



# Sunnyview Animal Care Centre

Summer 2009

Roundworm, Hookworm, Heartworm, Tapeworm, Lyme Disease, Ticks, Fleas, Ear Mites, Mange...what the &#%\$??

It's the summer again, and all these words get thrown at you at the rate that your dog wags its tail. There are so many new and old germs and worms out there, and it seems that each of them have a product to protect your pet from them. In fact, our clinic houses 7 different types of products to protect your pet from parasites and the diseases they may cause.

Depending on your preference as well as where you live in the HRM, we will recommend the best product(s) to fit your lifestyle and living area. For example, if you live in Bedford, we would recommend Interceptor for deworming and heartworm protection as well as Advantix for flea and tick (Lyme disease) protection. Where as if you live in Halifax, we could recommend Revolution, Sentinel, Interceptor, Advantage, or Advantage Multi, depending if you would prefer a topical (skin) liquid or an oral pill.

**Heartworm** is also a factor in Nova Scotia. Families travel more with their pets, and may be inadvertently bringing heartworm with them. Heartworm is carried by mosquitos, which pick up immature heartworms, incubate them, and then pass them onto other dogs when taking a blood meal. The immature heartworms take a specific course throughout our pets' body and end up in the right pulmonary artery, where they live and thrive off of your pet. These can be prevented with Interceptor (tablets), Sentinel (tablets), Advantage Multi (liquid), or Revolution (liquid).

**Lyme Disease** has been a recent topic since last year in the papers and magazine articles. Lyme disease is transmitted by one of the four species of ticks living in Nova Scotia. Immature ticks (nymphs) pick up the disease by feeding on small rodents, as they grow they will crawl or drop onto us or our pets while walking in the woods, or paths, or lying in shaded areas. At our clinic we see ticks as early as the end of March, and as late as November. Experts say that ticks only like temperatures between 4 degrees Celcius and mid 20 degree Celcius. However, in our beautiful Nova Scotia climate, you will see + degrees in December, and below 20 degrees in the summer (especially while walking in the woods, under tree tops). The best way to protect your pets from Lyme disease is to protect them all summer long from tick bites. If you see a tick on your pet, remove it very carefully with a proper tick removal tool, which you can pick up here, or at your local pharmacy. DO NOT cover the tick in Vaseline, burn the tick

with a match, or any other method other than proper technique. If you are hesitant to do this at home, give us a call and we can book an appointment time to have one of our staff members remove it for you. After the tick has been removed, place it in a container (sealed) and either bring it down to us, or bring it to the Museum of Natural History in Halifax.

## Antibiotics...



An antibiotic is used to fight off and kill, or act as a growth regulator for bacteria. Their goal is to prevent or clear up infections. Antibiotics do absolutely nothing for viruses other than to prevent the possibility of a secondary infection.

Antibiotics are prescribed for a current problem, and are based on which are the most likely bacteria to be residing in the infection. There are several different types of bacteria, and several different types of antibiotics to go with them!

They are also prescribed for a certain period of time, and to be given in a certain manner as well as for a prescribed amount of days to be given.

If you accidentally forget a dose, do not double dose your pet at their next dosing period. Simply continue on like nothing is wrong. If the dose is only going to be about an hour or two off, you can give the dose at the time when you remember.

Antibiotics can become ineffective with the least amount of misuse. The full course of the antibiotics prescribed should be finished during the time period it was prescribed for. If it is a liquid antibiotic these should be thrown away, or brought back to us for proper disposal.

Ear and eye medications should only be used for current problems. These medications may not be suitable for the next ear or eye problem and can actually cause problems if used improperly.

# HOT CARS ARE BAD FOR PETS

It's a nice summer's day out, sun is shining, there is a slight breeze... nice day for a drive with Fluffy. However, while you are out, you remember that you need to stop in the grocery store for a few things. Fluffy will be fine to stay in the car, roll down the windows a bit. This simple idea can turn fatal very fast for Fluffy. With fur coats, pets can get heat stroke a lot faster than humans. Even with a breeze, the inside temperature of the car will start to rise within a minute. The windows being rolled down may help, but the car needs to be positioned so the breeze blows through the car and across Fluffy. Also, the windows can't be rolled down too much as Fluffy may feel the need to jump out of the car and run around the parking lot chasing the carts!

Even pets out in the summer sun can over exert themselves or sun-bathe too long and give themselves heat stroke. Pets outside should have a constant supply of water and shade. The water should be in a position that it won't tip over easily. One way of ensuring this is to get a "bunt pan" (the cake pan with a hole in the middle) and drive a wooden or metal steak through the hole. This way the pan part can be filled with water and it can't be tipped over. Pets should have a constant supply of shade where there is a breeze. A "dog house" isn't the best as the air doesn't circulate properly. The best way to protect your pet in the upcoming summer days is to think: "Would I stay out in this sun and heat that long?" If the answer is no, then bring Fluffy inside.

