



Premier
VetCare

Pet Care Basics

Inside:

- Home Wellness Checklist
- Vaccines Your Pet Needs
- The Fight Against Fleas
- Heartworm Prevention
- Preventing Human Disease
- Dental Care
- At Home Emergency Care



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WHY FEED PREMIUM FOOD?

Although grains are good for humans, dogs and cats are **primarily meat-eaters** --certainly **NOT** vegetarians!
Look at the ingredients: Supermarket brands are primarily grain and soy.

You may think soy protein is just as good as meat protein, but animal-based protein is the most digestible form of protein for animals. Dogs have a much shorter intestine than humans, and therefore must convert protein much faster to a digestible form.

Vegetable proteins are digested much slower.

- Beef and chicken are the **MAJOR** sources of protein in Premium Foods.
- High quality protein is much easier on the liver and kidneys as your pet matures.
- Diets high in fiber (indigestible material) are healthy for people, but can produce loose and frequent stools.

Premium Foods are 85--95% digestible.

- Most commercially available foods are only 50-60% digestible!
- Higher digestibility means **LESS STOOLS** and easier housetraining.

Quality Foods are completely balanced. Often you note improved hair coat and muscle mass in six (6) weeks due to high quality ingredients.

Proper Calcium/Phosphorus Ratio aid best growth rates and help prevent Feline Urologic Syndrome in the cats.

Since young animals have small stomachs, a more concentrated food insures better growth because it contains more nutrition and less “filler”.

- Most pets accept the food readily due to the outside meat or chicken coating.
- Warming the food for 15 seconds in the microwave greatly enhances flavor.
- You will be feeding **one-half** to **one-third** less as you do with most commercial brands(Compare the feeding charts on the label).

Since an 8 ounce cup of Premium Food weighs less, you will find that you get many more cups in each bag. Commercial foods usually weigh 1-2 ounces per cup more due to bulk and fillers.

Feeding costs with Premium Foods often will be **NO** more **PER MONTH** than with the food you are now using, even though you pay more per bag. Remember you feed less amount; and also get more cups in a pound of the product.

Premium Foods utilize a “FIXED FORMULA,” which means the ingredients don’t change.

Most other foods vary the amount of each ingredient, using whatever is the cheapest at the time ingredients are purchased.

- This often results in diarrhea when a new bag of food is opened.
- **This will NOT happen with High Quality Premium Foods.**
- Examples of Premium Foods include: **Iams/ Eukanuba Foods, Hill’s Science Diet and Purina Pro Plan.**

WEEKLY CHECKLIST OF GOOD HEALTH: Play Doctor With Your Pet

YOUR care and attention to your pet will help keep him/her in good health.
The following checklist will help remind you of possible signs of illness.

Please **EXAMINE** your pet weekly, review the checklist, and check “**YES**” or “**NO**” to each statement. If you answer “**NO**” to any of the statements, please **CALL** for an appointment so we can examine the pet and correct the problem.

My pet is acting normal, active, and in good spirits.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s appetite is normal and has no difficulty in chewing or swallowing.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet breathes normally, without straining

YES [] **NO** []

My pet urinates in the usual amounts and frequency.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet has normal appearing bowel movements.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet walks without stiffness, pain, or difficulty.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s coat is full, glossy, and in good condition.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s skin is free from dry flakes, and not greasy.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet has no fleas, ticks, lice, or mites.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s eyes are bright, clear, and free of matter.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s ears are clean, without debris inside.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s nose is moist and free of discharge.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s teeth are clean, white, and free of tartar.

YES [] **NO** []

My pet’s gums are glistening and pink, with no redness

YES [] **NO** []



"PET-PROOFING" YOUR HOME

Kittens and puppies are lively and curious, which can get them into serious trouble. Remember that your young pet sees everything from a much lower vantage point than you—like a baby who has begun to crawl—and may be attracted to things you do not see while standing up.

It's impossible to totally "pet-proof" your home against accidents, but here are some recommendations:

1. Securely screen all windows to help prevent falls, and keep your pet off balconies, upper porches, and high decks.
2. Securely store cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, bleach, paint, paint thinner, pesticides, fertilizer, disinfectants, mothballs, roach & rat poisons, medications, and antifreeze. Make sure you keep these in tightly closed areas to which your pet cannot gain access. Keep all cabinet doors closed securely.
3. Remove poisonous house plants, or place them in hanging baskets completely out of reach of all pets. Some plants that are poisonous include amaryllis, English ivy, narcissus, dieffenbachia, mistletoe, poinsettia, holly, philodendron, azalea, rhododendron, daffodil daphne, foxglove, bleeding heart, potato, iris, ivy, oleander, rubber plant, tobacco, tulip, clematis, morning glory, and weeping fig.
4. Keep toilet lids down. Young pets may decide to play in the water, and the lid could close and trap them; also, toilet bowl cleansers are harmful if swallowed.
5. Store plastic bags where the young pet cannot get inside them and suffocate or chew/tear them and swallow bits of plastic. Plastic six-pack holders used for packaging beverages should be cut apart.
6. Keep exposed electrical cords as short as possible, or tack them against a baseboard so the pet cannot play with or chew on them.
7. Never give your pet any medication without first consulting with your veterinarian. Never use over-the-counter products on pets without first checking with your veterinarian. **Veterinarians are the true pet experts.** Guard against potential exposure to human medications. Even in small doses, aspirin, acetaminophen, diet pills, sleeping pills, and tranquilizers can all be fatal to your pet.
8. Keep all dresser drawers, trunks, and closets closed. Always check to see where the pet is before closing refrigerator doors, the oven, washer, or dryer.
9. Always be sure your pet is secure before leaving the pet alone. We strongly recommend the pet is crate trained and confined in a plastic travel crate when alone.
10. If the pet is allowed outdoors, always be sure to blow your horn and bang on the hood before starting and moving your vehicle. Kittens especially like to crawl up under the hood to keep warm.
11. Keep sewing supplies out of your pet's reach. Buttons, needles, pins, and thread can hurt his mouth or cause intestinal obstructions if swallowed. The same goes for nails, staples, screws, brads, ear plugs, and aluminum can tabs.
12. Do not use electric blankets for the pet's bedding.
13. Never put anything other than the appropriate collar around a pet's neck. Ribbons can easily choke the pet if they should get caught on anything.

