

Rabbit Welfare Association Owner Newsletter Summer 2014



Now that the myxi and RHD vaccination is combined and only need to be given once a year we recommend a 6 monthly check in between. This is a good opportunity for your vet to check your rabbits weight, and that they are generally fit and well. Often during these checks things are picked up that are not urgent like the start of a dental spur which can be dealt with routinely rather than as an emergency when the rabbit has stopped eating, which is obviously better for the rabbit and means you have time to prepare. If you are reading this then your vet is already on the rabbit friendly vet list that we hold, so you should be in good hands, but we still thought the following would be useful.

1 Carry case. Make sure you have a carry case that opens at the top. You do not want to be trying to get a rabbit out of a front opening carry case because they always splay their back legs and it ends up being a battle. Much easier if they are easily accessed from the top. Also, if you know your vet trip is a few days away, place the carry case in the rabbits' environment and let them get used to it, feed them in it, so that the journey to the vet is less stressful.

2 Food. On the morning of the vet trip make sure you give your rabbit her favourite breakfast. Take a packed lunch with you, of all of your rabbit's favourite foods (herbs and dandelions are a favourite. and some of their usual pellets) We do not recommend fruit as part of a daily diet, but after an operation we can relax a little bit, we want them to be eating asap so we need to tempt them. A juicy nectarine or bit of apple would not be something we would give every day, but it might be just the thing to get the rabbit to start to eat again on her own. And don't forget to have some critical care / recovery sachets to hand in case you need to syringe feed too.

3 Travel. Sounds obvious, but rabbits find car journey's stressful, so no loud music, and make sure the carry case is secure on the seat with the seatbelt secured through the handle.

4 Companion. If your rabbit lives with another rabbit companion, take them both to the vet. Bonded pairs should not be separated and it will be less stressful for them to be kept together. This can often help the recovery of the rabbit that is having the operation.

5 Back home. Your rabbit should be alert and eating before being discharged. Make sure you keep them warm overnight, so this might mean keeping them indoors unless it is very warm outside, and be vigilant. Make sure they are eating and drinking as normal, otherwise you will need to syringe feed. Rabbits that are in pain will not eat, so make sure that your rabbit has had pain relief if needed, and you have some to give at home in the days following the procedure.



**If you love rabbits
you'll love the RWA!**

- Four issues of Rabbiting On
- The RWA Members Handbook.
- Hop To It, our comprehensive rabbit care guide.
- Stickers for your car and pet carrier.
- An invaluable Vet Expert Referral Services.



join online at www.bunnybazaar.com or
you can telephone the RWA's National
Helpline on **0844 324 6090**.

If in any doubt, ring your vet!