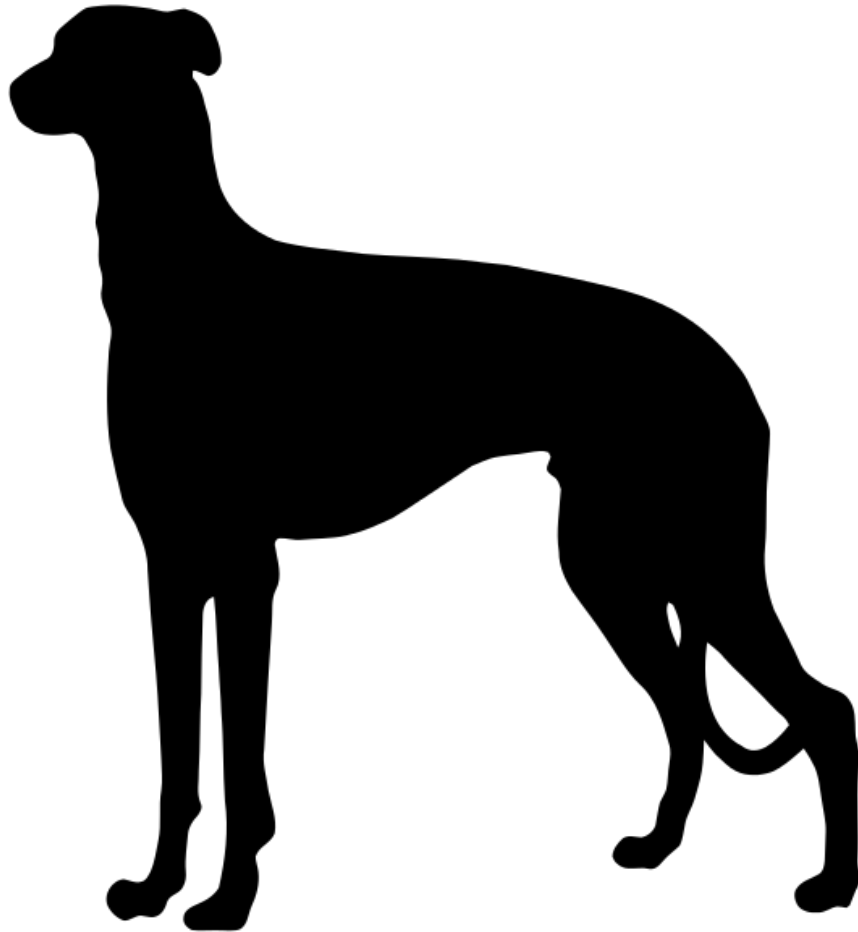


Kettle Moraine Veterinary Clinic



Canine Adult Care

(920)892-4225

Animals enrich our lives

People who own pets live longer, happier, and fuller lives. Our pets remind us of what it is to be gentle, loyal, and to flourish and trust. For all that our pets teach us, for all the love and joy they bring to our lives, they deserve good care, and they rely on us to give it.

Why lifetime veterinary care matters

The average life span of dogs and cats in the United States is 7.4 years. The POTENTIAL life span of the average dog or cat in the United States is 15 years. Comprehensive medical care, good nutrition, and proper training allow pets to live up to their potential as long term family members. In other words, the care you provide your pet with throughout its lifetime will determine how long he or she will remain a happy, healthy member of your family.

Our goal is to maximize the lifespan and the overall health of your dog or cat through preventative medical care, nutritional counseling, and behavioral counseling. We are advocates for your pet. Our job is to advise you of the best care options available for you and your pet.

Working together as a team, we hope to help our patients and their families spend many happy years together.



Kettle Moraine Veterinary Clinic

2712 Eastern Ave · Plymouth, WI · (920)892-4225

G.A. Bohn, D.V.M. · R.M. Maas, D.V.M. · P.J. Connors-Scherer, D.V.M. ·

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Canine Adult Wellness Program

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After-hour emergencies will be handled by
Lakeshore Veterinary Specialists

located at

207 W. Seven Hills Rd.

Port Washington, WI 53074

Phone: (262)268-7800 · Website: www.lakeshorevetspecialists.com

Directions to Lakeshore Veterinary Specialists: *Starting from Plymouth*

1. Head south on HWY 57
2. At the 4-way traffic lights in Fredonia, turn left onto Cr-H/Cr-A
3. Continue to follow Cr-H for 5.5 miles
4. Immediately after crossing the overpass of HWY 43 turn right onto W Seven Hills Road/Cr-LL
5. The Lakeshore Veterinary Specialists is located in the North Port shopping center (207 W. Seven Hills Rd)



WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

Please do not hesitate to call with your questions or concerns. We rather you call early, than have your pet suffer needlessly or worsen overnight. If calling after hours, your call will be transferred to Lakeshore Veterinary Specialists Emergency Service. Please **do not give human medications to your pet** without checking with us first. Many human drugs are toxic to pets or are dosed very differently in animals. For instance, Tylenol and Advil are toxic to dogs and cats, and even a small amount of aspirin can be fatal for your cat.

First Aid Tips

Severe Bleeding: Apply pressure with a cloth, bandage or your hand. **Call your veterinarian.**

Choking: You may use a Heimlich maneuver but be gentle. For smaller animals use the infant method. **Call your veterinarian immediately.**

Vomiting: Do not give food for 12-24 hours. 2 hours after vomiting stops you can try ice chips or very small amounts of water. If no vomiting, you can gradually increase the amounts of food and water over a 24 hour period. **Call your veterinarian if vomiting continues or if accompanied by diarrhea, fever, lethargy, or pain.**

Diarrhea: Do not give food for 12-24 hours. Save a sample of the diarrhea for testing, and keep in a cool place. **Call your veterinarian. If vomiting, lethargy, or pain call immediately.**

Fracture: Signs of a bone fracture include inability to stand on limb, limping, intense pain, and bone appearing to bend where it shouldn't. **Call your veterinarian immediately.** While moving your pet, tie a pantyhose or cloth around the muzzle (severe pain can cause even a nice dog to bite). Use a blanket, floor mat, or board as a stretcher to limit the movement of the limb. Keep your pet warm and quiet while transporting.



Home Checklist for Pet Health

Please use this checklist on a regular basis. You can discover many problems early, before they become serious and cause undue pain and expense.

My Pet...

- is acting normal – active & in good spirits
 - has a normal appetite with no chewing or swallowing difficulty
 - breathes normally, without straining or coughing
 - urinates in the usual amounts and frequency
 - has normal appearing bowel movements
 - walks without stiffness, pain, or difficulty
 - has healthy looking feet and short nails
 - has a full, glossy coat that's in good condition
 - has skin that is free from dry flakes and isn't greasy
 - is free from fleas, ticks, lice, or mites
 - has eyes that are bright, clear, and free of matter
 - has ears that are clean and free of debris and odor.
 - has a moist nose, free of discharge
 - has clean, white teeth that are free of plaque and tartar
 - has gums that are pink with no redness and non-offensive breath odor
 - has a body that is free from lumps/bumps
- as I run my hand over its entire body

Call us if you answer “No” to any of the above questions!



Care Recommendations for Adult Dogs

These suggestions will enable you to provide the best health care, allowing your dog to live as long as possible.

- **Annual physical examination**

A year between physical examinations for your dog is like four to seven years between annual examinations for us.

- **Nutrition**

Feed the highest quality food you can find. Premium pet foods such as Science Diet, Iams, and Purina are much more digestible and result in a healthier pet with less stool volume. DO NOT feed table scraps and snacks!

- **Internal Parasites**

Parasites threaten your dog's health. In large numbers they can cause intestinal blockage, bloody diarrhea, and even death. Certain types can also affect you and your family. A microscopic examination of your pet's stool needs to be done annually.

- **Provide a constant supply of fresh & clean water!**

- **Keep your pet under control**

Don't let your pet run loose. Purchase an ID tag to place on your pet's collar, and keep it on at all times. It is your pet's "ticket home" if they become lost. Consider a microchip or tattoo for permanent identification.