VACCINATIONS FOR YOUR CAT

Many serious infectious diseases of cats can be controlled by vaccination. With over 20 million pet cats in the U.S., your cat is quite likely to come in contact with an infectious disease at one time or another. Even indoor cats can be exposed to viral diseases carried in the air, in dust, or on clothing. **Vaccination is inexpensive protection against costly treatment, or even the premature death of your cat!**

Feline Panleukopenia:

Feline Panleukopenia, also known as “cat distemper” is a highly contagious and often fatal disease in young cats. It is easily transmitted from cat to cat. Signs include depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Feline Respiratory Diseases:

Feline Respiratory Diseases include several different infectious agents. They are all highly contagious and are widespread. High death rates occur in young cats and “old” cats. Signs of these diseases include sneezing, fever, nasal discharges, runny nose, coughing, Conjunctivitis (eyelid infections), mouth ulcers, and general depression. These diseases include:

Rhinotracheitis
Calici Virus
Chlamydia

Upper respiratory infections are easily spread from cat to cat by sneezing, etc. Even a stray cat that seems outwardly to be healthy may be a “carrier” infecting your pet, even through a screen window. Protection from all the above diseases are included in one injection. A **series** of the initial injection is necessary to build the antibody protection needed to help your cat develop a high degree of immunity against these diseases.

Feline Leukemia:

Feline Leukemia was unknown many years ago, but is now considered to be the **leading** cause of death in cats. It is a cancer-causing virus that often suppresses the ability to fight other infections. Kittens can be born with the virus. Cats can have the leukemia virus for years before showing signs of the disease. Feline Leukemia is not transmissible to humans or dogs. **There is no successful treatment once signs develop!**

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP):

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) is a progressive and fatal disease. Many infected cats also harbor Feline Leukemia. Signs include loss of weight, labored breathing, enlarged abdomen, and generalized illness. **There is no successful treatment once signs appear!**

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) is also known as “**Feline Aids Virus**”. It is a relative to the HIV virus that causes AIDS in people. This virus does its damage by depressing the cat’s own immune system, making it much more susceptible to other common cat infectious diseases. There is now a new vaccine available for this disease. There is an accurate blood test that will tell whether or not the cat is a carrier of the disease that should be completed prior to older cats are vaccinated. For maximum accuracy, the cat should be 6 months of age before being tested. This particular test detects blood “antibodies” to the disease. It takes time for these antibodies to develop in the blood yielding the positive test. Therefore, a recent exposure of 30-90 days or less may not have provided sufficient time for antibodies to develop that would be detected by the test. **There is no successful treatment once signs appear!**



Rabies

Rabies is a fatal viral infection of the nervous system that attacks all warm-blooded animals, including humans. Cats have outnumbered dogs in reported cases since 1981. Rabies is a public health hazard and personal risk to you. It is transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. Even indoor cats may be infected through contact with a carrier in a basement, garage, or attic. **There is no cure!** Vaccination is very important for your safety, as well as the safety of your pet.

VACCINATIONS FOR YOUR DOG

Many of the serious diseases of dogs can be prevented by vaccination. With over 50 million pet dogs in the United States alone, your pet is bound to come in contact with an infectious disease at some time. Even if you always keep your pet indoors, your dog can be exposed to viruses carried in the air, in dust, or on clothing. Vaccination is inexpensive protection against costly treatment, or even premature death of your dog.



DISTEMPER:

Distemper is one of the two most important diseases of dogs. It is very widespread, and nearly every dog will be exposed to distemper within the first year of life in our area. Signs include coughing, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, fever, and discharges from the eyes and/or nose. "Squinting" of the eyes is often the first sign observed. Once the virus enters the nervous system, convulsions, twitches, or partial paralysis become evident. It is spread through all body secretions and is **HIGHLY** contagious. It is usually fatal.

PARVOVIRUS:

Since its devastating worldwide appearance in 1978, most dog owners have heard of parvo. It is transmitted through direct contact with an infected dog's feces. A dog that recovers from the disease, remains a "carrier" spreading the virus in its bowel movements for 1-3 months. Signs include vomiting, fever, depression, and diarrhea which often will contain large amounts of blood. There is another form where the virus attacks the heart muscle causing a heart attack and death. The younger the pet, the **GREATER** the chance of death. The death rate is **VERY HIGH** in dogs **UNDER** 4-6 months of age.

Dogs may remain susceptible to Parvovirus infection until TWO WEEKS AFTER THE LAST INJECTION in the vaccination series. This is the MOST SERIOUS and FATAL disease we see today.

INFECTIOUS CANINE HEPATITIS:

Canine hepatitis affects the dog's liver. Spread through an infected dog's urine, exposure can mean anything from a mild infection to death. Puppies are at the most risk with this disease. Vaccination has controlled this disease for several years, making it rarely seen by the veterinarian today.

LEPTOSPIROSIS:

"Lepto" is a bacterial infection that affects the dog's kidneys. It can reside as a low-level infection for months or years, infecting other dogs while weakening your pet. It is controlled by vaccination.

BORDETELLA:

Causes the disease known as "Kennel Cough" also called "tracheobronchitis," it is an upper respiratory infection with the major sign being a persistent, dry, hacking cough. It often lasts several weeks and is **HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS**. It is caused by several viruses and bacteria which are included in the vaccinations.

CORONAVIRUS:

Corona virus is an intestinal infection resulting in diarrhea, vomiting, and depression. It is **HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS** and can be **FATAL**. Research shows it often co-exists with "Parvo" at the same time in many dogs.

RABIES:

Rabies is a **FATAL INFECTION** of the nervous system that attacks all warm-blooded animals, including humans. Rabies has become synonymous with the image of a vicious dog. Rabies is a public health hazard and a personal risk to all pet owners. Many states require vaccination against rabies, and most veterinarians recommend vaccination for all dogs and cats, regardless of state law. Rabies can be transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. Even dogs kept indoors can come in contact with a rabies carrier in a basement, garage, or attic. Because there is no cure for rabies, vaccination is your pet's only protection.

