



from

All Creatures Veterinary Hospital



509 BENICIA ROAD • VALLEJO, CA 94590

(707) 642-4405

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 306
Vallejo, CA

DOCTOR'S EDITORIAL ...

SUMMER 2003

"Summertime and the Living is Easy"

These are the opening words to a once popular song from a once popular Broadway play. For most of us the words evoke a dream-like utopia, free of the stresses and anxieties of our modern world. For many, there is nothing "easy" about our daily routines and the fact that it is summertime doesn't make it any easier. Many of us live between the juggling act of family and profession as well as commuting and fitting into our busy schedule the needs of our children and spouse. All of this is far from easy.

As a caring veterinary practice, we share with you the same stresses and anxieties that you experience. We understand what you are going through. Because of this, if there is something we can do to make your life a little easier, let us know. Your pet is a valued member of your family and needs routine care but, with the demands of busy schedules, finding the time to fit in Fido's and Kitty's needs is often difficult. We want to hear from you about what we can do to make sure your beloved pet gets the medical and preventive care he or she needs while making the procedure a little easier on you. We care about both you and your pet.



PET MATTERS

SUMMER HEAT AND YOUR PET

With the increased temperatures of summer come some increased risks to our furry friends.

PLEASE REVIEW THESE!

You may be familiar with many of these and some may be new information.

Regardless, it is always good to refresh our memory so we can keep our pets out of harm's way.

■ DO NOT SHAVE YOUR PET UNLESS YOU TALK TO US FIRST.

Many pet owners think they are doing their pet a favor by removing their fur during the summer heat. For some breeds, this may be fine. However, for other breeds, the same fur coat that keeps them warm in the winter also insulates them from the excessive heat in the summer. Additionally, exposing an animal's bare skin to the sun will cause sunburn and possibly skin cancer. Please call us first before taking the shears to your pet.

■ WATCH THE INSIDE OF CARS!

The internal temperature of your parked car - even if parked in the shade - can easily spike to over 120 degrees in a matter of minutes. You would not think of leaving a child alone in a parked car during the summer so don't leave your pet there either.

■ AIRLINE TRAVEL CAN BE TOUGH ON

SOME PETS. Dogs with shorter noses like Pugs, Pekingese and Bulldogs as well as cats like Persians can have difficulty breathing on an airplane and are often prone to heat stress. Keep this in mind when scheduling your flights. Choose direct flights in the early morning or at night.



■ CAREFUL OF YOUR PETS AROUND POOLS AND PONDS.

Not all dogs and cats are natural swimmers. Give them the same supervision you might a child.

■ MAKE SURE YOUR PETS HAVE PLENTY OF FRESH WATER AND SHADE.

The heat of summer is tough on animals especially for our seniors. Change their water daily.

■ CAREFUL WHEN FERTILIZING YOUR LAWN.

Some fertilizers and chemical lawn treatments may cause your pet to get ill and, in worse cases, die. If you are treating your lawn, ask the contractor what ill effects the products placed on your lawn can cause your pet. A good idea is to keep your pet off the freshly treated lawn until after a rain has leached the fertilizers into the soil.

■ TAKE CARE WHEN YOU EXERCISE YOUR PET.

If you walk or jog your dog during the day, remember that sidewalks and streets can be exceptionally hot and burn the pads of an animal's feet. It is best to keep your pet on grass or walk them in early or later hours of the day.

■ IF TAKING YOUR PET ON VACATION, TAKE ALONG PROOF OF RABIES VACCINATION.

If your pet should accidentally bite a person or another animal while away from home, having proof of rabies vaccination can save you a lot of trouble including possible quarantine. Give us a call if you need a rabies certificate or if your pet needs a booster.

YOU ARE THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST PARASITES ATTACKING YOUR PET!!

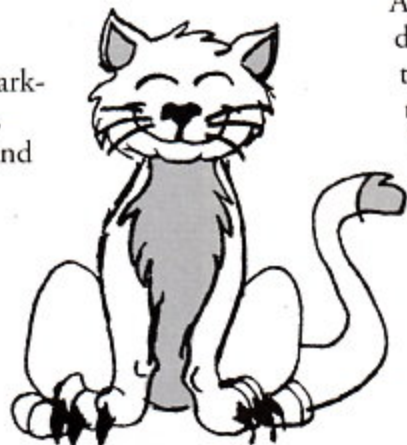
There is a war going on out there! Parasites like heartworms, ticks and fleas are constantly trying to attack your pet. A knowledgeable pet owner is the first line of defense against these pests and this veterinary practice is your ally in this ongoing battle. Possible heartworm laden mosquitoes are biting your pet and ticks and fleas are lurking to ambush the unprotected dog or cat. Prevention remains the best defense. If your pet is on a heartworm, flea or tick preventative, administer the medications as directed. Be careful using over-the-counter products. Some can be toxic to your pet even when using them as directed. Give us a call. We have the products, the experience and the knowledge to give your pet the best possible defense against parasitic attack!

HELPFUL TIPS

DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR:

How can I stop my cat from scratching?

Cats naturally love to scratch; it's a form of "marking behavior". Because it is an innate behavior, scratching is often difficult to stop. Your sofa and expensive drapes are not the places you want "marked" but how can you direct the cat's behavior to other, more appropriate places? Cats do not respond well to punishment because they see no link between the punishment and the crime. But here are three tactics that may be helpful.



