



Animal Health Clinic of Funkstown

"We'll treat your pet like family!"

Newsletter

April-June 2008

CRITTER'S CHRONICLE

Digital Radiography –

If you have visited the clinic lately, you may have noticed some new walls and perhaps some fresh paint. This is all due to our newest addition in medical diagnostic equipment; a digital x-ray machine. Our old lab had to be moved to a new area to make room for the new equipment involved with the digital x-ray machine.

We have had a digital *dental* x-ray machine for a little over a year but have recently added a digital x-ray machine. This digital x-ray machine will allow us to take x-rays more quickly and with greater accuracy allowing the doctor to make a quicker diagnosis. Up until this point, taking an x-ray meant measuring the pet, selecting the size of the x-ray film, taking the x-ray itself, developing the film,



getting the doctor to review the record to assure that the film is readable and if not starting the process all over again! This process would take anywhere from 30 - 45 minutes per x-ray. With this digital x-ray machine that time will be cut down to only 5 - 15 minutes!

We no longer have to deal with x-ray films, making it much easier to burn copies of x-rays onto a CD for referrals, etc. Our staff is very excited about the new addition and the doctors are already finding it to be a more efficient method for taking x-rays.

Happy Anniversary –

Happy Anniversary to our Lead Technician, Erin Mills, and our Head Receptionist, Rebecca Chupak who are both celebrating 10 years here at the clinic! Having both started in June of 1998, just a couple of weeks apart, they not only share their anniversary here but their birthdays as well. Ten birthdays have come and gone for these two women as they have shared their work lives together.

Both started as receptionists but Erin found her true calling as a technician, being promoted to Lead technician in 2001 and receiving her certification as a Registered Veterinary Technician in 2004. Erin is responsible for single-handedly creating and maintaining our wonderful website,

www.funkstownvet.com and is our volleyball coach each year for Mudd Volleyball, a fundraiser held in July for the Washington County Community Free Clinic. She is our primary photographer for our many events throughout the year, as this is a passion of hers.

Erin has recently moved into a new home with her dog "Mercedes," and 3 cats "Gabby," "Zoey," and "Katie."

Rebecca has been the smiling face both behind the counter and in front usually making the puppies pee! Shortly after starting, she was promoted to Head receptionist and has carried the title proudly ever since. Besides normal receptionist duties, Rebecca is responsible for organizing our annual Pet Fair, advertising for our various activities throughout the year and writing our quarterly newsletter...hmmm, who might be writing this right now. She has a special affinity for cats and shares her home with two frisky felines, "Ethan" and "Chip" (both of which she acquired here at the clinic), 2 rats, a mouse, a gerbil, and her two beautiful children, Tyler and Mikayla.

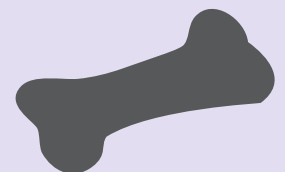
Over the years Erin and Rebecca have worked closely with each other, as well as the rest of the staff, to try to make our hospital the best that it can be. Congratulations on 10 years of service!

Care Credit –

Would you like to be able to make payments on your pets' veterinary care? Ask us about Care Credit! Care Credit is a credit card, however it differs from your normal Visa, Master Card, or Discover, which can be used anywhere. Care Credit is only able to be used at doctors, dentists, or veterinary offices. It offers a no interest payment plan on any charges over \$300. You can extend payments out over a year and as long as the balance is paid off within that year, you will not accrue any interest.

Many of us budget for our pet's yearly vaccines, deworming, heartworm and flea and tick prevention, but what happens when your pet gets ill? One bout of vomiting or diarrhea can mount up in a hurry and you may not necessarily have the extra money to pay for treatments. With Care Credit, you can make payments, which allows your pet to receive the treatment he may need. Care Credit can be used for routine care as well; vaccines, dental cleanings, medications, etc.

We have applications available at the reception desk or you can go to www.CareCredit.com and apply online. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have.





“The most common symptoms of diabetes mellitus...”

Doctor's Corner **Diabetes –**

Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a disease process that transcends species lines; from humans to dogs, cats to birds. Diabetes, often called sugar diabetes, is a complex disease in which the body either does not produce enough insulin or does not use it properly.

As the food we eat is broken down into smaller components to be used as fuel, glucose is produced. Insulin is responsible for moving glucose from the blood stream into the cells for use in the body. When insulin is not produced in sufficient quantities, we eat more, trying to get nutrition. Often what happens though is we lose weight because the nutrition is not getting to our cells and we break down fats and protein in the body. Excessive glucose in the blood is eliminated through the kidneys, which leads to increased thirst and urination and increases the risk of urinary tract infections (UTI).