- **Vaccinations & boosters**

Unfortunately, there is no safe, effective drug available to combat any of the major viral diseases of dogs. Vaccination is the only effective form of protection. Vaccinations enable your dog to fight infection by stimulating the immune system so it makes antibodies against the viruses. To maintain this protection, dogs must be vaccinated regularly so the level of immunity is always high enough to prevent disease.

Immunity produced by vaccination does not last forever. It is very important that your dog be revaccinated every year

- **Distemper, Hepatitis, and Leptospirosis** are all wide spread, contagious, and deadly diseases. Nearly every dog will be exposed to these diseases in their lifetime.
- **Parainfluenza** and **Bordetella** cause “Kennel Cough,” a common and debilitating upper respiratory infection. The more your dog comes in contact with other dogs (at groomers, boarding, doggy day care, obedience classes, or even walking your dog) the greater the risk.
- **Parvovirus** causes bloody diarrhea as it destroys the immune system and intestinal lining. It is often fatal even with costly intensive care. Worldwide, Parvovirus is the deadliest virus, killing more dogs than any other disease.
- **Coronavirus** is the second leading cause of viral diarrhea in dogs.
- **Rabies** is a fatal infection of the nervous system that attacks all warm-blooded animals including humans. There is no cure.
- **Lyme Disease**, carried by ticks, poses a serious health risk to both dogs and people. Lyme disease causes crippling arthritis and heart, kidney, and nervous system damage.
- **Heartworm Disease** is serious and deadly. It is carried by mosquitoes. An annual blood test is needed to check for these parasites and monthly medication is given to prevent this disease.

Preventative health care is much more than just vaccinations....

How old is your dog in human years?

| AGE | 0-20 POUNDS | 21-50 POUNDS | 51-90 POUNDS | OVER 90 POUNDS |
|----------|-------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 YEAR | 7 YEARS | 7 YEARS | 7 YEARS | - |
| 2 YEARS | 14 YEARS | 16 YEARS | 18 YEARS | 20 YEARS |
| 3 YEARS | 28 YEARS | 30 YEARS | 32 YEARS | 34 YEARS |
| 4 YEARS | 32 YEARS | 34 YEARS | 36 YEARS | 38 YEARS |
| 5 YEARS | 36 YEARS | 37 YEARS | 40 YEARS | 42 YEARS |
| 6 YEARS | 40 YEARS | 42 YEARS | 45 YEARS | 49 YEARS |
| 7 YEARS | 44 YEARS | 47 YEARS | 50 YEARS | 56 YEARS |
| 8 YEARS | 48 YEARS | 51 YEARS | 55 YEARS | 64 YEARS |
| 9 YEARS | 52 YEARS | 56 YEARS | 61 YEARS | 71 YEARS |
| 10 YEARS | 56 YEARS | 60 YEARS | 66 YEARS | 78 YEARS |
| 11 YEARS | 60 YEARS | 65 YEARS | 72 YEARS | 86 YEARS |
| 12 YEARS | 64 YEARS | 69 YEARS | 77 YEARS | 96 YEARS |
| 13 YEARS | 68 YEARS | 74 YEARS | 82 YEARS | 101 YEARS |
| 14 YEARS | 72 YEARS | 78 YEARS | 88 YEARS | 108 YEARS |
| 15 YEARS | 76 YEARS | 83 YEARS | 93 YEARS | 115 YEARS |
| 16 YEARS | 80 YEARS | 87 YEARS | 99 YEARS | 123 YEARS |
| 17 YEARS | 84 YEARS | 92 YEARS | 104 YEARS | - |
| 18 YEARS | 88 YEARS | 96 YEARS | 109 YEARS | - |
| 19 YEARS | 92 YEARS | 101 YEARS | 115 YEARS | - |
| 20 YEARS | 96 YEARS | 105 YEARS | 120 YEARS | - |

Dogs are considered to be Seniors at 7 years of age.

- **Dental Care** is just as important for your pet as it is for you. The average life span of a dog that receives timely dental care is 10-20% longer than one that doesn't. Infected teeth and gums are very painful to your dog, and also spread infection to the kidneys, heart, liver, and elsewhere. Dental cleanings are a necessary component of a long, happy life for your pet!
- **Prevent Obesity** – extra pounds burden the heart, kidneys, joints, and muscles, decreasing life expectancy 30-50%.
- **Exercise** – most dogs don't get nearly enough exercise. Poor health, obesity, and boredom-related behavior problems often result.
- **Grooming & Nail Trims** - Keep an eye out for fleas, dandruff, sores, lumps, bald spots, or mats. Report any skin issues to your veterinarian. Also watch the nails. Nails that get too long may curl into your dog's pads, or be ripped off when your dog is playing.

- **Flea Control** is essential. Preventing fleas with regular use of effective flea products is much less costly than treating an infestation of fleas in your home. DO NOT waste your money on over the counter flea products. Many do not work and some are even harmful to your pet!! Our products provide good control and we will take the time to individualize a flea program to suit your budget & requirements.
- **Never give human medications to your dog without checking with us.**
- **Report any changes** or problems in your dog's health or behavior to your veterinarian as soon as possible. Diseases or behavior problems are more successfully treated the earlier they're addressed.
- **As your dog ages** Geriatric workups help detect many of the problems caused by aging (kidney, liver, heart, arthritis, dental, etc.) Early detection can lengthen your pet's life. Proper treatment will improve your pet's quality of life.

***We are here to help you assist your pet in living a long,
healthy life at the lowest cost to you!***

Vaccinating for Kennel Cough

Kennel cough is the common name for a group of diseases similar to the human cold or flu. Symptoms of kennel cough include fever, swollen tonsils/lymph nodes, and a deep “honking” cough that takes weeks to go away. Although rarely fatal, it can lead to pneumonia in puppies, geriatric pets, or those already ill with other disease.

There are several different bacteria and viruses that can cause kennel cough. All are very contagious, especially when multiple dogs are in the same room together. When a sick dog coughs or sneezes, it sprays the infectious virus or bacteria particles into the air, where they can float around and are inhaled by other dogs across the room or in the cage next door. Also, it can be spread by touching noses, sharing food/water bowls, and sniffing around where a sick dog has been.

The most common cause of kennel cough is a bacterium named *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. *Bordetella* vaccination is either an intranasal (nose drop), oral, or injectable form. All give quick and effective immunity for 6-12 months. Parainfluenza is a viral cause of kennel cough. There are two strains of parainfluenza vaccine contained in the DHLPP vaccine that most dogs receive annually. Some *bordetella* vaccines contain extra parainfluenza vaccine as well. Also, there are some less common viral causes of kennel cough for which we have no vaccine, so even a vaccinated dog can occasionally contract the disease.

There have been numerous studies reported recently in the veterinary literature about *bordetella* infections causing upper respiratory diseases in cats as well as dogs. Unlike the cough seen in canines, cats develop sneezing and sinusitis.

All boarding kennels require that dogs be vaccinated against kennel cough. Some require the *bordetella* vaccination given within the previous 6 months to keep immunity high. Many veterinary clinics require vaccination before elective surgeries to prevent the spread of disease in the hospital. The last thing your pet needs after major surgery is a fever or a cough.

Most groomers do not require *bordetella* vaccination, but they should. Also, your pet should be vaccinated if you go to dog parks, obedience training, hunting or hiking with other dogs, or if you encounter other pets while walking your dog. Even sitting in the waiting room of the veterinary clinic or entering the clinic for dentistry, x-rays, or other procedures puts your pet at risk for contracting this disease. Only pets confined to their own house or yard have no risk of catching kennel cough.

As with most diseases, prevention is easy and cost effective. Be sure your pet is vaccinated!



What is Lyme Disease?

