



# CHB VETS LTD

5 Northumberland Street, Waipukurau

ph 06 858 6555

e: reception@chbvets.nz

Veterinary newsletter

August 2020



## Shelter

After the last few months with such extreme weather events, it is a good time to think about planning for the provision of shelter for our farm animals. We expect our animals to cope with changing weather conditions and often with severe and extreme events. As the people in charge of these animals, we have an obligation to ensure that our animals are provided with adequate shelter or protection as suits their species, environment and physiological state.

Adverse weather can happen at any time of year and includes droughts, storms, floods, heavy snow, rain, and strong winds. These events can affect the welfare of fit and normal sheep but will have an even greater impact on vulnerable animals like newborn lambs, freshly shorn sheep or those suffering from an illness or disease.

In hot conditions, sheep will seek shade and drink more. In severe conditions they will show signs of panting and when really struggling the tongue will be extended. In cold conditions, sheep will find places out of the wind or rain, hunch up and shiver, facing away from the wind. As hypothermia progresses they become depressed and listless and may even die.



The provision of shelter can range from planting trees to provide wind breaks and shade, building small sheds for animals to shelter in and around, to putting windbreak cloth along the prevailing fenceline, planting tussock and using the lay of the land to reduce the wind effect.

It is important to take note of the weather forecast when planning shearing, mustering and yarding to avoid extremes of temperatures, both hot and cold. Have an idea of what you might do to protect your stock if an unusual weather event is expected. Is there somewhere you can move them to keep



them safe from floods, snow, rainfall and droughts?



The provision of shelter doesn't need to be an expensive construction effort. There are lots of ways to provide some protection from the elements. Your stock will do much better if you can reduce the impact of weather on them.



## 5 fun facts about chickens

- Chickens can remember over 100 different faces of people or animals
- Chickens can taste saltiness, but not sweetness
- Chickens have prehistoric roots and are the closest living relative of the Tyrannosaurus Rex
- Chickens have their own unique language with over 30 different sounds used to communicate
- A mother hen turns her eggs about 50 times per day, and can lay more than 300 eggs per year



### **The big question: Is this an emergency or not and how serious is it...?**

This is just to act as a guideline for you to decide whether you need to get your animal to a clinic asap or not. If you are unsure, please give your veterinarian a call immediately to discuss the situation. A phone consult can be tricky, because decisions rely on the owners' interpretation of the situation and symptoms, especially if there aren't obvious signs.

### **The BIG 3!**

**1.) Respiratory:** Is the animal breathing? What is the rate and depth of the breaths? Is there difficulty/effort when breathing? Make sure air is actually flowing in and out. Hold your hand in front of the nose/ a tuft of hair and look for movement if in doubt.

**2.) Cardiovascular:** Is the animal bleeding? Is it trickling/squirting? If it is, apply constant pressure. If blood seeps through or still drip from a pressure bandage after 10min, call the vet. The easiest way to get an idea of how severe blood loss is, is to lift the animals' lip and look at the color of the gums, or pull the lower eyelid down. Normal mucous membranes are pink, moist and glistening. It can be compared to other animals in the household or to your own if you are unsure.

**3.) Neurological:** Is the animal conscious or not? What is the level of awareness? If you have a seizing animal, stay calm...and call the vet. If an animal had a stroke or an epileptic fit they can look confused, lost or might not recognise you, but this usually get better with time. Although not an immediate emergency, liver or renal disease can also cause neurological symptoms for example head pressing against a wall, just staring into space or aimless wondering. If an animal has sudden weakness in the hind quarters, loss of coordination or dragging the back legs this could be a sign of disc injury in the spine, definitely talk to the vet.

## Old age is not a disease .... but arthritis is!

Winter is here, so that means lower temperatures. These lower temperatures can have a huge effect on how we and our furry companions feel especially the joints.

Arthritis (osteoarthritis – OA) in the joints is the most common cause of chronic pain in dogs. It affects 4 out of 5 older dogs. It is a disabling, non-curable, and progressive disease which initially focuses on moving joints but eventually affects the whole dog and is a major cause of euthanasia due to loss of quality of life.

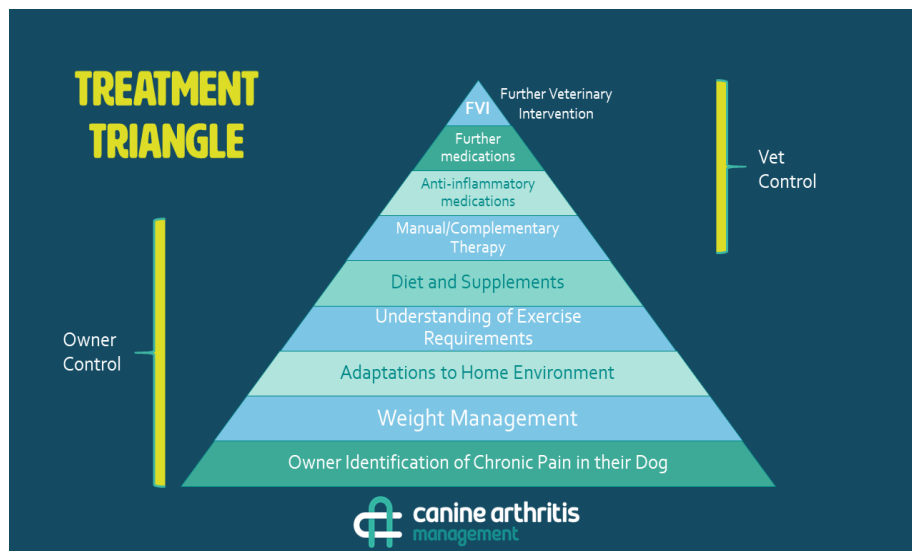
Certain breeds are more likely to suffer from arthritis, such as large to medium breeds; and certain lifestyles can promote its development such as hard exercise or long-term obesity.

