



Animal Health Clinic of Funkstown

"We'll treat your pet like family!"

Newsletter

April – June 2009

CRITTER'S CHRONICLE

Heartworm Disease –

Buzzzz.... Buzzz..... Is that a mosquito? Besides being annoying, mosquitoes can carry deadly diseases. The most common disease amongst our pets is heartworm disease. Heartworm disease was long thought to have been a strictly canine problem, but recent research has shown that cats, even indoor only cats, are susceptible.

The life cycle of the heartworm begins in the heart and/or lungs of an infected animal. It is here that the female heartworm produces its offspring called microfilaria. When a mosquito bites and feeds off of an infected animal, the microfilaria passes from the animal's bloodstream into the mosquito. It then takes 10-14 days for the microfilaria to mature into the larval stage inside the mosquito. Once they have reached this stage, the larvae are ready to be passed onto the new host animal. For this to happen, the mosquito simply needs to bite the next animal. Once in the new host animal's bloodstream, the larvae travel to the heart and lungs where in 6 months they will mature into adults and begin to reproduce, starting the life

cycle over once again. A heartworm can live in a dog for up to 7 years, assuming the dog lives that long.

A dog can carry a worm burden of up to 250 worms, whereas a cat may only have 1 or 2 worms. Due to the large number of heartworms in the pet's system, heart enlargement and heart failure are common occurrences. Pets will not immediately show signs and symptoms of heartworm disease because it takes months, sometimes years for there to be enough heartworms in the system to illicit symptoms. Symptoms of heartworm disease in dogs include but are not limited to: a mild persistent cough, resistance to exercise, vomiting, gagging, difficulty or rapid breathing, lethargy, weight loss, and sudden death. Heartworm disease in cats usually presents as feline asthma, upper respiratory disease, or sudden death.

Heartworms are found in all 50 states, with the highest infection rates being in areas close to water. Although there are quite a few bodies of water close by, heartworm disease prevalence has increased in this area since animals

that survived Hurricane Katrina were relocated to the northern states.

So what is to be done? The key to fighting any disease is prevention. Heartworm prevention for dogs comes in the form of a flavor tablet given once monthly called Interceptor. Cats can also be given Interceptor or a monthly topical medication called Advantage Multi which protects against heartworms, fleas, roundworms, and hookworms. Before starting dogs on any heartworm prevention, a heartworm test must be performed and every other year thereafter as long as the dog is kept on the prevention year round. If for any reason the pet is off of the Interceptor, a test will need to be performed in order to restart the medication. Because there is no effective test for cats, a cat may be started on prevention without prior testing.

To check on your pet's heartworm test status or to get your pet started on prevention, please contact us as soon as possible. Also ask us about rebate offers on Interceptor and Advantage Multi.

Get Your Tail Moving –

Spring is the perfect time of year to get in some extra exercise for both you and your pets. Exercising with your pet is a wonderful way to get and stay motivated. As with humans, pets tend to get a bit plumper during the cold winter months. Who wants to go outside and exercise when it's so cold?

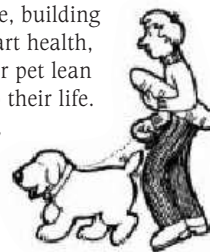
We all know the 2 main culprits of weight gain: overeating and under exercising. While overeating seems like an easy fix (just feed or eat less), exercise can be a more challenging prospect. This is where your pet comes into play. Pets are often better personal trainers than those expensive trainers at the gym; they are always ready to go, they are available when your schedule permits, and all they ask in return is your love and affection.

The extra exercise is good for your pet too. Animals benefit from exercise in the same ways that we do: weight loss

and maintenance, building muscle tone, heart health, etc. Keeping your pet lean can add years to their life. Besides exercise, it is important to monitor your pet's calorie intake.

Instead of giving "Fido" a french fry off of your plate, consider a green bean instead. Most pets will not know the difference, only that they are getting your attention which is what they truly desire. Or instead of giving treats at all, take Fido outside for a game of fetch which increases exercise for both of you.

Increasing exercise in cats can prove to be a bit more difficult, but not impossible. There are numerous toys available for cats that help to increase their exercise: laser pointers, feather toys, strings (just don't let your cat chew on them), mice, catnip toys, etc. You can even do something as simple as moving the



food bowl to a higher location so that your cat has to jump up to get to it.

