

## A Little Note From Max About Fleas

My name is Max and my carer is a Vet in Milton under Wychwood. I am what one could disrespectfully call a crossbreed or mongrel. I consider myself more correctly to be a Shih-Cairn, the result of a meeting in a North London wood between a dashing Cairn



Terrier and a rather lovely Shih-Tzu. My carer was working in North London at the time and a client told him that a rather cute litter of Shih-Cairns had been produced. As he was already looking after a Shih-Tzu he visited the litter and his wife took an immediate shine to me, as I was a happy, waggy puppy with a wonky mouth. He repeatedly called me the runt. I am still not sure what that means.

### The Big Fleas or was it Freeze?

Occasionally I am taken 'to work' by my carer where I get exposed to all sorts of interesting things, including recently a nasty case of fleas. A poor little cat came in to the surgery covered in scabs and looking very moth-eaten and depressed. Apparently she had been getting worse and worse over the last few weeks. Her housemates were all fine.

My carer examined her carefully whilst I behaved and stopped myself from jumping up at her. (I have been told not to chase cats and I do try to behave.) He discovered lots of little black bits of dirt in her coat, which were flea faeces. I was glad that I had not jumped up at her, as I

don't want fleas! Some poor animals can be allergic to flea bites and cats can appear very scabby. They can even start to vomit because they start over-grooming and swallowing a lot of hair. Other cats and dogs may not be allergic and can appear completely normal

even if they have a flea problem. My carer discussed flea issues with the poor cat's carer and pointed out a few things. The main problem is in the house, where the flea eggs will be lying around waiting to hatch. This used to be considered a seasonal issue but because of central heating it happens the whole year round now. Even when we have 'A Big Freeze'!

There were a few other points that my carer discussed but by this time I had managed to beg a treat from one of the lovely nurses so I am afraid I was not paying attention anymore. What I do remember is that there is no one way to sort out a flea problem as it very much depends on things like how many pets there are in a household and whether they are cats or dogs, or both!

I will remember to listen next time!

**Max (The Vet's Shih-Cairn)**

*P.S. If you would like to know more about fleas and their treatment options please feel free to ask my carer or one of his colleagues at Stow Veterinary Surgeons in Milton under Wychwood. Tel: 01451 830620*