Osteoarthritis tends to reveal itself late in its course, because the initial changes are within the joint and therefore not visible, plus because your dog has 4 limbs, they can shift weight, change posture and cope. It is common that owners will not notice changes in their dog's willingness to exercise, ability to do what they used to do, and changes in the way their dog walks and runs, till they have significant arthritis.

Most owners arrive at the vets saying 'he's slowing up' or 'he's getting old'; they do not realize this is because their dog is in significant pain, as they expect them to whimper, yelp, or limp. But dogs do not show pain like we do.

There are many ways to manage arthritis, but three rules apply to all approaches:

1. We need to identify the signs of discomfort the dog expresses. These are unique to your dog and often subtle, such as short-lived enthusiasm when exercised, scuffing of nails or pads when walking, moving with an arch in their back, difficulty getting up and laying down or toileting on the move.
2. We need to understand that arthritis is not curable but progressive. All treatment options are aimed at managing the problem, not fixing it.
3. The best way to offer your dog a pain-free life for as long as possible, is to start early with management of OA to slow the progression down and combine different treatment options together. It is unlikely that one option on its own will be enough.



What can you do for your dog at home?

- Keep your furry friend warm with a coat when outside
- Create a comfortable and warm space to sleep (inside, off the floor, memory foam makes great dog bed)
- Massage and heat therapy (wheat bag or hot pack) are a good way to help your dog with sore joints and muscles
- Use of steps and ramps to get your dog in- and outside, on the couch or bed and in and out the car
- Non-slippery floors around the house can prevent injuries

If you would like to discuss the options available to improve your dog's quality of life, give us a ring today to book a consult.

## Spring is in the air!

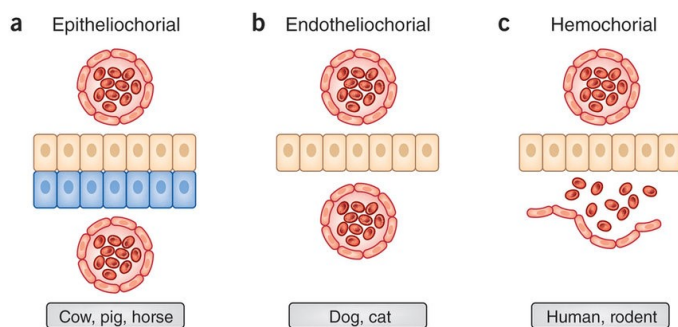
We are heading into the “baby season” – calves, lambs and in a few months foals are born – and although we hope that the mothers know their Job and give birth and can rear their offspring themselves – we do end up with pet lambs, calves and sometimes even orphan foals that have to be bottle fed. Unfortunately these young animals are the most vulnerable ones and are very likely to contract disease if we don’t take good care of them.

Probably the main thing that we always need to think of – **did the orphan receive a sufficient amount of Colostrum from the mother??**

If not – then we NEED to supplement it – either by giving Colostrum replacer – eg powder bought from the store – or Colostrum from another Ewe, Cow or Mare. (Lambs can receive Cows Colostrum)

**WHY is Colostrum so important** – especially why is it more important than it seems to be in human babies?

Some of you may know but it is - Because of the different placenta types!!!



In the diagram above you can see the bloods vessels of the Foetus above and the Blood vessels/blood supply of the mother below. Both are separated by a varying number of layers depending on the species

Type A is the placenta we find in SHEEP, CATTLE, PIGS and HORSES where – easily explained – maternal and foetal blood are well separated by multiple layers – thus making a passing of ANTIBODIES, also called Ig G, impossible.

Type B is a placenta with an in between stage e.g. maternal and foetal blood are well separated but only by few layers – which we can find in DOGS and CATs.

Type C is what we have in humans – our maternal blood is the closest to the foetal blood vessels - with the least amount of layers in between – allowing a passing of Antibodies eg IgG!!

In conclusion – we humans are already capable of transferring lifesaving, disease protecting Antibodies to our babies in uterus – it starts around the 5<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy.

Dogs and Cats are limited to do so thus they are still relying on supplying a large amount of Antibodies to their new-borns through the first milk e.g. Colostrum

AND – calves, lambs and foals have not received Antibodies throughout the pregnancy thus their FIRST drink – e.g. the GOLDEN Colostrum is what protects them from all the diseases they are suddenly confronted with in their new environment.

Thus spend the money and the time to ensure your new babies this year receive quality Colostrum in any form you can get – otherwise it would be like sending them to War without Weapons!