No matter how you choose to exercise your pet, the benefits will be astonishing. You and your pet will both have more energy and have a stronger bond.

It's A Girl! –

We are thrilled to report that Dr. Tara Cumley and her husband Dave are expecting their second child, a girl, at the end of June. Dr. Cumley will be out of the office for at least 6 weeks to enjoy time with her family and new addition. Dr. Scrivener, Dr. Smith, and Dr. Holcomb will be attending to her patients during this time. We are all so excited to be "aunts" again!



“Now that you have the First Aid box made, what do you do with it in an emergency?”

Using Your Pet First Aid Box –

In the last newsletter we discussed how to make a Pet First Aid Box. Now that you have the First Aid box made, what do you do with it in an emergency? In the case of some common household emergencies, here is what you do...

Bee Stings and Insect Bites –

At the first sign of swelling, call your veterinarian to alert the staff that an emergency may be coming in. Start the appropriate dose of Benadryl. Contact your veterinarian for dosing instructions.

If your pet is known to be extremely allergic to insect bites or stings you should have a dose of epinephrine in your first aid box (your veterinarian can prescribe the appropriate dose).

Broken Bones –

If the back leg is broken, let the pet find its own position of comfort and call your veterinarian.

If the front leg is broken, try to put a bulky bandage on to protect it from further damage and call your veterinarian.

If you think the back is broken, put your pet on a straight board and call your veterinarian IMMEDIATELY!

Choking –

Is the pet breathing?

If YES, start CPR. Consult your first aid manual.

If NO, establish the cause.

*Look in the mouth for foreign objects or liquid.

*Use something to prop the mouth open to prevent accidental biting.

If the cause is liquid, hold the pet with the head lower than the chest to allow the liquid to drain out.

If the cause is a foreign object and it cannot be easily retrieved, LEAVE IT until you arrive at the veterinary hospital. (Trying too hard to retrieve the object may push it into the airway). Heimlich Maneuver may be used on animals, however, be prepared by reading your First Aid Manual before this emergency occurs.

Cuts, Lacerations, Bites from Fighting –

If the wound is not bleeding profusely:

Clean the wound with saline and Physoderm. If Physoderm is not available use diluted peroxide sparingly.

If the wound IS bleeding profusely:

The most important thing to do is to stop the loss of blood. A pressure bandage or tourniquet is used here. Gauze pads, wash clothes, and elastic bandages such as Coban or Ace bandages can be used as pressure bandages also. Remember, a tourniquet must be released every 5 to 10 minutes to avoid oxygen deprivation to the tissues. Always call your veterinarian to let

them know you are on your way.

Heat Stroke (hyperthermia) –

Signs include: weakness, rapid panting, and dry hot skin.

- Take the pet's temperature using a rectal thermometer.
- Heat stroke temperature is usually 106 degrees and above.
- Normal temperature ranges between 100 – 102.5 degrees.
- Place pet in the shade; cool down with cloths or towels, place ice packs on head and neck but DO NOT ice your pet down.
- Call your veterinarian and transport your pet to their office as soon as possible.



Hypothermia (cold induced – weather or water) -

Signs include: depression, cold gums, shivering (occasionally the body is too cold to shiver)

- Get pet into sheltered area
- Put warm towels, clothing, blankets around the pet
- If the pet is small enough, place it in a tub of tepid (cooler than luke warm) water. Bring the water temperature up slowly. Supervise your pet and monitor its temperature with a rectal thermometer until temperature returns to normal (100-102.5 degrees)
- Dry the pet and wrap it in blankets until it is dry
- Contact your veterinarian as soon as possible

Ingested Toxins –

Antifreeze

- One tablespoon can kill a 60-pound dog.
- One hour later may be too late.
 - Start giving vodka or the drink with the highest alcohol content you have in the house.
 - Call your veterinarian and get there as quickly as is safe to drive.

Petroleum Distillates like Gasoline

- DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING
- Do give one or two tablespoons of vegetable oil, one cup of milk and bread, anything that will start soaking the substance up.
- Call your veterinarian and take the pet in ASAP

Rat Poisons

- Use peroxide to induce vomiting immediately
 - Small pets – one teaspoon of peroxide & two teaspoons of water



“Preparing yourself ahead of time will help you not to panic in a time of crisis.”



- Medium to large pets – one tablespoon of peroxide & two tablespoons of water

These may be repeated every 15 minutes until vomiting occurs.