NOTE: Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus, and Coronavirus are all available in one injection. A series of injections are required to develop the high level of immunity required in our



COMPLETING THE INITIAL VACCINATION SERIES IS ESSENTIAL

A Series Of Immunizations Is Required For A Young Pet To Develop Its Immunity.

The immune system of newborn puppies and kittens is immature. For that reason, the newborn receives immunity “called antibodies” from its mother through the milk it nurses for the first 24 hours after birth. This “special” milk is called “colostrum.” These “antibodies” are called “passive immunity” and exist for varying periods of time in each individual young pet. In some pets, this immunity may last up to 20 weeks of age, while in others it may last only a few days or weeks. The problem for the doctor is there is no easy, practical way to measure how much of this “passive immunity” is present in each pet—and how long it will last.

Vaccinations contain “antigens” which have the capability of causing the pet’s own immune system to produce its own “antibodies.” This is termed “active immunity.” However for the vaccination to be able to cause this stimulation, the pet’s body must have very low levels remaining of the “passive immunity” it got from its mother.



When a vaccine antigen is administered to a pet, that antigen has the ability to stimulate immunity for only 5 days or so. If the passive immunity remaining from the mother’s milk does not drop low enough for the vaccine to “over-ride” this obstacle, the vaccine will not work and loses its potential strength to do so in approximately 5 days.

It is also possible that the pet’s overall condition may not be sufficient to allow the immune system to work at its optimum level. Malnutrition and parasites can greatly reduce the body’s ability to produce its own “active immunity.”

Since there is no quick, inexpensive way to measure this passive immunity level, a SERIES of vaccines must be given to be sure there is active stimulation present when the pet’s body is able to do it. As mentioned before, this particular time varies from pet to pet. This series of vaccinations must be spaced out so as to allow a minimal “window of opportunity” for disease to occur. This “window of opportunity” is defined as the time when the passive immunity (from the mother’s milk) is too low to protect the pet from disease, and the time when a vaccine antigen is available to stimulate the pet’s immune system.

It should also be noted that a very small percentage of pets do not have an immune system capable of producing immunity at any age. This is similar to the kids that must live in a “plastic bubble.” They have the same problem. They have a body much more susceptible to disease since their immune system doesn’t work normally.

Your own veterinarian, considering age of the pet, breed, environment, overall health, and disease prevalence in the area, must determine the particular vaccination program, including specific vaccinations used and frequency of administration.

YOUR PET IS AT RISK UNTIL THE ENTIRE SERIES OF VACCINATIONS IS COMPLETED.

1. Follow the individual vaccination schedule for your pet recommended by your veterinarian.
2. Be sure to RETURN ON TIME to minimize the pet’s “window of opportunity.”

YOUR PET'S COMPREHENSIVE PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Detection of Problems Early Leads to Longer Life for Your Pet

Comprehensive physical examinations are an important tool in providing a long, quality life for your pet. Pets age 5-7 times faster than humans, can't talk, and often hide early signs of disease. One year represents 5-10% of the pet's life span, whereas one year only represents a very small percentage of the average life of a human. Getting a comprehensive physical examination for your pet is like one every 5-7 years for humans if done yearly.

Since pet's can't talk to us, they often are unable to communicate problems before they become a major concern and threat to the pet's well being. Regular physical examinations increase the chances of being able to prevent or at least minimize many of the effects of aging.

The information obtained during a comprehensive physical examination of your pet becomes part of your pet's medical history, and can be critical when an emergency or sudden illness arises. Any hint of abnormalities may bring recommendations for additional laboratory testing to confirm suspicions. Catching problems early solves problems more rapidly, saving your pet unnecessary discomfort and possibly the costs of more expensive treatment later on.

A COMPREHENSIVE PHYSICAL EXAMINATION INCLUDE:

WEIGHT & OTHER BODY VITAL SIGNS.

Significant weight gain or loss can be an early warning of disease. Obesity is the most common nutritional problem in pets, and one of the top disease affecting pets. Your pet's overall body condition will be evaluated and appropriate recommendations of diet and other nutritional needs will be made.

SKIN & HAIRCOAT ASSESSMENT.

Dull, dry, brittle hair or hair loss often indicates an underlying illness. Flea infestation can lead to serious disease.

EYES, EARS, & NOSE EVALUATION.

Such things as severe conjunctivitis, cataracts, and glaucoma can sometimes be prevented if detected early enough. Thorough examination of the ear canals can prevent painful ear infections and loss of hearing. The ear canal of pets is anatomically different from humans with the majority of the canal hidden from view with the naked eye. Tumors, grass seeds, excessive wax, and ear mites are commonly found in the lower part of the ear canals.

ORAL EXAMINATION.

The oral cavity is thoroughly examined paying particular attention to the teeth and gums. Periodontal disease is very common in pets and leads to many other problems. Periodontal disease causes pain, bad mouth odor, loss of teeth, and leads to infection of many of the internal organs. Bacteria causing gum infections may also be transmitted to other pets or humans. Gum tissue perfusion is also assessed for proper

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blood circulation. Tonsils are examined for signs of infection.

HEART & LUNG AUSCULTATION.

A stethoscope is used to detect heart murmurs, irregular heartbeats, abnormal heart rhythm, and abnormal lung sounds. Chronic heart failure is very common in both dogs and cats. Early detection may allow the pet to live a longer, healthier life. An ECG screening may also be obtained to detect heart rhythm problems not detectable with the stethoscope. Chest x-rays may be recommended if the examination hints of potential problems.

BONE, JOINT, & SPINE PALPATION.

Manipulation of the musculoskeletal system looks for such things as ligament damage and arthritis.

ABDOMEN & LYMPH NODE PALPATION.

Tumors, inflammation, adhesions, pain, and infection can all sometimes be diagnosed by manual palpation of the abdomen & lymph nodes.

Comprehensive Physical Examinations coupled with a thorough medical history and appropriate diagnostic testing can add years to your pet's life.



SHOULD YOU VACCINATE YOUR OWN PETS?



We are often asked the question, “Can I vaccinate my pet myself with an over-the-counter vaccine?” The answer is that you are free to choose what level of care you wish to provide for your pet.