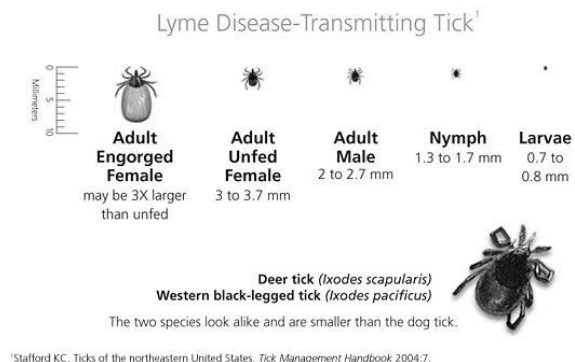
Lyme disease is an infection caused by a type of bacteria called a spirochete. Although originally discovered in Lyme, Connecticut, Lyme disease has now been reported in most states. The disease is more properly called Borreliosis after the bacterial species that causes it-Borrelia burgdorferi.

Lyme disease is a serious and life threatening disease. It can cause an array of symptoms such as kidney, heart, skin and neurological diseases, abortion and infertility. The most common symptoms in dogs are low grade fever (103-104°F), weight loss, and lameness or joint pain which may shift from leg to leg. Symptoms may occur as soon as 4 days after exposure to an infected tick, or as long as 1 year later. The average incubation period is 1 month.

How is it Spread?

The deer tick is the most common carrier of Lyme disease in Wisconsin, Minnesota and the eastern coastal states. Deer are not the only animals that harbor deer ticks. The larval deer ticks prefer to feed on small rodents that live in grassy or brush areas that are often found around the edges of woods or fields. Pets can pick up Lyme disease whether or not they are in a deer populated area.

The deer tick lives a rather complex life cycle. It develops from an egg to a larvae, larva to a nymph and finally from a nymph to an adult. The deer ticks are among the first ticks to become active in the spring, and they remain active in various stages until the first snow. All three life cycle stages of ticks can transmit Lyme disease, and all three are very small and difficult to find. They are active almost all year round.



Can Lyme Disease Be Treated?

Yes! The bacterium that causes the disease is sensitive to several antibiotics. Doxycycline is the one most commonly used to treat the disease in animals. The length of time to treat Lyme disease is typically 4 weeks and the earlier the diagnosis is made, the more successful the treatment likely is. Even with prompt treatment, however, there can be permanent damage, especially if the infection involves the brain, kidneys or heart. Preventing the disease altogether is a much better alternative than waiting for your pet to pick up the disease.

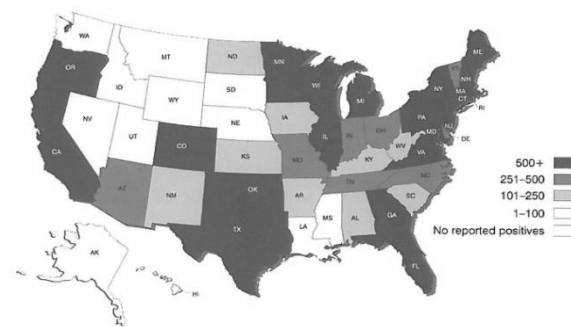
Should I Vaccinate?

We recommend vaccinating for Lyme disease if you take your dog hunting, hiking, camping, running in fields or woods, or can see deer from your house or in your yard. We also advise the use of tick control products on your pet because even though you vaccinate your dog, ticks carry other diseases besides Lyme disease and their bites can become irritated or infected. Prompt removal of any ticks you find on your dog is also recommended to help prevent exposure to the disease.

U.S. Canine Positive Lyme Results

Page 1 of 1

U.S. Canine Positive Lyme Test Results



Reported positives from more than 10,000 veterinary clinics, telephone surveys and IDEXX Reference Laboratories; results collected from the year 2000 to the present

www.idexx.com/animalhealth/diagnostics/lyme/usa/lyme.html

Lyme Disease Affects People Too!

It is important to do thorough tick checks on yourself, your children and your pets after spending time outdoors. This includes time in your own backyard or garden as well as when camping, or hiking in wooded areas. Avoid grassy and marshy woodland areas, and don't walk barefoot in grassy areas. Wearing light colored clothes helps to find ticks easier. Also tuck pants into boots or socks and wear long sleeved shirts buttoned at the cuffs.

Ticks do not fly or jump onto their host; instead they wait atop grasses or other vegetation until an animal brushes against them. Then they cling to the skin, fur, or clothing and crawl for a time on their host before they embed and start to feed. Ticks must be embedded and engorged (not flat) before they transmit the Lyme disease bacteria, therefore it is important to look for and remove any ticks as soon as possible in order to prevent infection.

Protect yourself and your pets with insect/tick repellents. We have several good, long-lasting products available to help you safely protect your dog from Lyme disease.

Can I Get Lyme Disease From My Pet?

It is not known at this time whether Lyme disease can be spread directly from animals to humans. *Borrelia burgdorferi* organisms have been found in the urine of infected animals; however it is speculated that urine and feces from birds and rodents may be contributing to the spread of the disease. Certainly, infected ticks can carry the disease from animals to people in close proximity. At this time we don't believe that animal-human transmission is a significant factor in the disease transmission but caution is advised if you are exposed to an animal which has the disease. Use insect repellents conscientiously and wash your hands or wear gloves when handling animal wastes or deer carcasses.

Deworming

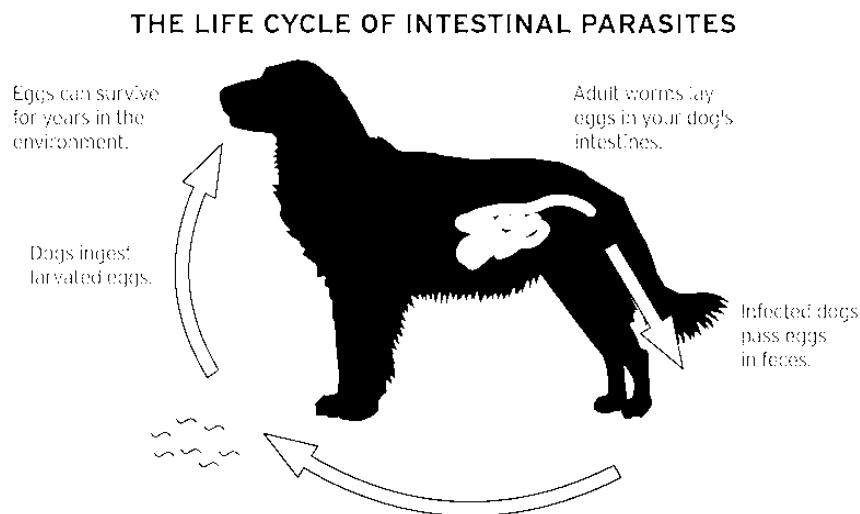
Intestinal parasites can cause vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, or even death. Some intestinal parasites are transmittable to humans. *Over 10,000 cases of animal roundworms cause illness in children every year in the United States.*

Intestinal parasites are diagnosed by having a fresh stool sample examined under a microscope by someone here at the veterinary hospital. This should be done as part of a health exam when you obtain a cat or dog. Also, it should be done on a yearly basis as part of your pet's annual health exam.

Stool samples should be collected when they are fresh and stored in the refrigerator until they can be brought to the hospital. DO NOT freeze them. One to two teaspoons is all that is necessary to run a fecal exam.

If a stool sample from your pet is found to be positive for worms, the veterinarian will prescribe an effective dewormer. Most parasites require deworming twice, two weeks apart. Please weigh your pet before picking up dewormer to ensure a proper dosage. Stool samples should be checked again in 4 weeks and 8 weeks after the final deworming to ensure your pet is not re-infested by his or her environment. For prevention of intestinal parasites, remove fecal matter from your yard regularly and dispose of it.

So that you may better understand the problems intestinal parasites may cause and what signs to look for, we have included a short description of the six most common types of intestinal parasites.



Roundworms

Roundworms, the most common type of intestinal worm, are 2-4 inches long and resemble strands of spaghetti. They live in the small intestine and may cause vomiting, diarrhea, or weight loss. The larval worms can damage the liver and lungs while migrating through these organs on their way to the small intestine. Roundworms are transmitted via stool of other infected dogs and cats, or through the uterus of the mother dog/cat to her unborn babies. Entire worms can sometimes be seen in the stool or vomit of infested animals.

