



THE BARRACKS
VET SURGERY
MOSMAN

TICKS

Australia is home to a number of black, brown or grey species of ticks, one of which is the devastating grey “paralysis” tick (*Ixodes Holocyclus*). Ticks are tiny parasites which attach to animals (and people), inject a toxin and draw a blood meal. After feeding they become engorged. They thrive in bushland where they find intermediary hosts such as possums, and can drop on to your pet from shrubs.



Prevention

During the Spring and Summer months in Sydney, and throughout the year in bushy areas, we recommend you treat your pets for ticks. *Nexgard* is a monthly oral chew for dogs that has made tick prevention much easier and more effective. Top spot treatments are also available, must be applied fortnightly. *Frontline* is safe for both dogs and cats, but *Advantix* can be fatal to cats so it is best not to use on dogs who live with a cat.

Even if you are punctual with applying the top spot, you should still do a tick search every day as ticks may attach temporarily despite the treatment. Simply run your hands all over your pet's skin, paying particular attention to the shoulders and head where 90% of attachments occur. However every crevice, such as between the toes, is worth searching.

Try to keep your pet out of bushy areas and be careful with heavily vegetated backyards.

Symptoms

The classic symptoms of tick poisoning are weakness in the back legs, a hoarse bark or meow, lethargy and gagging or vomiting. The greatest danger is from respiratory paralysis. Those animals which are treated with a tick serum and recover must be kept quiet for weeks afterwards to reduce stress.

Removal

We recommend you buy a pair of inexpensive “tick twisters” to remove any ticks easily. It's a wise idea to keep one at home and one in the car. Slide the feet of the twister beneath the tick and rotate as you lift. This will disengage the mouth parts which have burrowed under the skin. Put the tick in a small clear bag or attach it to sticky tape to stop it escaping! Then bring both the tick and the dog to your vet without delay as the symptoms can worsen even after the tick is removed.

Treatment

The pet will be assessed by the Vet who will recommend treatments such as tick serum, intravenous support, oxygen therapy and possibly 24 hour nursing in hospital. If the tick is found and removed early within 1-2 days, major treatment will be avoided. So prevention is vital!