We **DO NOT** recommend owner-administered vaccinations for the following reasons:

1. **Written instructions provided with over-the-counter vaccines cannot adequately educate you on proper vaccine administration.** Would you vaccinate your own child for measles if the pharmacist provided you with the vaccine and syringe?
2. **Injury to yourself or others can occur because of lack of training.** Children can pick up a needle and stick themselves, or you may be bitten while attempting to vaccinate your pet.
3. **Vaccines purchased over-the-counter are often improperly handled and thus ineffective.** You have NO control over the handling of the vaccine before you purchased it. Veterinarians know where their biologics come from and choose them based on effectiveness and handling.
4. **Vaccination schedules must be individualized for each pet depending on breed, time of year, and area of the country.** There is NO set vaccination schedule that is the

best for all pets we see. The program must be individualized for each individual pet to develop its best protection.

5. **Vaccines administered to an unhealthy animal may be ineffective, or even HARM the pet.** No pet should be vaccinated without a prior **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION** performed by a licensed veterinarian skilled in diagnosing potential problems.
6. **Severe ALLERGIC REACTIONS (Anaphylaxis) may occur following routine vaccine administration.** Pet owners are NOT EQUIPPED to handle this complication.
7. **Syringes and Needles are considered HAZARDOUS MEDICAL WASTE.** Disposal of such items can lead to devastating consequences.
8. **PETS NEED REGULAR VETERINARY CARE.** Just as your child needs regular check-ups, your pet does, too! Puppies and kittens should be examined every 2 weeks during the initial vaccination series to ensure proper growth, diet, parasite control, and behavior. **Adult dogs and cats should have a complete physical examination every year.** Early detection of tumors, diseases, and parasites helps ensure a better life for your pet AND your family.

The health and well-being of your companion animals and the promotion of responsible pet ownership are our primary concerns.

WE CARE!!



ZOONOSES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

RABIES: Deadly to people as well as many species of animals. All dogs & cats must be vaccinated by law. Raccoons, skunks, foxes, and bats are common carriers. Rodents and rabbits are uncommon carriers. Wild animals cannot be vaccinated. There is no effective treatment for the disease. Prevention by vaccination is a must. Rabies is transmitted by exposure to infected saliva through a wound or mucous membrane. Contact with any wild life should be avoided to reduce the possibility of Rabies transmission. If you or your pet comes in contact with either a raccoon, skunk, fox, any roaming canine or bats, dead or alive, you should contact Rutherford County PAWS for instructions.

TOXOPLASMOSIS: A protozoan disease carried by some cats. Eggs of the parasite (oocysts) are shed in the cat's feces, and then ingested by other animals (and people) causing disease. The primary concern in people is the potential for causing birth defects. Litter boxes should be changed daily and pregnant women should not be allowed to change the litter box, even though the stools are not infective until they have remained in the litter box for 48 hours or more. Ask for a specific handout on this disease.

ROUNDWORMS: Toxacara canis is the scientific name for a parasite that can migrate through body tissues and eyes in children from ingesting the eggs, which can be in the soil or pet's feces. Puppies and kittens should be routinely dewormed with the appropriate drug 3 times at 2-3week intervals to control this parasite.

HOOKWORMS: Larvae from the soil can migrate through the skin. Signs include itchy skin and skin rashes. It is self-limiting. The parasite affecting pets will not reproduce in humans and therefore dies out without treatment unless re-infection occurs. Routine deworming of pets eliminates the potential for soil contamination.

RINGWORM: 60% of all kittens are thought to be carriers, even though they show no clinical signs of the skin disease. It can spread to the entire family. A fungal culture is recommended for all new cats brought into a household to screen for this disease. All cases of hair loss in your cat should be presented to a veterinarian promptly for a definite diagnosis.

GIARDIA: An intestinal parasite carried by dogs and cats that may possibly be transmitted to humans. The major clinical sign is diarrhea although carriers may not show any sign of the disease. Routine internal parasite tests should be performed on all pets at least once each year. This disease is commonly present in wild animals.

CAT SCRATCH DISEASE: A bacterial infection characterized by slight fever and enlarged lymph nodes. This disease is usually self-limiting. The most common cause is a cat scratch. There is no reason to euthanize a cat that has caused this problem.

LEPTOSPIROSIS: A life-threatening bacterial infection of the kidneys that often results in kidney and or other organ failure. Symptoms include but are not limited to fever, joint pain, depression, nausea, excessive drinking, jaundice and excessive bleeding. Dogs become infected after contact with the urine of an infected animal such as rodents. The Center For Disease Control and Prevention reports that 1/3 of people infected with Leptospirosis contract the disease from dogs and 1/3 come from contact with rodents. Leptospirosis causes similar disease in humans and can be fatal. Ensuring that our pets are vaccinated and avoiding contact with wild rodents will reduce the risk of Leptospirosis

HEARTWORMS: Heartworms can cause disease in both dogs and cats, and has been reported in people. It has been confused with cancer in the lungs of humans. The heartworm has also been found in the eye of humans. All pets should be on prevention.

PREVENTING ILLNESS IN PEOPLE

ZOONOTIC DISEASE is the medical term for any disease that people can “catch” from animals.

More than 150 diseases are transmissible to people (about 1/3 of all known diseases). Preventing them is important. **The main prevention strategy is nothing more than GOOD SANITATION.**

Some of the most common zoonotic diseases include:

Roundworms
Hookworms
Ringworm
Tuberculosis

Cat Scratch Fever
Toxoplasmosis
Scabies
Salmonella

The National Center for Disease Control recommends that veterinarians advise their clients of the potential risk and take measures to prevent the problem.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists (AAVP) now recommend the routine deworming of pets on a regular basis. This is called “Strategic Deworming,” and is designed to prevent parasite disease and the shedding of parasite eggs in your yard and home. This is important because family members can be infected by the eggs in the environment as well as the pet.

Virtually all puppies and kittens are born with internal parasites (worms) or are infected shortly after birth through the mother’s milk. Our practice routinely deworms all new puppies and kittens at least 3 times during our initial preventive care visits.