Hookworms

Hookworms are half inch long worms which attach to the lining of the small intestine, causing blood loss and diarrhea. Puppies and kittens can become infested through the mother's uterus before birth or via her milk after birth. Older animals acquire hookworms through skin contact with the stool of other dogs or cats.

Whipworms

Whipworms live within the large intestine. They are not as common as the other intestinal parasites, but the disease they cause can be very serious. Bloody diarrhea and weight loss are the symptoms seen. These worms are transmitted by ingestion of the stool of infested animals.

Tapeworms

Tapeworms live within the small intestine, where the head attaches to the intestinal wall and produces a chain of segments. Mature segments containing eggs are passed with the stool, or may be seen around the rectum. They resemble small grains of rice. They may be acquired by the ingestion of rodents or birds, or most commonly through the ingestion of fleas. Flea control is essential to control tapeworm infestation.

Coccidia

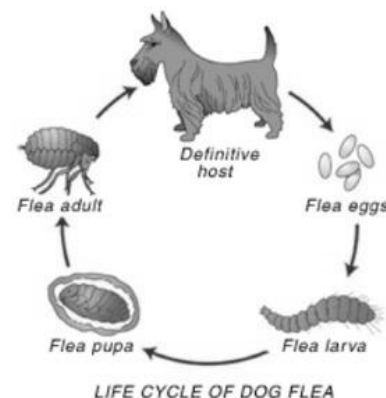
Coccidia are a one-celled protozoan parasite, more like bacteria rather than a worm. Puppies and kittens can pick these up from their mother and they can be acquired by eating rabbit or other wildlife droppings. They are treated with antibiotics.

Giardia

Giardia is also a protozoan. They are very difficult to pick up on a regular stool check. Antibiotics or special dewormers kill them, but they are difficult to eradicate completely and often flare up with stress or other intestinal problems. They are contagious to humans and cause vomiting and diarrhea in both people and pets.

Preventing Fleas and Ticks

Fleas are among one of the most common health problems in dogs and cats. It is much easier and more cost effective to prevent fleas on your pets than to have to treat a major flea infestation in your house. Regular use of flea products will take care of the occasional flea that your pet may encounter in the yard and should prevent you from having to spend a large sum of money on foggers and exterminators. Treating a bad flea infestation in your house usually costs upwards of \$150.



Fleas will bite your pets causing an itchy allergic reaction which can become very severe. They also carry viral and bacterial diseases. Puppies and kittens can become anemic, which can be fatal. Fleas also carry tapeworms and tapeworm segments can be seen in the stool or around the rectal area of your pet. They look like small rice segments and chances are if they have tapeworms, they have fleas or vice versa.

Other animals bring fleas into your yard. Pets and people can then bring fleas into the house. Birds nesting in the attic or mice seeking shelter can also bring fleas into your home. Fleas can travel and will hop inside through an open door or window. They are often small enough that they can come through a window screen. Once inside your home there is no place a flea cannot get to. Adult fleas spend most of their time on your pet but the remainder of the time they are roaming your house and laying thousands of eggs!

If you've never been lucky enough to see a flea, they are about 1/8 inch long, reddish brown and shaped like a sesame seed with legs. They are usually found on your pet's head, belly or lower back. If you ripple the hair backwards and look at the skin they can be seen scurrying through the base of the hair coat. The droppings they leave behind can be seen in clusters and look like grains of pepper. If you place some of these on a white paper towel, wet it and mush it around it will turn the towel red. This happens because the flea droppings contain digested blood. Plain dirt stays black or gray when it is wet.

Prevention

Many flea products sold in the stores are wasting your time and money, and some are even harmful to your pet. Most compounds that are strong enough to be effective are sold only through licensed veterinarians and exterminators, who are properly trained in their use and are regulated by the state and EPA. Insecticides should only be used according to the label directions. Care is needed to ensure that toxicity does not develop due to the concurrent use of other drugs, pesticides, or because the compound used is not safe for a particular age or type of animal.

Many insecticidal flea collars that are available in stores are not as effective and often cause dermatitis on the pet's neck. Flea shampoos and soaps are great for cleaning your pet but they have no residual effect.

To see what flea/tick treatment Kettle Moraine Veterinary Clinic offers, visit the "Flea Products on the Market" page.

Flea/Tick Products on the Market

Frontline Gold- a vial of liquid that is applied to the back of the neck in cats, and down the backs of dogs. Protects against fleas and ticks for 1 month.

Approved for use on cats, including breeding, pregnant, and lactating queens and kittens 8 weeks or older weighing 1.5 lbs or more.

Approved for use on breeding, pregnant, and lactating bitches and puppies 8 weeks or older weighing 5 lbs or more.

Nexgard- available in four sizes of beef-flavored, soft chewable tablets for oral administration to dogs and puppies according to their weight. Approved for use in dogs and puppies 8 weeks or older weighing 4lbs or more. Nexgard is not available for cats of any age. Not recommended for dogs with food allergies.

Revolution- a vial of liquid that is applied to the back of the neck. Protects against fleas, heartworm disease and also treats and controls hookworms, roundworms, and ear mites. Product is applied once a month and should not be used on kittens less than 8 weeks of age.

Sentinel Spectrum- available in four sizes for oral administration to dogs and puppies according to their weight. Protects against, fleas, ticks, heartworm, roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, and tape worms. Approved for the use in dogs and puppies 6 weeks or older weighing 2 lbs or more. Safe to give dogs with food allergies.

Seresto Collar- for 8-month prevention and treatment of ticks, fleas, and lice on dogs and puppies 7 weeks or older weighing above 18lbs. 8 month prevention and treatment of ticks and fleas on cats and kittens 10 weeks of age or older.

Heartworm Disease

Heartworm Disease...

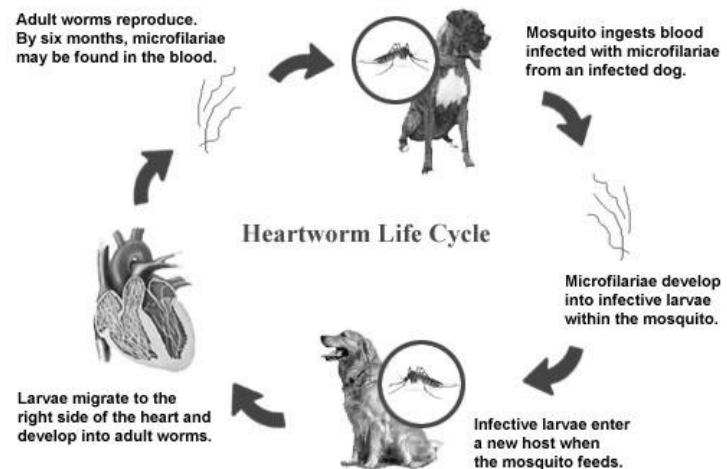
It is a deadly disease wherever mosquitoes are present. Each year thousands of dogs become permanently debilitated or die from lung, heart or circulatory problems caused by heartworms. Your dog can have heartworms for several months before symptoms are obvious. By then the disease may be difficult or impossible to treat successfully.

Symptoms...

An infected dog becomes less active and tires easily. Coughing, weight loss, chronic fatigue and fainting may appear in advanced stages of the disease. Adult heartworms are found in the heart, lungs, and major blood vessels and secondary liver and kidney disease may result. Heartworms can grow from 5-14 inches long and in advanced cases a hundred or more worms can be found in a single heart.

Prevention...

Year round monthly heartworm prevention is recommended along with annual heartworm blood testing. It is easy and inexpensive to test for and prevent heartworm disease. We are happy to say that most of our clients who own dogs do have them tested for heartworm disease and put them on a monthly preventative medication. Heartworm preventatives come in both a chewable beef flavored form or in non-chewable pill that is given once a month year round.