The most common symptoms of diabetes mellitus we see in pets are:

- Increased water consumption
- Increased urination
- Increased appetite
- Weight loss

It has been found that male cats are more commonly diagnosed with DM than females and obesity is a major contributing factor in DM.

DM is diagnosed based on clinical symptoms, physical exam, and the presence of persistently increased levels of glucose in the pets' blood and urine.

It is important to treat DM because if left untreated it can be fatal to your pet. Treatment will depend on the severity of the disease but can range anywhere from a diet change to daily or twice daily insulin injections. The pets' blood glucose must be monitored closely, as is done with humans. If you notice any of these symptoms in your pet, it is recommended to schedule an appointment as soon as you are able so treatment can begin immediately. As with any disease the sooner it is caught, the better the outcome.

For additional information on caring for your diabetic pet, you can visit www.vet.cornell.edu.

Dr. Virginia Scrivener

Heartworm Disease –



Along with the beauty and rebirth of spring Heartworm disease in cats and dogs is a serious and life-threatening illness. To help you better understand heartworm disease, enclosed is an excerpt from the American Heartworm Society's website, www.heartwormsociety.org.

How Heartworms Happen: The Life Cycle

First, adult female heartworms release their young, called microfilariae, into an animal's bloodstream. Then, mosquitoes become infected with microfilariae while taking blood meal from the infected animal. During the next 10 to 14 days, the microfilariae mature to the infective larval stage within the mosquito. After that, the mosquito bites another dog, cat or other susceptible animal, and the infective larvae enter through the bite wound. It then takes a little over 6 months for the infective larvae to mature into adult worms. In dogs, the worms may live for up to 7 years. Microfilariae cannot mature into adult heartworms without first passing through a mosquito.

What are the signs of Heartworm Disease?

For both dogs and cats, clinical signs of heartworm disease may not be recognized in the early stages, as the number of heartworms in an animal tends to accumulate gradually over a period of months and sometimes years and after repeated mosquito bites.

Recently infected dogs may exhibit no signs of the disease, while heavily infected dogs may eventually show clinical signs, including a mild, persistent cough, reluctance to move or exercise, fatigue after only moderate exercise, reduced appetite and weight loss.

Cats may exhibit clinical signs that are very non-specific, mimicking many other feline diseases. Chronic clinical signs include vomiting, gagging, difficulty or rapid breathing, lethargy and weight loss. Signs associated with the first stage of heartworm disease, when the heartworms enter a blood vessel and are carried to the pulmonary arteries, are often mistaken for feline asthma or allergic bronchitis, when in fact they are actually due to a syndrome newly defined as **Heartworm Associated Respiratory Disease (HARD)**.

How do you Detect Heartworm Disease?

Heartworm infection in apparently healthy animals is usually detected with blood tests for a heartworm substance called an "antigen" or microfilariae, although



“There is no effective treatment for heartworm disease in cats. . .”



neither test is consistently positive until about seven months after infection has occurred.

Heartworm infection may also occasionally be detected through ultrasound and/or x-ray images of the heart and lungs, although these tests are usually used in animals already known to be infected.

Prevention

Because heartworm disease is preventable, the AHS recommends that pet owners take steps now to talk to their veterinarian about how to best protect their pets from this dangerous disease. Heartworm prevention is safe, easy and inexpensive. While treatment for heartworm disease in dogs is possible, it is a complicated and expensive process, taking weeks for infected animals to recover. There is no effective treatment for heartworm disease in cats, so it is imperative that disease prevention measures be taken for cats.

There are a variety of options for preventing heartworm infection in both dogs and cats, including daily and monthly tablets and chewables and monthly topicals. All of these methods are extremely effective, and when administered properly on a timely schedule, heartworm infection can be completely prevented. These medications interrupt heartworm development before adult worms reach the lungs and cause disease.

It is your responsibility to faithfully maintain the prevention program you have selected in consultation with your veterinarian.

Treatment

Usually, all but the most advanced cases of heartworm disease can be successfully treated in dogs. Currently, there are no products in the United States approved for the treatment of heartworm infection in cats. Cats have proven to be more resistant hosts to heartworm than dogs, and often appear to be able to rid themselves of infection spontaneously. Unfortunately, many cats tend to react severely to the dead worms as they are being cleared by the body, and this can result in a shock reaction, a life-threatening situation. Veterinarians will often attempt to treat an infected cat with supportive therapy measures to minimize this reaction; however it is always best to prevent the disease.