Roundworms are very common and it is estimated that a female roundworm can produce more than 200,000 eggs/day which can remain alive in the soil for many years. Roundworms and Hookworms cause “larval migrans” and possibly can result in disease in humans. It is estimated that 10,000 children in the U.S. are infected annually with roundworms and that approximately 750 will suffer visual impairment or even blindness. Infection occurs when the roundworm eggs from the environment are ingested, usually from accidentally putting dirty hands in the mouth. Fruits & vegetables growing close to the ground, such as strawberries & carrots, may be contaminated.



DON'T PANIC. The incidence of pet to human worm transmission is very low. CAUTION and GOOD SANITATION are “the keys.”

Internal parasites are often grouped together and called “worms.”

Roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, and tapeworms often infect pets.

PREVENTION OF HUMAN INFECTION

- Washing hands regularly after handling soil or playing with pets.
- Removing pet droppings from your yard at least 2-3 times/week. Daily is best.
- Keep your pets flea-free.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating.
- Do not allow children to go barefoot or sit or lie on playgrounds or beaches where they are exposed to pet stools. Hookworm larvae can penetrate the skin and cause inflammation.
- Clean cat litter boxes daily and wash hands carefully afterwards.
- Pregnant women should not clean out the cat's litter box or do any gardening (working with the hands in the soil) without wearing gloves, but avoiding the task is best.
- Do not drink water from streams or other sources that may be contaminated with feces.
- Ensure your pets are dewormed for Roundworms, and Hookworms on a regular intervals.
- Have routine internal parasite examinations performed on your pets feces every 6 months, or if worms are noted in the stool.

Preventions for
Heartworm, Fleas and Ticks are
just as
important for
YOU AND YOUR FAMILY
as it is for your PETS!!!!



FLEA FACTS

Flea infestations are the most common parasite problem of dogs and cats in our area. It is estimated that American pet owners spend over 500 million dollars each year on flea products—most of which do not work!

During the past few years much research has centered on studying the life cycle of the species of fleas that attack dogs and cats in an effort to develop better flea control methods. There are over 2000 species of fleas, but only a few actually attack dogs and cats. Here are some facts you should know:

1. Flea eggs are white and about the size of a grain of sand. The eggs are laid while the flea is on the pet and easily roll off the fur into the environment. Eggs usually hatch in 1-10 days, depending on the temperature and humidity. Once the eggs hatch, the larvae move deeper into the carpet to get away from light and searching for food. Temperatures below 65° and relative humidity below 70% slow down growth of the flea. When the larva is mature, it produces a silk-like cocoon. Because the cocoon is sticky, it quickly becomes coated with debris from the environment that helps camouflage it. This stage can last 9-174 days. Adult fleas emerge from the cocoon when stimulated by heat, vibrations, and exhaled carbon dioxide. The entire life cycle can be completed in as little as 12-14 days, or as long as 140 days. Under average conditions, the entire life cycle takes 3-4 weeks.
2. Adult fleas are attracted to house pets by the warmth of the pet's body, movement, changes in light intensity, and exhaled carbon dioxide. Fleas have tremendously powerful back legs, which they use for jumping on the pet. It is estimated that if we have the power in our legs as has the flea, we could jump over the Empire State Building. It is reported that fleas can jump as high as 13 feet.
3. It is now known that the adult flea species that attacks dogs and cats spends its **entire** adult life on the pet. Once the adult flea begins to feed on the pet, it must have almost **constant access** to the blood of the pet for it to survive. Adult fleas cannot live off the pet more than 3-4 days without a blood meal.
4. Egg production begins within 48 hours of the first blood meal, reaches a peak of 40-50 eggs per day and can last well over 100 days. Female fleas can produce over 2000 eggs during their life. This is equivalent to producing their body weight in eggs every day of their life. While only a fraction of these eggs will eventually develop to adults in the natural environment, this high rate of reproduction ensures that there will **always** be fleas!
5. New adult fleas must have a blood meal within 2-3 weeks after hatching. The higher the temperature and lower the humidity, the quicker the fleas will die.
6. It is common for people to be attacked by fleas after returning from vacation or being away from home for several days. This is often due to the increased temperature that occurs when the air conditioning is turned back providing a better optimum temperature and humidity (in our area) for fleas to mature.
7. Fleas consume 15 times their body weight with every blood meal. An infestation of 220 female fleas could consume 10% of a 1 pound kitten's blood volume in one day. The majority of blood consumed is passed out as partially digested feces (flea dirt) that serves as essential food for flea larvae in the carpets and other areas.



Flea control must include treatment of the yard, house, and pet!

ESSENTIAL STEPS FOR FLEA AND TICK CONTROL

With the introduction of the new topical flea control products, flea control is now much easier for the average pet owner. The product we currently believe is the best is **FRONTLINE TRITAK®**. When used **MONTHLY**, it breaks the flea life cycle and controls tick infestations as well. It remains effective after bathing, water immersion, or exposure to sunlight.

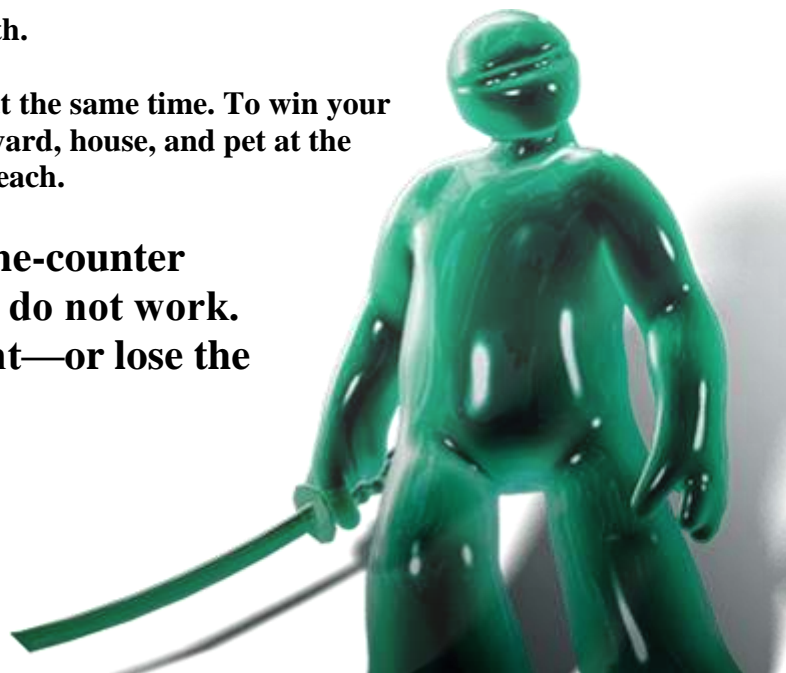


1. FRONTLINE TRITAK® is absorbed into the hair follicle's sweat glands where the skin oils are produced and therefore the pet should not be bathed for 2 days before and 2 days after application.
2. Part the hair and apply directly to the skin. Avoid superficial application to the hair instead of the skin.
3. It is safe for all cats and dogs 12 weeks of age and older.

