

Pet experts warn: check your pet daily for paralysis ticks

Pet owners are being urged to check their pet's fur daily as paralysis tick season begins.

Pet owners are being urged to check their pet's fur daily as paralysis tick season begins.

The paralysis tick (*Ixodes holocyclus*) is a small parasite that feeds on the blood of native animals, such as possums. The tick can also bite dogs and cats, which do not have immunity to the tick.

When the tick bites a pet, it releases a neurotoxin that can cause paralysis and eventual death.

Fortunately, vets can administer a treatment serum once a paralysis tick bite has been positively identified, but the effect of the serum can slow down while symptoms worsen.

It's therefore essential to take your pet to the vet immediately if you suspect they have been bitten.

Pawshake, often described as the Airbnb for pet sitting, is urging Aussie pet owners to start checking their pet's fur daily. If a dog walker or pet sitter is involved, they should also keep a close eye out for ticks.

'You may not even see a tick once your pet displays symptoms, as it may have dropped off after biting' says Tanguy Peers, co-founder of Pawshake, 'this is why it is so important to be diligent in checking your pet's fur around their legs, belly, ears, chin, torso and tail.'

'It's a good idea to speak to your vet and discuss the various tick treatments on the market. And always clear up long grass and plant clippings from around the house.'

The paralysis tick is most active from spring through to summer and is most common in humid conditions on the east coast. The tick can be found in grassy environments and bushland, including in suburban backyards and parks.

Paralysis tick symptoms are similar between cats and dogs. The vet should be called if any of the following symptoms are spotted.

Cats can appear lethargic and wheezy, with a little gasp at the end of their breath. They also might meow more than usual, or their meow might sound different.

Dogs can appear quieter than normal or lethargic.

They can suffer from difficulty swallowing or having an unusual sounding bark, which is caused by the setting in of paralysis around the throat. They can also suffer from coughing, vomiting, retching, gagging, swelling or loss of coordination.

If you do spot a tick and it is yellow or grey with long legs (or if you find any tick you are unsure about), don't try to remove the tick or as this might make it release more toxins.

Instead, call the vet immediately and await their instructions.

For further information or quotes, please contact

Pawshake Marketing Manager: jessica@pawshake.com

<https://www.pawshake.com.au/>

Contacts

Pawshake Marketing Manager: Jessica Tanner

mailto: jessica@pawshake.com