- Call your veterinarian and take the pet in for further protective treatment such as activated charcoal drench and Vitamin K therapy.

The main thing to remember in an emergency is to try to stay calm and focused on what needs to be done. Preparing yourself ahead of time will help you not to panic in a time of crisis. Although not all emergency situations are life-threatening, the sooner you can get your pet to a veterinarian, the better the outcome for them. As always, we are here to answer any questions you may have.

Flea & Tick Season –



What is the size of a sesame seed, has 6 legs when young and 8 when full grown, can produce 2000 offspring at a time, and can cause debilitating diseases to animals and humans alike? The correct answer is the American Deer Tick. Besides being difficult to detect due to its petite size, the American Deer Tick can cause such diseases as Lyme disease, Ehrlichiosis, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

As spring slowly begins to bloom, fleas and ticks will also begin to emerge. Flea and tick season seems to start earlier and earlier each year, and arrives with a vengeance.

The following flea facts were listed on advantage.petparents.com:

* Flea fossils date back to the Lower Cretaceous period, meaning fleas have been around for about 100 million years. At that time, fleas may have infested a Tyrannosaurus Rex or Triceratops!

* Fleas can jump up to 150 times their own length. To put that into perspective, if a human competed in the Olympic long jump with that ability, that athlete would certainly win the gold medal with a gravity-defying 1,000 foot long jump. So they can easily jump onto your pet from the ground, or from another pet.

* On average, a flea's lifespan is two to three months. However, pre-emerged fleas (not living on a pet) can survive undisturbed and without a blood meal for more than 100 days.

* The female flea can lay 2,000 eggs in her lifetime. That means that if all 53 million dogs in the United States each hosted a population of 60 fleas, the U.S. would house more than six trillion flea eggs. Laid end-to-end, those eggs would stretch around the world more than 76 times! It's important to kill fleas before they get a chance to lay eggs.

* The female flea consumes 15 times her own body weight in blood daily.

* The largest recorded flea is the North American

Hystriechosylla schefferi. Found in beavers, it can measure 12mm in length - almost 1/2-inch!

* A flea can bite 400 times a day. That's a rate of 4,000 bites a day if your pet has just 10 fleas.

There are many flea and tick products on the market. It is important as a consumer and pet owner to know the difference in the products. All over-the-counter products have the potential to make your pet sick and in some cases those products can be fatal. These prove not only to be a waste of money but can end up costing more in the long run if your pet does become ill from using such products.

We recommend Advantage or Frontline Plus depending on the pet's particular needs. If you live in or visit a high tick endemic area, then you will want to use both a flea and tick prevention such as Frontline Plus. However, if your pet is inside only (as is the case with many cats) Advantage, a flea only prevention may be all you need.

When choosing a flea and/or tick prevention, consider all aspects of your pet's life; where you live, where you visit, who visits you, etc. For instance, even though your pets do not go camping with you, you may have the potential of bringing parasites home to them. Or maybe the dog next door has fleas, which can easily spread to your yard and your pets. Do not be fooled either if your pet is indoor only. Flea eggs are sticky and can be carried in on your shoes. Therefore your pets do not need to go outdoors in order to have fleas. We will be happy to discuss your pet's particular needs with you at any time.

The Family Dog –

If you can start the day without caffeine,

If you can be cheerful, ignoring aches and pains,

If you can resist complaining and boring people with your troubles,

If you can eat the same food day after day and be grateful for it,

If you can understand when loved ones are too busy to give you time,

If you can overlook when people take things out on you when, through no fault of yours, something goes wrong,

If you can take criticism and blame without resentment,

If you can conquer tension without medical help,

If you can relax without liquor,

If you can do ALL of these things.....

THEN YOU ARE PROBABLY THE FAMILY DOG!!

Author: Unknown



Yearly Examinations –

We understand that due to the current economic condition of our nation, many luxuries must be eliminated, even when it comes to our beloved companion animals. Although many of us think of our pets as our family, there are some things that we can not help but let slide. Maybe we don't buy the normal top-of-the-line cat food; or perhaps now the dog gets groomed every 3 months instead of once a month as before. Or maybe we choose to have vaccinations done at a "low cost" clinic at the local pet store. We certainly sympathize with this reasoning, but our utmost concern is our patients. Not only are the vaccines themselves important, but the yearly examination as well.