ADDITIONAL TREATMENT THAT MAY BE NECESSARY IN HEAVILY INFESTED ENVIRONMENTS:

1. **Spot treat the yard.**
 - Treat shady areas, damp areas, dog houses, and other areas where your pet spends the majority of time.
 - Use granules or a residual spray for longer lasting effect.
 - Spraying is most effective when the ground is damp. (Keep pets off until completely DRY!)
 - Repeat spraying every 3-4 weeks. (Do **not** use these products on the pet!!)
 - Follow the label instructions of any pesticide you use.
2. **Treat the house.**
 - We **RECOMMEND** a professional exterminator. Over-the-counter foggers just don't work! Use a professional exterminator who will give you a written guarantee to solve the problem. You will find this to be the most cost-effective way to treat the house. Solicit quotes from several exterminators in the area. Be sure to compare guarantees. Get it in writing.
 - Vacuum the house thoroughly, at least once each week to remove eggs.
3. **Use Frontline TRITAK® Once Each Month.**
4. **All pets in the household must be treated at the same time. To win your war with fleas, it is important to treat the yard, house, and pet at the same time using appropriate products for each.**

Don't waste your money on over-the-counter products and "quick cures." Most do not work. There is "no free lunch." Do it right—or lose the war!



HEARTWORM FACTS

- 1. Adult Heartworms live in the right side of the heart.**
They are 6-14 inches long. Several **HUNDRED** may be present in the dog!
- 2. Heartworms impair blood circulation resulting in damage to the heart, lungs, liver, and kidneys.** Serious damage may occur even before outward clinical signs are observed.
- 3. Advanced signs include difficult breathing, coughing, tiring easily, listlessness, loss of weight, and fainting.**
- 4. Heartworms are found THROUGHOUT the United States and Canada.**
- 5. Heartworms are spread by MOSQUITOES.** After ingesting blood from an infected dog, the MICROFILARIA (“baby” heartworms”) are transmitted to another dog or cat when it is bitten by the mosquito. Once the heartworms mature, they begin reproducing additional microfilaria. **THESE MICROFILARIA ARE NOT DANGEROUS TO THE INFECTED DOG.** The microfilaria **MUST** be ingested by a mosquito before they can become infectious. The mosquito must then inject the heartworm larvae into a susceptible pet.
- 6. It takes 3-6 months for adult heartworms to develop in the dog after being bitten by an infected mosquito.**
- 7. Heartworms occur in ALL breeds of dogs: both large and small, short-haired and long-haired, inside-dogs and outside-dogs.** Heartworms also now are known to infect cats.
- 8. Diagnosis of Heartworms is by a blood test. Annual blood tests are recommended for all dogs including those on preventive medications because none are 100%.**
- 9. Treatment IS very SUCCESSFUL but is very EXPENSIVE when the disease is detected early.** The adult worms are killed with an injectable drug given in a series of 2 injections. A few days later, the worms begin to die, and are carried by way of the bloodstream to the lungs where they lodge in small blood vessels. They slowly decompose and are absorbed by the body over a period of several months. Other injections are required to kill the microfilaria (baby heartworms) at a later time.
- 10. HEARTWORMS CAN BE PREVENTED!!!!**
WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND MONTHLY HEARTWORM PREVENTIVE BE GIVEN ALL YEAR ROUND.



PREVENTING DENTAL DISEASE

We all know what happens to us when we don't take care of our teeth. But most of us don't realize....that our pets suffer from dental complications too.

You can save the pain of dental disease if you learn about proper dental care for your pet, and how to spot potential problems **BEFORE** they become serious.

Problems with the gums and teeth are known as **PERIODONTAL DISEASE**. Periodontal disease is a major problem in both the dog and cat. Regular check-ups are the best method to prevent problems and complications.

Periodontal disease causes over 75% of all pet dental problems. In advanced stages, your pet might have.....foul-smelling breath, excessive accumulations of tartar, and loose teeth. They may also have a loss of appetite or be unduly irritable...because of the pain involved with infection. **Periodontal disease HURTS!!**

Food first accumulates between the tooth and gum forming a substance called "**plaque.**" If the plaque is not removed, it will allow bacterial growth. **This bacteria is the start of Periodontal Disease.**

The bacteria invade the gums, leading to inflammation and the formation of another substance called "**calculus.**" Calculus is a hard, irritating substance that can be best removed at your pet hospital in a procedure called "scaling." If this is not done, pus pockets will form around the root of the tooth, causing further separation of the tooth and gum and possibly destroying the bone that holds the teeth. At this point, in most cases, the tooth can no longer be saved.

Untreated Periodontal Disease will leave your pet with a constant source of infection that can spread throughout the body through the bloodstream. It can enter the bloodstream through the bleeding gums caused by the infection. Heart, liver, and kidney problems may often result. **Proper care of the mouth preventing these conditions can add years to the life of your pet--and certainly make it more comfortable and pleasant to be around.**

Preventing Periodontal Disease should be a major concern for you. The best prevention is proper dental hygiene to promote teeth and gum health and slow the rate of tartar formation. **Follow these tips for good oral hygiene:**

- 1. Feed hard food only if possible which will provide a cleaning action.** Hard food is encouraged to help remove early soft plaque accumulation, but will NOT prevent the problem alone, no more than if you were to stop brushing your teeth and simply eat a piece of hard candy each day.
- 2. Have teeth examined at least twice every year for tartar buildup.** Pets vary considerably in the amount of tartar that accumulates. Have a dental prophylaxis procedure performed when recommended by your veterinarian.
- 3. Use a pet dentrifice on a regular basis. We will be happy to recommend what is best for your pet. Some options include:**

CET Chews® are available for both dogs and cats.