Not only are heartworm medications reasonably priced but many of them also prevent roundworms, whipworms, and hookworms. These parasites live in the intestines and over 95% of puppies are born with one or more of these parasites. They are also common in adult dogs, especially those that spend a lot of time outdoors. Roundworms and hookworms can also cause problems for people, especially children who may be outside barefoot in the yard or toddlers who may put soiled fingers in their mouth. There are 10,000 cases of animal parasites that cause diseases in children every year in the United States.

Why Risk Problems for Your Pet or for Your Family?

We recommend having a stool sample checked for intestinal parasites at the time the heartworm test is done. If the stool sample is positive for intestinal parasites, your pet will need deworming to kill the adult intestinal worms. The heartworm preventatives given after that will prevent your dog from becoming re-infested with the intestinal parasites. Eggs of intestinal parasites do survive on grass for long periods of time. Without the heartworm preventative, it is common for dogs to pick up intestinal parasites repeatedly in the yard.

Untreated Animals Spread Diseases. Please Don't Let Yours Be the One!

Unfortunately heartworm disease is here to stay due to untreated pets and wild animals. There will always be dog owners who choose to not put their pets on heartworm prevention. These unprotected animals serve as a reservoir, spreading the disease to other dogs. Please don't let your dog become a victim of this deadly disease. Call for an appointment to get your pet started on a parasite prevention program today.

➡ **Fact** All dogs, regardless of age, sex, size or breed are at risk wherever mosquitoes are present. It takes only ONE infected mosquito to infect your dog.

➡ **Fact** Heartworm disease can kill your dog.

➡ **Fact** Effective, easy-to-use preventative medication can save your dog's life!



How to Choose a Pet Food

One of the most common questions we are asked is “What should I feed my pet?” Since the most important contribution you can make to your pet’s health and well being is his or her diet, it’s a good question that deserves a good answer.

Think Quality!

First of all, with pet foods, as with most things, you get what you pay for. Cheap dog and cat foods use cheap ingredients, have poor quality control, are not well digested and may have excesses or deficiencies in vital nutrients, which can harm your pet. When analyzed in a laboratory many generic or store brand foods do not actually contain the level of nutrition stated on the label. So, to get the nutrition you are paying for, choose a well known name brand such as Science Diet, Purina or Iams. Premium foods contain superior nutrition over grocery store and department store brands. They are extensively tested and meet rigid standards with no ingredient substitutions. The finest pet foods are formulated with controlled levels of key nutrients like fat, protein, phosphorus, and magnesium to help reduce the risk of kidney disease. That is why, even though grocery store brands provide adequate nutrition for many pets, we still recommend that you feed your pet the best you can buy.

Don’t switch foods

Animals do not need variety in their diets. Dogs are prone to digestive upsets such as diarrhea on varied diets or table scraps. These problems usually appear in middle aged dogs, which may then be difficult to accustom to a more healthy diet. If you do need to change from one product to another, do so gradually by mixing a small amount of the new food with the old food and gradually increase the new food amount over about two weeks time. This will prevent vomiting and/or diarrhea from too sudden a change in food. Your pet will do best if you pick one complete food that is appropriate for his or her age and activity level, and stick with it. For a puppy or kitten this means a puppy or kitten food. Young, rapidly growing animals need more nutrition than adult food can provide.

Don’t base your food choices on what you would like to eat

Many food manufacturers would like you to do this. Dogs and cats are color blind, so they don’t care whether their food is red or brown. They also don’t care if it looks like beef stew or pork chops! The fancier the food looks, the more you are paying for unnecessary artificial coloring, flavoring and preservatives. Some pets can be sensitive to these.

Dry food is best for teeth and gums

The majority of your dog or cat’s nutrition needs should be met with a chow type food. Canned foods are much more expensive to feed, as you are paying for more water and extra packaging. Many people like to supplement their pet’s diet with canned food, and this is fine as long as you pick a high quality one, and don’t overdo it.

Value

Better foods may cost more per bag, but the superior nutrition and better digestibility of these foods means you feed less per day, you clean up fewer stools later, and your veterinary bills for nutritionally related diseases will be less as well.

What about treats?

Most dog owners and an increasing number of cat owners feed treats to their pets, as well as regular food. Treats are rarely “complete and balanced”, and are often loaded with salt, fat, artificial colorings and preservatives, all of which comprise “junk food” for animals. It’s easy to forget treats contain extra calories and can lead to weight issues, so it is recommended to give these items in moderation. Some of them, such as the Hill’s line of life stage biscuits, are better than others. Read the labels before you buy. These biscuits can help slow the build-up of dental tartar, but cannot remove tartar once it’s present. Your pet will still need dental care even if you feed this type of snack. If a diet restriction is recommended for your pet only use recommended treats.

Supplements

Do not give any vitamin or mineral supplements to your dog or cat without your veterinarian’s advice. These types of supplements can easily cause harmful nutrient excesses.

Frequency

Puppies and kittens need a lot of calories to grow on, and plenty of fresh water. Until they are 4 months of age, feed at least three meals a day, giving as much as the animal will consume in 10-15 minute feedings. It is much easier to housebreak a puppy if you feed him or her at set meal times.

Once your young dog is 4 months old, you can cut back to two meals per day, and at 6 months (longer for large breed dogs) you can reduce to 1 meal a day if desired. Cats are nibblers and need at least two meals a day throughout their lives. Continue to feed a diet made for puppies or kittens until your dog or cat is 1 year old.



How to Avoid and Treat Behavioral Problems

Dogs and people have lived together for many years, but that doesn't mean we always understand each other. Living with pets can sometimes be as frustrating and confusing as living with people. The following program will help you make the most of your relationship with your dog.



Dogs are pack animals. They are social and like to interact with people and other dogs. You can use this to your benefit; your dog will do what it wants if it earns him praise and petting, and considers you a pack leader.

This is a key point! All dog packs have a leader dog that makes decisions for the rest of the group. Other dogs are subordinate to the leader. Your dog should never think he is the leader in your house. You are the one who should decide when to eat, when to go outside, when to go to the veterinarian for a checkup or when to get a nail trim. As with children, dogs that have rules to follow and respect from their parents are well behaved. Many behavioral problems arise as a direct result of lack of leadership on the part of their owners.

Dogs behave as though they prefer knowing that you are in charge, and often seem much happier when they understand that you have taken charge. Following the advice below may be harder on you than on your dog! It's lonely at the top so give your dog a break and take over. He'll love you just as much.

Also keep in mind that dogs are very sensitive to body language and visual cues. Behaviors that you don't think much about may have meaning to your dog in a way that may not be what you intended to say. For instance, two people talking face to face is confrontational in a dog's body language whereas standing side by side is not. You can learn to take advantage of these nonverbal cues.

The following suggestions are an effective and humane way to let your dog know that he is safe, well loved and NOT the leader of the pack. Keep in mind that love is not related to social status, and that most dogs live in relaxed harmony when the social hierarchy is clear, no matter where they stand.

These are not practices you must follow every minute of the day. Who wants a dog if you can't ever pet it just for fun? But it's not good to cater to your dog. Your dog's behavior should drive your decisions on how to treat him or her. If your dog has always been a perfect gentleman, you may not need to change a thing you're doing, but if your dog gives you problems, follow these social distance suggestions.

If Spot just bit you, completely ignore him for two days to notify him there's been a change in the household. Don't speak to him or look at him, even while feeding him or letting him out. Follow this program to the letter for at least a month before giving him any slack. If Ginger ignored a command at the park today, adopt these tips for a few days. Applying "social distance" when your dog is misbehaving and rewarding with praise and attention only when he is good is the key to good behavior. Reward the behavior you want to continue to see!

SO HERE'S HOW....