During a yearly exam many illnesses or abnormalities may be found and treated such as: upper respiratory issues, heart conditions, masses, fever, weight loss or gain, eye problems, dental disease, etc. It is important to acknowledge that any vaccine has the potential to fail and a common cause of vaccine failure is administration to a sick or debilitated animal. For this reason, we will continue to examine every pet prior to recommending a vaccine. Vaccination is a medical decision and a medical procedure that should be based on the risk and lifestyle of each pet.

Many "low cost" clinics do offer discounts on vaccines but try to remember, you get what you pay for. Examinations are not always provided and without an exam, how can you be assured that your pet is healthy? We feel it is imperative for our patients to receive the best medical care available and we are committed to making that possible.

Employee Spotlight –

In this edition we would like to spotlight Becca Arnold. Becca joined our receptionist team in October of 2008. Although she has had previous experience in a veterinary hospital her most recent occupation was at a local pawn shop. However her love of animals has brought her back to the veterinary field and we are thrilled to have her.

Becca lives in Hagerstown with her fiancée Neil, her daughter Brittany, and son Brian. Furry family prior to coming to work with us consisted of Zona an Italian Mastiff, and Harley and Petey, both of the feline persuasion. She has since added Jett, a beautiful all black cat with extra toes, and Gunther a 13 week old Mastiff Mix puppy.

Although confusing having Becca and Rebecca both working the front desk, we are pleased Becca has joined our team and look forward to working with her for a long time.

Calendar of Events –

April –

Thursday April 2nd – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday April 9th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday April 16th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Saturday April 18th – MS Walk at the Antietam Battlefield
Thursday April 23rd – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Friday April 24th – Monday April 27th – CVC East – staff training
Thursday April 30th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed

May –

Sunday May 3rd – Saturday May 9th – National Pet Week
Thursday May 7th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday May 14th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday May 21st – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Monday May 25th – Memorial Day – Office Closed
Thursday May 28th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed

June –

Thursday June 4th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Thursday June 11th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Wednesday June 17th – Puppy Luau – 6:30 p.m.
Thursday June 18th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed
Tuesday June 23rd – Dr. Cumley's Due Date – IT'S A GIRL!
Thursday June 25th – Staff Meeting 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. – Office Closed

2009 Referral Program –

As always, we deeply appreciate referrals from our clients and have offered a free gift for referring new clients to our practice. This year, as a special Thank you, we are giving our clients an additional \$25 credit toward goods and/or services here at the clinic for each new client referred.

The greatest compliment we can receive from our clients is the referral of new clients. We are thrilled that you entrust not only your own pets to our care but are willing to refer your family and friends as well. Thank you.

www.funkstownvet.com

ALOHA! It's that time of year again; time for our 4th annual Puppy Luau! Join us on Wednesday June 17th starting at 6:30 p.m. for an evening of Hawaiian fun and puppy socialization. Puppy and people friendly snow cones will be available as well as other tropical treats. The puppies can compete in Musical Beach Towels, and what luau would be complete with a Limbo contest? All puppies, ages 5 months to 1 1/2 years, are invited. We encourage everyone to show up in their best Hawaiian attire as there will be judging for the best dressed puppy and owner in attendance. We look forward to seeing you there. Please call ahead if planning to attend.



Puppy Luau –

WHERE!
If you plan to come cheer us on, be sure to bring a canned good as payment for parking and wear something you don't mind getting dirty as the mud is EVERYWHERE!
The Funkstown Hellcats are back once again and ready to get down and dirty for a good cause. Saturday July 18th will mark the 8th year that the Hellcats have contributed to Mudd Volleyball benefiting the Washington County Community Free Clinic. The free clinic provides health care to working individuals who do not have health insurance. It is estimated that the clinic provided health care and medications to nearly 15,000 Washington County residents in 2008. Mudd Volleyball is their biggest fundraiser of the year with donations totaling \$35,000 last year and we could not be happier to participate.
Last year we donated almost \$1900 between donations and being an event sponsor. We even won first place in individual money raised. We can not wait to get back in the mud. As always we would love to have a cheering section (it gets larger every year) and would appreciate your donations.
If you plan to come cheer us on, be sure to bring a canned good as payment for parking and wear something you don't mind getting dirty as the mud is EVERYWHERE!

Mudd Volleyball –



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