Maxiguard® is a tasteless gel that is accepted well by the pet. It is simply rubbed on the teeth and gums with your finger.

Pet toothpaste is available. Human toothpaste should not be used since it can be toxic if swallowed by the pet. Most pets will accept a toothbrush if time is taken for the pet to get accustomed to it.



Preventive dental health will help save your pet's teeth, help avoid stress related problems caused by pain, and provide protection from liver, kidney, and heart disease which are the major killers of older pets. Proper dental care at home is the most significant factor in preventing painful damage to your pet's teeth. Regular dental examinations by your veterinarian can result in early diagnosis and timely treatment of most dental problems.

Our staff is professionally trained to clean, scale, and polish your pet's teeth. We will examine your pet's mouth and then make the appropriate recommendations for therapy. Good dental health for your pet is up to you!

COMMON DENTAL CARE QUESTIONS ABOUT TEETH CLEANING

1. WHAT IS TARTAR AND GINGIVITIS?

Tartar, or dental calculus, is the buildup of food, bacteria, and other residues on your pet's teeth that lead to gum infections or gingivitis.

2. CAN DIRTY TEETH BE HARMFUL TO MY PET?

Dirty teeth will cause bad breath, eventual loss of teeth due to infections; and may even lead to generalized infections in your pet due to bacteria entering the blood stream.

Heart disease and **kidney disease** are very common as a result of gingivitis.

3. WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU CLEAN MY PET'S TEETH?

Your pet is given a physical exam and any needed laboratory work to insure your pet's well-being before the procedure. Your pet is then sedated. Teeth are then hand-scaled, cleaned with ultra-sound equipment, and polished, very similar to a human dentist. A fluoride treatment is then applied. Necessary extractions are performed when the teeth's roots have been destroyed by infection.

4. WHAT ABOUT EXTRACTIONS?

Only the veterinarian can determine which teeth should be extracted, and which loose teeth can be saved. This is often impossible to determine until the pet is properly sedated, due to the possible pain in the gum area.

5. WHAT ABOUT ANTIBIOTICS?

Antibiotics are often given before, and then after the dental cleaning (and possible extractions) to fight any bacteria present. In many severe infections, antibiotics will be prescribed for several days and then an appointment is scheduled for a recheck. **Be SURE to continue antibiotics until instructed not to do so!** Use the entire contents of any prescribed medications before stopping.

6. WHAT CAN I DO AT HOME AFTER CLEANING?

Soft food may be fed for several days if the pet's mouth seems sore. Gums and teeth are often a little sensitive for 3-4 days after cleaning. Daily use of a prescribed dentifrice is most important to prevent future problems. Many pets (especially over 5 years of age) will require dental cleaning procedures every 6-12 months to maintain optimum oral hygiene.



HANDLING COMMON EMERGENCIES

The best health insurance you can give your pet is preventive health care.

Preventive health care is much more than just vaccinations. Preventive health care includes proper nutrition, exercise, weight control, internal & external parasite control, skin and coat care, and dental hygiene. It has been estimated that simply keeping your pet's teeth clean can add 2 years to its life. Annual blood profiles and urinalysis for all pets over 5 years of age will allow earlier detection of problems before they become life threatening.

Preventive health care also includes being prepared for an emergency. Even though you can't protect your pet from all dangers, you should pet-proof your home and learn how to handle an emergency.

The first step in being prepared for an emergency is by utilizing a veterinary hospital for the routine preventive health care procedures. When selecting a veterinarian, don't hesitate to ask how emergency service is handled.

If you know how to stop bleeding, induce vomiting, administer medications, and apply a muzzle, you will probably save your pet's life if it is possible to do so. **Remaining calm** in an emergency situation is most important for a successful outcome. The basic fact is that if a pet is going to die within the first 30 minutes after an accident, it will probably do so regardless of what you do.

A **basic emergency first aid kit** can be assembled in a Ziploc® bag and should include:

- Elastic Bandage Roll (4) -- for bandaging & controlling hemorrhage
- 2 Gauze Sponges to apply directly to a wound
- Triple Antibiotic Ointment
- Nylon Cord for a Muzzle
- Ipecac Syrup (for inducing vomiting)
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Pepto Bismol (for diarrhea)
- Dial Soap (for washing wounds)
- Ivory Soap (for washing the skin from contact with poisons)
- Rectal or Ear Thermometer



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When treating a hurt or injured pet a muzzle should ALWAYS be placed prior to moving and treating the pet no matter how “nice and sweet” the pet usually is.

How to Muzzle A Dog:

Make a large loop by tying a loose knot in the middle of a gauze bandage roll or string. Hold the ends up, one in each hand. Slip the loop over the dog’s muzzle and lower jaw, just behind his nose. Then quickly tighten the loop so the dog cannot open its mouth. Next, tie the ends under the lower jaw. Make a knot there and bring the ends back on each side of his face under his ears. Tie the ends together behind the ears at the back of the head. After tying both ends behind the dog’s head, take one end and bring it down the middle of his face. Slip it under the loop around his nose, bring it back over his head, and tie to the remaining end. Since the dog perspires through his tongue, do not leave the muzzle on any longer than necessary. Small or short-faced dogs can be prevented from biting by wrapping them in a blanket, coat, or large towel and covering the head.

Moving an Injured Pet:

1. Muzzle
2. Slide onto a board, blanket, jacket, or other makeshift stretcher
3. To carry a large dog, hold him across your arms with each arm just inside the pets front & hind legs.

Quick Treatment of Common Emergencies:

Allergic Reactions

Don’t panic if wheals (hives) should begin to break out on your pet. This type of allergic reaction is NOT fatal. It will become uncomfortable to the pet until treated by a veterinarian, but the pet will not die. Allergic reactions that result in death usually show NO outward signs -- just a dead pet!