Purchase the ones that best fit your cat's needs and preferred orientation. A cat that climbs and scratches on drapes would probably prefer a post tall enough for a long stretch such as those that mount on a wall or door. When your cat uses the new scratching posts you've purchased, reward their behavior with treats, strokes and praise for using it. You can also place food or treats at the top of or around the post as an added enticement.

1. Identify your cat's scratching preferences. Observe your cat carefully. Does she prefer to scratch on carpets, wood, furniture or some other surface? Does she scratch vertically or horizontally? Once you have discovered your cat's preferred scratching materials and orientation, you will be better equipped to buy a scratching post that suits her needs.

2. Provide items that match these preferences. Scratching posts of every shape and size covered with a wide variety of surfaces and textures are available.

3. Make unacceptable items unavailable or less attractive to your cat. The only guaranteed way to stop your cat from scratching a given area or object is to block her access to it. Closing doors may be the simplest solution. However, if this is not practical, booby trap the area to discourage scratching. A tower of plastic cups that topples over when bumped can be placed in front of a scratchable item to startle your cat. Covering items with blankets, sheets of plastic or double-sided tape also hinders scratching behavior.

You can further minimize scratching by routinely trimming your cat's nails.

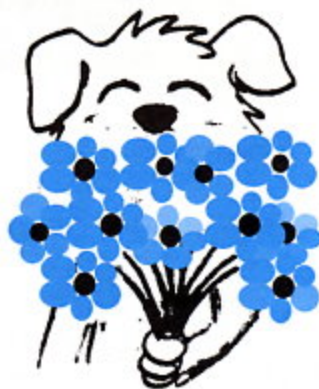
Source: Cornell University



FIRST AID: WHEN YOUR PET IS STUNG BY A BEE OR WASP

Summer blossoms attract bees. As a result, some cats and dogs can not resist their instinctive behavior to hunt bees and wasps that are so abundant this time of year. Like with humans, some animals are allergic to bee and wasp stings and may collapse after being bitten. **THIS IS AN EMERGENCY SITUATION!** Ensure that the pet's airway is clear and contact us immediately.

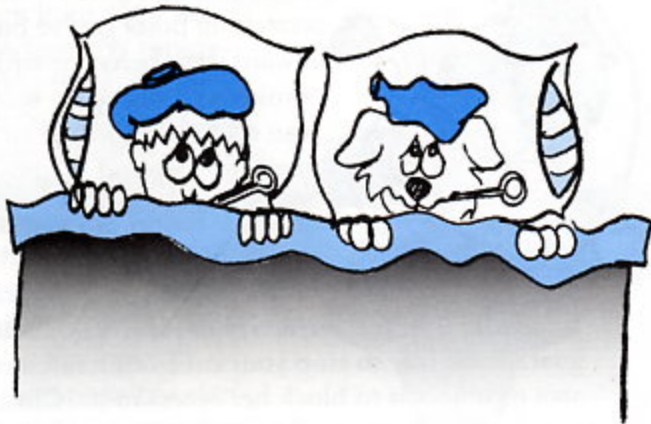
If swelling appears, remove the stinger from the pet if a bee sting (wasps do not leave a stinger) using your fingernails. Since bee stings are acid, remove the sting and place a little paste of baking soda and water on the affected area. Wasp stings are alkali so bath the sting area with a little vinegar.



ANIMAL HEALTH NEWS

Humans & Pets: What is "Zoonosis"?

Zoonosis is a medical term for diseases that may be directly transmitted from animals to humans. The main culprits in this transmittal are Roundworms, Hookworms and Tapeworms. Because there are so many wonderful deworming medications on the market in recent years, we have become a little complacent about parasites and their potential danger to humans.



TRANSMITTAL: Exposure to Roundworms or Hookworms often occurs when dogs and cats defecate in garden beds and sandboxes where either gardeners or children come into contact. Tapeworms are transmitted by fleas and if your pet is flea infested, your exposure potential to tapeworms is increased.

PROTECTION: The most important thing you can do is to keep your pet free of parasites. A fecal sample should be run for worms annually and, in some cases, semi-annually. The doctor may suggest that your pet be dewormed annually as a preventative. Also use good common sense. Wear gloves and wash your hands after gardening. Do not let stray pets onto your property that may use your children's sandbox and keep your pets flea free.

America's Most Popular Dogs and Cats

According to the American Kennel Club and the Cat Fancier's Association, here are America's top breeds:

<u>Dogs</u>	<u>Cats</u>
1. Labrador Retriever	Persian
2. Golden Retriever	Maine Coon
3. German Shepherd	Exotic
4. Beagle	Siamese
5. Dachshund	Abyssinian
6. Yorkshire Terrier	Oriental
7. Boxer	Birman
8. Poodle	(tie) American Shorthair
9. Chihuahua	(tie) Tonkinese
10. Shih Tzu	Burmese

Don't Let Your Pet Itch Needlessly

We see a lot of pets this time of year who seem to be itching themselves more than normal. Your chronically itching pet may suffer from an allergy. Pet allergies manifest themselves in a form of a *dermatitis* that causes the pet to scratch madly. There are three main types of pet dermatitis.

1. Allergic Inhalant Dermatitis: This is caused by an animal's hypersensitivity to airborne irritants like pollen.

2. Flea-bite Dermatitis: During the biting process, the flea injects its saliva under the pet's skin. This irritation causes the pet to itch and bite itself.

3. Contact Dermatitis: This is caused by direct contact with an irritant such as a flea collar, poison ivy, etc.

If your pet has itching frequently, give our office a call. Please do not attempt a self-diagnosis. A misdiagnosis could prolong your pet's suffering and possibly cause complications.