Adult heartworms in dogs are killed using a drug called an adulticide that is injected into the muscle through a series of treatments. Treatment may be administered on an outpatient basis, but hospitalization is usually recommended. When the dog is sent

home, exercise should be limited to leash walking for the duration of the recovery period, which can last from one to two months. This decreases the risk of partial or complete blockage of blood flow through the lungs by dead worms.

Re-infection during treatment is prevented by administration of a heartworm preventive. These preventives may also eliminate microfilariae if they are present. Dogs in heart failure require special attention.

We will be more than happy to discuss your pet's particular needs with you to decide the right prevention. Please remember that all pets, even those kept strictly indoors, can be susceptible to heartworm disease. Mosquitoes are tricky insects and can be anywhere, inside or out. We recommend keeping all pets on heartworm prevention year round. Spring is fast approaching and if your pet is not currently on heartworm prevention, now is the perfect time to start!

Schedule of Events –

April:

Thursday April 3rd – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday April 10th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Saturday April 12th – MS Walk at Antietam Battlefield – Funkstown Hellcats walking
Thursday April 17th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday April 24th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed

May:

Thursday May 1st – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday May 8th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday May 15th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday May 22nd – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Monday May 26th – Memorial Day – Office Closed
Thursday May 29th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed

June:

Thursday June 5th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Wednesday June 11th – 3rd Annual Puppy Luau – 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Thursday June 12th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday June 19th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday June 26th – Staff Meeting 1-3 p.m. – Office Closed



Satellite Adoptions –



We are thrilled to announce that both “Beamer” and “Simon”, two of our favorite kitties are doing extremely well in their new homes. We are so thankful that they found forever families.

Our current residents are “Lavern,” “Shirley,” and “Squiggy” three beautiful long-haired cats that are about a year old. They were brought to us as strays and still after 3 months can be quite reserved. All are very sweet but will need a family to be understanding of their past and be patient as they get adjusted. Their vaccines are current and they have all been spayed or neutered. Now all they need are loving forever homes. Can you help?

2008 Winter Puppy Olympics –

We hope you were able to join us on Wednesday January 23rd for our 2008 Winter Puppy Olympics! We had a hospital full of puppies and enjoyed the sheer chaos involved. Refreshments were available for people and puppies alike, with both hot chocolate and warm chicken broth to chase away the chilly winter air.

The puppies enjoyed playing musical snowflakes and having their pictures taken in front of the Olympic rings! Tours of the hospital were offered and goodie bags were given out to every party animal that came.

We held a drawing for 2 free microchips and are happy to announce our winners as

Lisa Crawford & “Caesar” and Janet Cumblidge & “Skunk.”

We all had a wonderful time and hope you did too! We look forward to seeing you at the Puppy Luau on June 11th at 6:30 p.m.



Mudd Volleyball -

The Funkstown Hellcats & Hell Hounds are back once again and ready to get down and dirty for a good cause. For the 7th year now, we will participate in the Washington County Community Free Clinic’s Mudd Volleyball tournament! This tournament acts as a fundraiser for the free clinic, which provides health care to working individuals who do not have health insurance. As an event sponsor and entering 2 teams for the first time, we were able to raise \$2400 last year.

This year’s tournament will again be held at Citi Group on Saturday July 19th beginning at 9 a.m. We would love to have a cheering section on the day of the tournament, or if you prefer to make a donation, we would very much appreciate it. If you do come to cheer us on, don’t forget your canned good to use as a parking fee. And always wear clothes that you don’t care about as the mud is everywhere!

3rd Annual Puppy Luau -

Aloha! Let’s Hula Down! Please join us on Wednesday June 11th at 6:30 p.m. for our third annual Puppy Luau!

All puppies ages 3 months to 1 year are invited*. As in years past, we will have snow cones for the pets and their humans, as well as other refreshments. We will play musical beach towels and what luau would be complete without the LIMBO!

We have had such a great time in past years and look forward to an even bigger and better celebration this year! Every pet that comes dressed for the occasion will receive a special gift.

*Please bring proof of current vaccinations.



www.funkstownvet.com

What is a Dog?

Dogs spend all day sprawled on the most comfortable piece of furniture in the house. They can hear a package of food opening half a block away, but don't hear you when you're in the same room. They can look dumb and lovable at the same time. They growl when they are not happy. When you want to play, they want to play. When you want to be alone, they want to play. They leave their toys everywhere. CONCLUSION: They're tiny men in little fur coats.

What is a Cat?

Cats do what they want. They rarely listen to you. They're totally unpredictable. When you want to play, they want to be alone. When you want to be alone, they want to play. They expect you to cater to their every whim. They're moody. They leave their hair everywhere. CONCLUSION: They're tiny women with little fur coats.

Just for Laughs -



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