1. Petting

- Pet only for obedience (come, sit, stay, down, shake, etc.) Reward obeying commands with attention.
- Keep petting briefly (Don't indulge your dog)
- If your dog demands petting, either: look away (fold arms, turn head up and away from the dog) or ask for a "sit" or a "down" and then pet when he obeys.
- If you want to pet your dog, call him to you, don't go to him

2. Practice Look Always

- Don't let your dog demand play, food, or petting. If your dog gets pushy, simply cross your arms, turn your head upward and to the side away from your dog. This is an example of the body language method mentioned earlier. If your dog counters by moving to your other side, turn your head the other way.
- This is good practice to do any time your dog approaches you if he is very dominant and pushy. It is especially important if your dog has been aggressive toward you.

3. Teach Lie Down & Stay

- A good, solid down and stay is one of the best learning tools. It teaches your dog to be patient and to wait for your command. You can practice while watching television. Start with one second stays for the first few days, and work up to longer ones. After three weeks most dogs can handle a half hour down stay during a quiet time of day.

4. Wait At The Door

- Alpha (pack leader) dogs have priority access to limited resources, which means they get to push out the door first to get something they want. This is why a lot of dog fights occur at doorways over who gets to go out first.
- Control the space in front of the dog and you control the dog. Use body blocks again to herd him away from the door, or head toward a door or doorway, and then suddenly turn and go the other way. This puts you back in the lead. Praise and pet your dog when he starts to turn around after you, and keep moving until he reaches you. Practice this as you move around the house until your dog is content to stay behind you and follow your lead.

5. Four On The Floor

- Dogs interpret an increase in height as an increase in status. Dogs who sleep up on the bed are especially impressed with themselves. Keep dominant dogs on the floor, not up on couches, chairs or beds. If you want to cuddle, get down on the floor and ask for obedience, then pet when your dog complies.

6. Teach Heel

- Leaders are in the lead. Teach your dog to stay at your side while you initiate the pace and direction/. This basic 6 part obedience program should make treating any other behavioral problems easier, if there are any. A dog that looks to you for direction can be taught almost anything. He will be happy to work for what he wants and it helps keep his mind occupied constructively. Integrate this training into your day by asking your pet to perform some action whenever it wants to go outside, be fed, play ball, etc. Letting you be in charge will soon become second nature to your dog.

Problem behaviors which we can help you deal with via proper training include:

- Barking
- Aggression
- House soiling, submissive urination
- Separation anxiety
- Digging
- Running away, boundary training
- Fearfulness

Here are a few more tips to make training more effective.

- Do your homework! There are reams of books available to assist in training. Be cautious, as some are better than others. Avoid outdated or cruel methodologies. Read more than one and pick the methods that seem to make the most sense to you.
- Consult with us, a good dog trainer, or behavioral specialist. What works for one dog may not work for another. The experience and training of those educated in the field of canine behavior and training is invaluable.
- Consider using a Promise™ halter. This is a different style of training collar which takes advantage of the dog's natural response to pressure over the muzzle and behind the ears.
- Using food as a reward for learning new commands is fine, but don't give a food reward every time. Giving food intermittently means your dog will perform commands for you even when food isn't involved.
- Keep all training positive and consistent. There is no need to scold or punish your dog.
- Please call anytime you have questions or problems with your dog's behavior. We have information on most problems and can refer you to a trainer or specialist if we can't help you ourselves.



How To Choose A Chew Toy

Dogs love to chew! Giving your dog appropriate things to chew on is good for their teeth and gums, keeps them occupied, and decreases the tendency to chew on things they shouldn't. But did you know that some chews you can buy for your pet are actually harmful? Unlike toys for children, there are no rules or regulations regarding toys or treats for pets. Just because you can buy an item in a store doesn't mean it's good for your pet! So what should you watch for and what should you avoid?



Toys with small parts that your dog could swallow or choke on are common. Avoid toys that have googly eyes, feathers or any other parts that could come off. Also avoid items that are too hard. The most common items on which dogs break their teeth are cow hooves and ice cubes. Biting down just right on an object that is too hard causes a flake of the tooth to shear off. If the tooth breaks in such a way that the tooth root is exposed, then the tooth will be very painful and subsequently become infected. Because this usually happens to the large premolar tooth that is difficult to see, your dog may be in pain for many months before you even notice there is a problem. If your dog likes ice cubes, switch to shaved ice instead.

Another popular item is rawhide chews. Rawhides come in all different sizes and shapes and sometimes even in flavors. Unfortunately, many of them are preserved in formalin or formaldehyde, which are carcinogens and can be toxic to the liver. Most of the rawhides that contain these toxic preservatives are from foreign countries. Their use is restricted in the U.S. so rawhides made here in the states are usually safer. Keep searching until you find ones made here and don't buy any made in other countries. If your dog swallows large pieces of a rawhide it could cause choking; switch to a smaller or larger form that prevents this. Do not give your dog rawhides if it gives him diarrhea or an upset stomach. The same guidelines also apply to pig ears, turkey feet and other preserved animal parts.

Raw meat or bones are not safe for dogs or people. Not only can uncooked bones break teeth but they can also give your dog Salmonella, Toxoplasmosis, E. coli or other food poisoning. Chicken, turkey, or other small bones can cause splinters and cause punctures in the mouth, esophagus or intestines so these also should never be fed to pets.

Pieces of rope with a knot at each end are popular now. These are a good choice as they are soft and gentle on teeth and gums but throw them away when they start to unravel. Soft plush toys usually don't last long and if the stuffing is swallowed it can cause an intestinal blockage. Take these away as soon as they start to come apart, which in large dogs may be a matter of minutes.

Nylabones and other nylon bones are also good, although some of these are hard enough to fracture teeth. Pick one on a softer side. If your puppy is teething, try placing a nylon toy in the freezer for a few hours. A chilled bone helps numb the gums. Squeaky toys are also good as long as the squeaker can't come loose and be swallowed and there are no parts that can be chewed off. Make sure any plastic or vinyl toys you choose are sturdy, heavy-weight and large enough that the pet can't choke on it. The same goes for balls. Balls should be larger than the back of the dog's mouth.



Kong toys are highly recommended. They are heavy-weight, come in several sizes and have a hollow center into which you can put a little peanut butter or other food treat in it. Your dog will spend hours working at getting the food out with his tongue. A dog thus occupied is much less likely to be getting into trouble chewing on other things especially if the Kong toy is brought out only as a special treat whenever you leave the house.

Old, well-washed and rinsed plastic milk or soda bottles make good chew toys. Frisbees are always a popular and good choice, especially for large dogs. Old socks or shoes are NOT a good choice and your dog can't be expected to understand the difference between old shoes and your good shoes.

Whatever toys you choose, use common sense and look for tough, long-lasting and durable toys. If your dog likes what you have chosen, he'll be sure to put it to the test!



Traveling With Your Pet



Traveling with pets can be traumatic for all concerned, especially if preparations are not made beforehand. Here are a few suggestions for a safe and comfortable journey.

If you are flying with your pet...contact the airline and us ahead of time. The airlines have special rules and regulations for pets and you will need health papers filled out ahead of time. If you are traveling or moving overseas, contact us at least 6 months ahead because the paperwork can take time to be completed.

If you are crossing state lines...whether you are traveling by air or car, you will need a health certificate, from us, filled out within 10 days of your trip. Health certificates are required by law to help stop the spread of rabies and other diseases from state to state. Different states have different rules about the frequency of rabies vaccine administration, so your pet may need a booster shot before you leave. You should also carry a copy of your pet's rabies certificate with you. Without these papers, if you are stopped by police during your trip, you can be fined and your animal quarantined for 10-14 days at your expense.

Be sure your pet is wearing a collar with ID tags...while traveling, in case he gets lost. An extra tag with the name and phone number of a friend or relative is also a good idea. Remember, you won't be home to take the call if your pet is found again. Consider having a microchip or tattoo applied for permanent identification.

Always leash your pet...when he is not in the car. Do not let your dog become a pest or a hazard at gas stations or rest stops. Unless you are on private property and have permission to let your dog run loose, keep him on a leash at all times.

