CELEBRATING BELLE BRUCE REID

In 1906 five aspiring veterinary students at Melbourne University - 4 men and one woman - sat their final exam. Only one of them passed. She was Isabelle "Belle" Bruce Reid, who was the first registered female veterinarian in the entire British Empire.

As 18th century progressed the field of veterinary science became more professional, with new "Veterinary Colleges" being established in London (1791), Philadelphia (1852) and Melbourne (1888) The graduates from these colleges were almost exclusively men, and as veterinary science became more professional, it also came to be dominated by males.

In the 1800's it seemed to be just accepted that veterinary science was an occupation for men.

One Danish community's advert for a new village vet in 1880 tells the story:

*We are looking for an older veterinarian, even a handicapped veterinarian.*

*If there is no other candidate, a female veterinarian may also apply.*

Given this advertisement, it is obvious that there were female veterinarians around, but that they were not given equal standing in terms of competence or knowledge as their male counterparts.

By the 1900's numerous women had studied Veterinary Science at colleges around the world, including more than a few Russian noblewomen who moved to Paris to study Veterinary Science in the 1880s and 90s.

But unfortunately for many of these women, study was all they could do. Although they were tolerated at lectures they were rarely ever acknowledged through grades or academic recognition.

It wasn't until the 1900's that women started to crash through the barriers they had faced, and began to be recognised as qualified, professional vets.

Aileen Cust graduated from Edinburgh in 1900, having used a fake name (A.I. Custance) to enrol in the course. Mignon Nicholson graduated from a Chicago school in 1907, Elinor McGrath in 1907 and Florence Kimball graduated from New York State Veterinary College in 1910.

But the first ever woman to become an officially registered member of any Veterinary College in the British Empire, and very possibly the world was Isabelle "Belle" Bruce Reid from Melbourne.

The youngest of the 10 children of Robert Reid, a merchant and politician in the Victorian Colonial Parliament, Belle grew up on a prosperous estate and developed a love of singing and animals.

Her parents, appalled at the idea of the daughter pursuing a career on the stage, supported her decision to enrol at the Melbourne Veterinary College in 1902.

Despite the prevailing attitude to female vets in other parts of the world, Belle maintained that she was never subject to discrimination during her studies, with an article in the Melbourne Times in 1912 reading:

*"Miss Reid declares that she has never been made to feel the influence of this petty prejudice in Australia, either as a student at the college or since she entered the area of professionalism".*



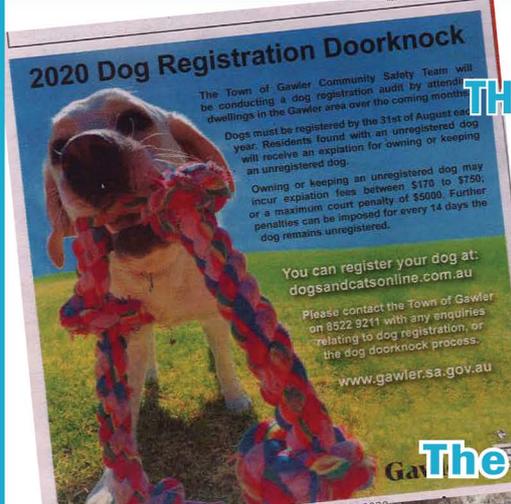
MISS BELLE REID,  
And her Pomeranian "Poudre."

Dr Reid went on to set up her own clinic in Balwyn in Victoria, on land owned by her family, where she became a very successful and well known figure in the area, attending her appointments down the country lanes on a buggy and trap.

In 1996 her name was included in the National Pioneer Women's Hall of Fame, and in 2006 the University of Melbourne awarded the Belle Bruce Reid Medal to 100 notable female veterinarians.

In the century since Dr Reid's day the numbers of female vets has increased exponentially. At least half the veterinarians currently working are now women, and you only have to look at our own clinics to see the brilliant contribution female veterinarians make every day.

But it's all thanks to pioneers like Belle Bruce Reid!



**2020 Dog Registration Doorknock**

The Town of Gawler Community Safety Team will be conducting a dog registration audit by attending dwellings in the Gawler area over the coming months.

Dogs must be registered by the 31st of August each year. Residents found with an unregistered dog will receive an expiation for owning or keeping an unregistered dog.

Owning or keeping an unregistered dog may incur expiation fees between \$170 to \$750, or a maximum court penalty of \$5000. Further penalties can be imposed for every 14 days the dog remains unregistered.

You can register your dog at: [dogsandcatsonline.com.au](http://dogsandcatsonline.com.au)

Please contact the Town of Gawler on 8522 9211 with any enquiries relating to dog registration, or the dog doorknock process.

[www.gawlersa.gov.au](http://www.gawlersa.gov.au)

**IS YOUR DOG REGISTERED?**

**THE COUNCIL ARE COMING TO CHECK!**

- Reduce your fee
- Avoid a fine
- Desex & microchip to save \$\$

**BOOK NOW!**

**The vets your pets would choose**



**Gawler Veterinary Services**

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(just past the BP and on the left)

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