Bleeding

Control bleeding by direct pressure to the wound with your hand or a pressure bandage. Place a gauze pad over the wound and then cover and wrap with an elastic bandage. Place the bandage snug for pressure, but not tight enough to cut off circulation. Although some blood may discolor it, the bandage should be tight enough so that blood does not drip through it. Seek veterinary attention for all cuts through the entire thickness of the skin or that bleed excessively. It is best NOT to apply any medications. Tincture of Iodine, Peroxide, and most ointments only irritate the wound more and decrease healing. Do NOT apply cotton to a wound.



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Burns

Immerse the affected part in COLD water. Keep ICE on the area as much as possible. Do NOT apply any type medication until veterinary attention is obtained if the burn appears severe. The major complication is infection.

Choking

Attempt to push the lower jaw open and tilt the head up. Using extreme caution try to remove any object with the fingers. If unsuccessful, kneel behind the dog, holding its body just below the ribs. Squeeze hard a few times, pressing up. Seek professional veterinary attention if the object does not pop out. Swallowed objects that do not interfere with breathing are NOT immediate life or death threats. However, a veterinarian should be consulted if it is possible the object was swallowed. Complications are much less when the object can be removed while still in the stomach rather than in the intestine. Many veterinary clinics now have endoscopes that allow the object to be removed without surgery.

Electric Shock

Remove the source of electricity with a wooden object. Seek veterinary attention since electric shocks will result in fluid buildup in the lungs for several days that can be fatal.

Eye Injuries

NEVER apply any medication to an eye without seeking veterinary attention first. Many scratches on the surface of the eye are not visible until the eye is treated with a special stain. If the wrong type ointment is used, such as an ointment containing cortisone in an injured eye, the condition can be made worse--even to the extent of causing loss of the eye. "Popped Eyes" can sometimes be gently reinserted by grasping the upper and lower lids and attempting to pull them out over the eyeball while at the same time gently pushing in on the eye. If this cannot be accomplished, keep the eye moist with a wet cloth until veterinary assistance can be obtained.

Fish Hooks

Fish hooks must be pushed on through the skin, the barb and point cut off, and then the remainder can be pulled back through the skin the same way it went in. Antibiotics are often needed to prevent infection from the puncture wound.

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Fractures

Fractures are no immediate life or death threats. Stabilize the limb with a stick, rolled newspaper, etc., wrapped loosely with gauze. Do NOT wrap tightly because of swelling that will occur may be harmful.

Heat Stroke

Early signs include panting, high fever (105°-108°F), shock, and collapse. Lower the body temperature by hosing or immersing in luke-warm water up to the neck. This is a serious condition, so get your pet to a veterinarian QUICKLY.

Poisoning (External)

Most signs will involve the nervous system including such things as trembling, nervousness, salivation, pupil constriction, or dilation, and convulsions or coma. Wash the skin in a mild soap, such as Ivory. Rinse and repeat. Seek veterinary attention BEFORE signs develop. Take a description of the poison to the veterinarian for identification.

Poisoning (Internal)

Read the label of the product for instructions. Do not induce vomiting of some poisons, such as caustic chemicals, acids, alkalies, and petroleum products. Most other cases require vomiting to rid as much of the chemical as possible from the stomach. Ipecac Syrup (5-15cc) is the drug of choice. Hydrogen Peroxide (15-30cc) will also sometimes work, but not always.

Seizures

There are many causes of seizures including low blood sugar, epilepsy, distemper, diabetes, and heart failure. The dog will NOT swallow his tongue--**do not put your fingers in his mouth**. Keep him warm, place him in an area where he cannot injure himself, and seek veterinary attention. Young puppies should be given a teaspoon of honey or other source of sugar. Do NOT give sugar to older pets if there is a possibility of diabetes.

Shock

Signs of shock include depression, decreased body temperature, and grayish gums. Keep the pet as quiet as possible, keep it warm, and seek veterinary attention immediately.

Miscellaneous Notes:

Kaopectate is of no value in diarrhea. Pepto Bismol is the drug of choice if a specific cause of diarrhea is not determined. Stool samples should always be examined by the veterinarian to determine the cause if diarrhea exists for more than 24 hours.



Tylenol will kill dogs and cats. Aspirin will often cause gastric ulcers. Use only the enteric coated types.

These instructions are meant for general pet owner information to help you stay calm during an emergency and help you identify pet emergencies, and is not all inclusive. It is always recommended that you seek immediately veterinary attention for any situation **YOU BELIEVE TO BE AN EMERGENCY!!**

25 WAYS TO SHOW YOUR PET YOU CARE!!

1. Take your pet to your veterinarian for a complete physical examination twice a year and vaccinations as needed.
2. Spay or neuter your pet.
3. Discuss proper nutrition with your veterinarian.
4. Avoid feeding table scraps.
5. Monitor your dog's weight. If you can't feel the rib cage, he's overweight.
6. Keep fresh water available at all times. Change it daily.
7. Securely attach Rabies Tag AND an IDENTIFICATION TAG to your dog's collar.
8. Walk or jog your dog daily. It will do both of you good.
9. Use a pet dental product daily to prevent tartar formation and gum infections.
10. Never give a dog bones that can be splintered or swallowed.
11. Begin obedience training when your dog is young. It's easier to prevent than to correct problems.
12. Set firm rules against jumping on people or furniture.
13. Remember that praise works better than punishment.
14. Use Heartworm prevention.
15. Have an Internal Parasite Examination and deworm your pet at least once each year.
16. Keep your dog fenced, and your cats inside, to avoid getting lost or automobile accidents.
17. Provide adequate shelter for outside dogs. Use cedar chips for bedding instead of straw, blankets, etc.
18. Select a breed that fits your lifestyle and living space.
19. Play with your dog daily and observe for any signs of illness.
20. Bathe your dog every 2 weeks in a shampoo balanced for dog skin.
21. Treat the environment (yard and house) on a regular basis for flea control.
22. Never leave a pet unattended in a car.
23. Never give chocolate to a dog. Four ounces can cause illness and death!
24. Antifreeze tastes good to most dogs, however it is fatal when ingested. Use caution when draining car radiators.
25. Rinse off the dog's feet after contacting salt or ice-melting chemicals.