Take along plastic bags...to clean up any mess, and some towels in case your pet has an accident or illness in the car. Also bring your pet's bowls and own supply of regular food and water. Sudden changes of food and water coupled with the stress of traveling can lead to diarrhea.

A crate is the best investment you can make... for safe traveling. Ask us how to accustom your pet to the crate ahead of time if your pet hasn't used one before. If you have recently gotten your puppy and plan on traveling, now is the time to introduce him to traveling in a crate. Your pet can relax and nap there without any nuisance and he will be better protected in case of an accident. You can also keep your pet crated at motels that allow pets.

Be sure your pet's crate is big enough for him to stand up, turn around and lay stretched out comfortably. Bed the crate with towels so your pet isn't sliding around on bare plastic. Keeping your dog confined to a tiny crate for hours on end is cruel. Be sure to let out your pet every 3-4 hours for exercise. Be sure the leash is on before opening the car door!

Never leave your pet unattended...in the car for long periods of time. Heat and cold can kill an animal left alone. Don't park in direct sunlight. If you are traveling in the summer and your car is not air

conditioned, think twice before taking your pet along. Health problems or fear of strangers and unfamiliar things may also be a reason to leave your pet at home. Short nosed breeds such as Pekingese, Chow Chow, Pugs, or Boston Terriers are especially prone to heat stroke and suffocation while traveling.

It's best to feed your pet lightly...or not at all before traveling. Feed your pet once you arrive at your destination or stop for the night. It's better to eat lightly for a day or two than to spend the trip carsick!

Your pet may need vaccines or medications...at your destination that he might not need at home. For instance, fleas and heartworms are year round problems in the south, not just the summer. If you will be hiking in the woods with your dog you may need the Lyme disease vaccination. Some pets also require sedative or anti-nausea medications to travel comfortably. Check with us well ahead of time about these requirements. Call us with any questions about traveling with your pet.



Things We Learn From A Dog



- 🐾 Never pass up an opportunity to go for a joy ride.
- 🐾 Allow the experience of fresh air and the wind in your face to be pure ecstasy.
- 🐾 When loved ones come home, always run to greet them.
- 🐾 When it's in your best interest, practice obedience.
- 🐾 Let others know when they've invaded your territory.
- 🐾 Take naps and stretch before rising.
- 🐾 If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.
- 🐾 When someone is having a bad day, be silent, sit close by and nuzzle them gently.
- 🐾 Avoid biting when a simple growl will do.
- 🐾 On hot days, drink lots of water and lay under a shady tree.
- 🐾 When you're happy, dance around and wag your entire body.
- 🐾 No matter how often you're scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout. Run right back and make friends.
- 🐾 Thrive on attention and let people touch you.
- 🐾 Delight in the simple joy of a long walk.
- 🐾 Run, romp and play daily.
- 🐾 Eat with gusto and enthusiasm.
- 🐾 Be loyal and never pretend to be something you are not.

Microchipping Your Pet

What is a microchip?

A microchip is a rice-sized chip placed underneath the skin between the shoulder blades of your pet. The microchip is used for identification purposes. Vet clinics, police, humane societies, and rescues have scanners that are able to read these microchips. Once a microchip is scanned, a number specific to your pet will pop up. This number will trace to your information such as; your name, address, telephone number, email address, and an alternate contact.

How does my pet get micro-chipped?

Bring your pet into the clinic to be micro-chipped. The injection of the chip is much like giving your pet a vaccine.

Does a microchip act as a GPS for my pet?

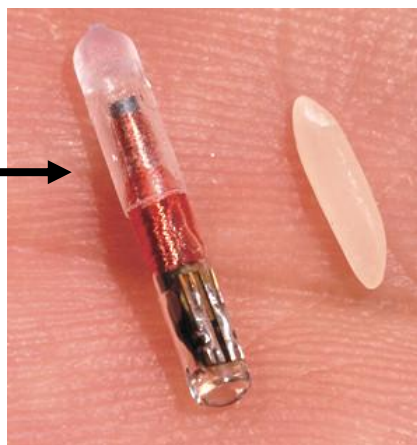
Contrary to popular belief, microchips DO NOT track your pet. Its sole purpose is to carry the number that traces to your information.



It is VERY important to keep your pet's microchip information up to date as you move or change phone numbers.

If your pet's microchip information is not kept up to date and your pet is brought to a shelter, there is a chance they won't be able to connect you to the chip. Failure to find the owners of a lost pet may lead to re-homing. **You are able to update your information by calling the microchip company or accessing their website.**

Microchip



What You Need To Know Before Your Dog's Upcoming Surgery

Many people have questions about various aspects of their pet's surgery and we hope this will help. It also explains the decisions you will need to make before your pet's surgery.

Is the Anesthetic Safe?

Today's modern anesthetics and anesthetic monitors have made surgery much safer than in the past. We do a thorough physical exam on your pet before administering anesthetics to ensure that a fever or other illnesses won't be a problem. We also adjust the amount and type of anesthetic used depending on the health of your pet.

Pre-anesthetic Blood Testing

Pre-anesthetic blood testing is important in reducing the risk of anesthesia. It is recommended for every pet to do blood testing prior to surgery to ensure that the liver and kidneys can handle the anesthesia. Even apparently healthy animals can have serious organ system problems that cannot be detected without blood testing. If there is a problem it is much better to find it before it causes anesthetic or surgical complications. Animals that have minor dysfunctions will handle the anesthetic better if they get IV fluids during surgery. If serious problems are detected, surgery can be postponed until the problem is corrected.

It is important that surgery be done on an empty stomach, to reduce the risk of vomiting under and after anesthesia. You will need to withhold food for at least 8 hours prior to surgery. Water can be left out until the morning of the surgery.

Will My Dog Have Stitches?

For most surgeries we use absorbable sutures underneath the skin. These will dissolve on their own and do not need to be removed later. You will only need to keep a watch on the incision for any swelling or discharge.



Elective Surgeries

The average life span of a neutered pet is 40% longer than an unneutered one. Almost all unspayed female dogs will eventually develop either mammary tumors (breast cancer) or a severe uterine infection called pyometra, by the time they are 8-10 years old. Female dogs also go through a messy heat cycle two to three times each year.

Male dogs commonly develop prostate disease, perianal tumors and testicular tumors in their old age. Even more sadly, the most common reason for euthanasia of pets in the U.S. is behavioral problems. These are usually aggression, running away or urinating in the house by intact male dogs. Male dogs also have more of a tendency to roam, which leads to car injuries, dog fights and contagious diseases.

Keep in mind also that millions of puppies are put to death in the United States each year because there are not enough homes for them all. Spaying and neutering your pet is the responsible thing to do.

We recommend spaying (surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus) of female dogs and castration (surgical removal of the testicles) of male dogs who will not be used for purebred breeding. This should be done when your animal reaches 4 months of age. Your pet will be a healthier and happier pet, and you will have done your part to reduce the pet overpopulation.

While your pet is anesthetized for surgery, we can also remove any retained baby teeth, clean ears, trim nails and implant a microchip.



Anesthesia and Your Pet

Many pet owners worry unnecessarily about anesthesia in their pets. Although anesthesia can never be completely free of risk, today's modern anesthetics make that risk very small.

The same anesthetics that allow complicated surgeries such as heart and kidney transplants to be done on humans are also used in pets as well. Even very frail pets can usually be anesthetized safely. In general, the risks from NOT performing a needed procedure such as dental cleanings or tumor removals are higher than the risk of anesthesia.

We use pre-anesthetic blood screening to help determine whether a procedure will be safe for your pet before it is performed. We recommend pre-anesthetic blood screening for all pets before anesthesia is administered. Even young and apparently healthy animals can have serious organ dysfunctions which are not evident without blood screening.

IV fluids are also recommended to help maintain blood pressure during the procedure. They also replace blood loss, speed recovery and allow for quick administration of life-saving drugs in case of an emergency. IV fluids can be elected for any procedure, but it is especially encouraged for intra-abdominal surgeries (spays) or any procedure where pre-anesthetic blood screening indicates.