How to know if your pet has heat stroke:

Panting, sweating, salivating, difficulty breathing, vomiting, bloody diarrhea, increased respiratory/heart rate, bright red gums/ear/eyes, dehydration, depression, lethargy, acting drunk, shock, shaking, seizure, collapse, or coma.

What to do:

**DO NOT** immerse your pet in cold water. This will cause a dramatic decrease in core body temperature and will send your pet into hypothermia. Remove your pet from the sun/ heat/ humid area. Place them on a cool surface (tile/hardwood flooring), soak towels in cool water and place them over your pet, and wet down the pads of their feet. Call your veterinarian and let them know that you are on your way.

Your pet will possibly need to be put on IV fluids, and monitored for the next few hours to days depending on how bad the shock is.

# Top 8 Things You Can do to Help Enjoy Your Pet Longer



## Prevention

Prevent dangers such as: hit by car, poisoning, fatal diseases, organ illnesses, and external and/or internal parasites.

You can do this by: keeping your pet indoors or on a correctly size collar and leash, bi-yearly exams with yearly bloodwork to screen for internal disorders before your pet shows signs, Vaccinations prevent most fatal viruses that pets can catch (even if their never leave the house), proper dental care – brush your pets teeth, give them dental treats to prevent build up of tartar, feed them a dental diet, give your pets a dental cleaning when recommended by your Veterinarian-, proper deworming and flea prevention program- products are available for prevention of all internal parasites, heartworm, ticks and fleas (see the first page!).

## Proper Feeding

Food is one of the most talked about subjects with pet owners, Veterinarians and Nutritionists. There is no “one food for every pet”. Each person is different in what they eat, what they like, what they are allergic or intolerant to, and what their digestive tract will digest. At our clinic, MediCal diets seem to work for our patients as well as our own pets. However, we do consider other diets when recommending foods to clients. If your pet is on a certain food and their hair is shinny, there is no dandruff, their skin is moisturized, eyes/nose is clear from discharge, ears are clean, they are at a healthy body condition, and their tail is wagging, then that is the right food for your pet. If not, then ask us what you should try!



## Proper Weight

Again with food. On average, more than half of the pets we see here are overweight. Whether they are a few pounds over the optimal weight or 20 pounds over their optimal weight. Think about what your pet gets in the run of a day. It should be their normal amount of food, with one or two small treats. Your pet shouldn't get “table scraps”, or treats every time they come in from doing their business. Human food should consist of healthy veggies, and fruit. Do not give your pet the food off your plate that you won't eat yourself, such as fat trimmed off the edges of meat, buttered up veggies, skin from cooked chicken etc.

## Don't Treat Yours Pets Illnesses off the Internet

Illnesses need to be treated by a professional. Whether it has to do with you or your pet. Medications are dispensed at a certain dose for certain problems. Even if the symptoms seem the same, the same medication may not be used.

## Pet Your Pet

Seems silly. But most cases of diseases can be prevented early on. By just simply petting your pet once daily you will notice: weight changes, lumps and

bumps, external parasites such as fleas and ticks, ear infections, eye infections, skin infections, dental problems, and changes in coat condition.

### Prevent Cancer

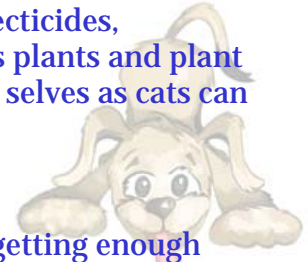
There are cancers you can prevent. Mammary cancer, ovarian cancer, and testicular cancer can all be 100% preventable if your pet is neutered or spayed before their first year (males) and before their first heat (females).

### Pet Proof Your House

Cleaners, bleach, deodorant, toiletries, garbage cans, insecticides, rat/mouse poisons, snail bait and other toxic substances such as plants and plant food. Pet proofing needs to go further than putting things up on selves as cats can jump and knock things onto the ground.

### Exercise With Your Pet

As the saying goes – “If your pet is overweight, your not getting enough exercise”. Exercise goes beyond the backyard. Dogs should be able to run and fully stretch their legs. If your time schedule doesn't fit with being allow for that, you can look into professional dog walkers or dog hikers.



## Is Bloodwork Really Necessary?

So, your vet has recommended bloodwork, and your wondering if it is really necessary. If your pet is geriatric, or is on a medication that they will be on for the rest of their life, the answer is...Yes! Bloodwork is the window into your pets' body. Depending on what bloodwork is run, it can tell you what the liver, kidneys, pancreas, thyroid, hydration levels, red and white blood cells, glucose levels, clotting factors, and adrenal gland function.

Some medications also need yearly monitoring bloodwork as well as yearly routine bloodwork. Two very common medications used in practice that need their levels monitored are: thyroid medication and anti-seizure medication.

These are sent away to a specialty lab and the results are usually sent back to us within 24 hours. Routine bloodwork is necessary on top of this level monitoring, as most of these medications use the liver and the kidneys to metabolize and excrete them, therefore we need to make sure these organs are healthy enough to perform their job properly and efficiently.

Medications such as Metacam and other Non Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs need bi-yearly routine liver and kidney values monitored for the same reason as mentioned above.