

VetTalk Newsletter

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SUMMER 07

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Protect your cat from sunburn
- Check your rabbit twice a day
- Fly prevention is better than cure
- Remember to apply your flea and tick treatments to your dogs and cats



Sunburn in cats

Did you know pure white cats or multicoloured cats with white ears can get sunburnt ears?

This is very important, not just because it can be painful but because it can cause a type of cancer of the ears called squamous cell carcinoma (SCC).

In affected cats the edges of the ear initially look red and flaky, scaly areas appear. As the disease progresses these areas look crusty and may ulcerate and bleed.

The most successful currently recommended treatment is resection or removal of the affected areas on the ear. Your veterinary surgeon will do their best to make the shape of the ear look as normal as possible.

Your vet may send the tissue

removed for further tests or histology so they can tell if the margins or edges of the lesion are free from cancer. Your vet will need to check your cat at regular intervals



Cat with cancer resulting from sunburn.

to ensure it remains free from cancer and other areas of the face such as the eyelids and nose (nasal planum) should be monitored closely. There are other treatment options for SCC such as

cryosurgery and radiation but surgical resection is more easily available, affordable and usually very successful. For white eared or pale coloured cats and those with very little fur cover the best prevention is to limit their time in the sun. Remember on a cloudy day you can still get 80% UV penetration! Apply protective film to your glass if your cat is determined to lie next to a window in the sunshine. Apply sun block to the ears.

Fly strike in rabbits

Referred to as fly strike or myiasis, this is when flies lay their eggs on your rabbit and these hatch into maggots which eat your rabbits flesh. Sounds horrible? It is and it's serious.

If you see maggots on your rabbit take it to your veterinary surgeon.

In mild cases the vet will need to clip and clean the affected area, remove the maggots and give your rabbit antibiotics.

In more severe cases, your rabbit may need surgery. Severely affected cases can be fatal.

Can you prevent this? Hope-

fully yes.

Check your rabbit frequently. Make sure your rabbit is cleaning itself. Check its rear end is clean. Use fly screens on the hutch and runs. Get an insect repellent from your veterinary surgery to apply to your rabbit.