During anesthesia your pet will be monitored closely for blood oxygen levels, body temperature, heart rate and heart beat intensity. The anesthesia is always administered by veterinary technicians and doctors to ensure safety and proper dosing.

If you have any further concerns about anesthesia and your pet, we would be happy to discuss the risks and benefits of any procedure with you and explain the exact protocol that will be used. Please let us know!

Pets and Their Teeth

Professional teeth cleaning is perhaps the most important preventative health care measure that can be done for dogs and cats over four years of age. Pets rarely communicate to their owners the pain and discomfort of oral and periodontal diseases. For middle aged or older pets, oral disease is the most common health problem. Hard mineralized tartar loaded with bacteria is the culprit. Tartar becomes a reservoir for disease causing bacteria which constantly stresses your pet's immune system. Problems caused by this bacteria-loaded tartar are not limited to periodontal disease and premature tooth loss, but can also spread infection to the heart, lungs, and kidneys. Bad breath (halitosis) is a primary symptom of tartar and oral infection.



The best solution to rid your pet of this health hazard is professional dental cleanings, also commonly referred to as a “dental.” This involves a multiple step procedure similar to that done for human teeth cleanings with a few very important differences. The need for general anesthesia is the most obvious.

The safety of your beloved pet under anesthesia is a major concern. There is always a certain risk involved with anesthesia, but the safety of anesthesia has improved remarkably with the advent of superior anesthetic drugs and inhalation gases over the past 10-15 years. We use the safest anesthetics available. Also, pre-anesthetic blood screening is available to further assess your pet's health prior to anesthesia use. Additional protection and safety is afforded by the use of intravenous catheter and IV fluids. This enables us to provide a higher level of quality care for your pet while under anesthesia.

Another area of concern is the spread of infection by the bloodstream to other areas of the body during the teeth cleaning procedure. Antibiotic treatment given prophylactically is the best method to prevent the spread of bacteria and treat concurrent infection problems. Typically, severe cases of periodontal disease are started on antibiotics 2-3 days in advance of the scheduled procedure, whereas milder cases can be started the morning of the procedure or need no antibiotics at all.

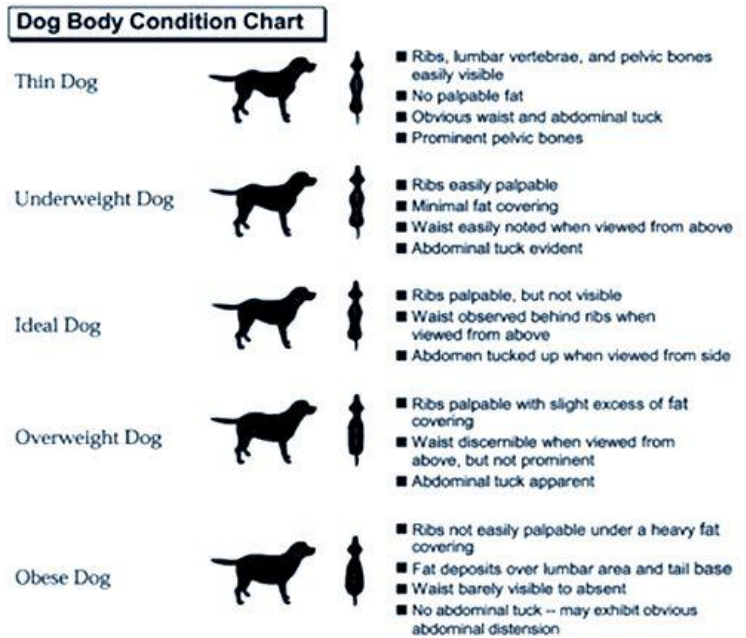
The dental procedure itself involves three separate steps: 1. Ultrasonic scaling of each tooth to remove heavy tartar deposits. 2. Hand scaling to remove tartar and plaque under the gum line and hard to reach surfaces. 3. Polishing to remove microscopic deposits and smooth the tooth enamel. This step is critical to remove the mineral crystalline base that can act as a catalyst and foundation for tartar to quickly rebuild. Occasionally, seriously diseased teeth are discovered upon removal of tartar and on close inspection of your pet's teeth. At this time dental x-rays, oral surgery, extractions, follow up exams or cleanings may be recommended to improve your pet's oral health.

Professional dental health care provides your pet with a healthy, disease-free and odor-free mouth. Often, aging pets act livelier and happier than they have in years after proper oral care. Eliminating sources of chronic pain and consistent stress to the immune system are key contributors to a longer and healthier life for your pet.

Weight Control & Exercise for Dogs

Over half the dogs we see every year at the vet are overweight, many extremely so. Being overweight has some serious consequences for dogs, just as it does for people. In fact, the average life span of an obese pet is years shorter than that of pets that stay slim and trim.

Weight related diseases include arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, liver disease, bladder problems, and many types of cancer.



Most of our house pets are not very active. Not only are many of them overweight, but they also don't get enough exercise. This is bad for their health and contributes to behavior problems – a dog that is bored and inactive is more likely to be destructive or aggressive.

So what should you do to prevent these problems?

Some dogs are better at burning calories than others, but for most dogs the recommended feeding amounts on dog food bags are way too generous. If you are feeding a good quality food, your dog can eat much less than the label says and still get all the nutrients necessary for good health. Feed only what your pet needs to maintain a healthy weight.

You should be able to easily feel your dog's ribs and backbone under his skin. If there's lots of padding over the ribs, your dog is probably overweight. You should be able to see his waist – his body should curve up behind his ribs if you are looking at him from the side. Looking from above, you should also see a pronounced narrowing of the body behind the ribs. Also look for bulges over the hips, a common place for excess pounds to show up.

On the other hand, if your pet's ribs or backbone are visible or very pronounced when you run your hand across them, your pet may be too thin.

Choose a good quality pet food which fits your pet's lifestyle. If your dog is very active, look for a food made for active dogs. If your pet is a couch potato, he needs a low calorie food.

Limit treats, snacks, and table food. A medium Milkbone™ dog biscuit contains over 100 calories. It doesn't take many extras to tip the scales, especially in small dogs. Avoid processed treats- they're loaded with fat and salt and aren't good for your pet's teeth. If you must feed treats, give small pieces or bits of the pet's regular food. Some dogs enjoy bits of carrots and other vegetables. These make fine, low calorie snacks.

Make sure your dog gets the exercise he needs. If your yard is fenced, let him run all he wants and if he tends to be lazy, get him up and moving with a game of Frisbee or ball fetching every day. Walks are fine, although most people don't walk fast enough to give a medium or large dog a good workout. Jogging with your pet or swimming usually results in better fitness levels. How often does your dog really cut loose and run? Probably not often enough.

If your dog is already overweight, he'll need an exercise program and/or a restricted calorie diet. Most "light" foods available in supermarkets are only about 10-15% less in calories than regular foods. If you feed one of these diets and give the same amount of food as you fed with regular non-diet food, your pet may stop gaining weight but won't lose any. To achieve a reasonable amount of weight loss in a reasonable amount of time, you need to cut back by about 25-30%. The easiest way to achieve this is to feed a prescription weight loss diet. These foods are lower in fat calories, so you can feed an amount large enough to keep your pet feeling full while still achieving weight loss.

If you decide to increase your dog's exercise level, start slowly. Just as with people, an out of shape pet is in no condition to exercise too strenuously. Avoid heat stroke and sore paws from hot pavement by staying indoors on hot days, especially when the humidity is high. Panting is an inefficient way to get rid of excess heat, so dogs will overheat easily. Also beware of too much running on pavement, as this stresses the joints. Dogs under a year of age with immature joints and those with arthritis should do most of their exercising on grass.

Most pets become less active with age, so their calorie needs often go down as they get older. Decrease their food accordingly. Most geriatric pets benefit from a food made for older pets, which is lower in fat and salt.

Please let us know what we can do to help you keep your pet in the peak of its health. We welcome you anytime to put your pet on our scale or ask our opinion on his current weight or weight loss goals.