



ANIMAL ANTICS

WHAT DOES THE THYROID DO?

The thyroid glands are paired structures sited either side of the trachea or major airway at the base of the neck. Their main role is to produce thyroid hormones (T3 and T4). These hormones are what vets measure in blood samples looking for thyroid disorders. They can also measure other hormones that control the glands to get a detailed picture of the animal's health status. The main function of the thyroid hormones T3 & T4 is to control the metabolic rate of the body. This basically means the speed that the body works, with hyperthyroid and hypothyroid being an increase or a decrease in hormone levels and, therefore, metabolic rate of most organs in the body.

Thyroid hormone increase will lead to over-activity of the body, with increased heart rate, weight loss, ravenous appetite, excitability and increased vocalisation. This condition usually affects cats, with dogs suffering from hypothyroidism showing lethargy, dull coat, slow heart rate etc. Thyroid hormones are essential for correct growth of both humans and animals.

Vets treat under-active thyroid glands with thyroid hormone supplementation and over-active glands with drugs to reduce T3 & T4 production or sometimes remove the gland(s) completely.

Should you feel your cat is losing weight and yet has a ravenous appetite or your dog is getting excessively lethargic, contact your veterinary practitioner to see whether a thyroid test is appropriate?



**“A PET IS FOR LIFE ...
NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS”**



A twist on the old adage, but it still holds true. If you're getting a pet this Christmas, please think very carefully. No matter how large or small the animal may be, it is a big undertaking and one to be given serious consideration. Although most people's intentions are good, unfortunately, some don't take into account the bigger picture of responsible pet ownership. You need to choose an animal that fits into your lifestyle and consider the commitment and financial implications for your pet's lifetime.

Please log onto <http://www.petpatrol365.co.uk/downloads/Dec06.pdf> for a copy of last year's full article.

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