



# Paw Talk



A professional publication for the clients of East Valley Animal Clinic

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## Pet Health Insurance

Pets are living longer than ever today, thanks to increased owner awareness and advances in veterinary medicine. Diagnostic tools such as MRI's and ultrasound are commonplace now, and advanced treatment options for allergies, orthopedics and cancer help our four-legged family members live longer, healthier lives. Unfortunately, these advances come with a price, and the cost of veterinary medicine has risen as a result.

How can a concerned pet owner keep these costs manageable? One way is to consider pet health insurance. Some pet insurance companies have been around for almost 30 years, but the number of providers has been growing in the past few years, along with awareness of this option for managing the cost of veterinary care. Insurance may cover preventive services such as wellness examinations, vaccinations, dental care and prescription drugs, or it may be purchased only to mitigate the

*continued on pg. 4*

## The Lilies are Blooming

A common plant seen blooming in gardens this time of year is the lily. Asiatic lilies, Stargazer lilies and Tiger lilies are perennial plants that bloom mid-summer in Minnesota. Easter lilies are a popular springtime plant. Another extremely popular plant in Minnesota gardens is the daylily. Unfortunately, all of these beautiful plants can be extremely toxic to your cat.

Lilies contain a chemical that can cause acute kidney failure in cats. Once ingested, your cat may start vomiting within a few hours. If left untreated, the vomiting will continue, along with lethargy and a lack of appetite. Within 36–72 hours of ingestion, kidney failure can develop. Once the kidneys begin to fail, the prognosis for recovery is poor, and mortality is high. If the stomach is emptied and emergency treatment is administered within an hour or two after ingestion, the prognosis for a complete recovery is much better. If you see or suspect your cat has ingested any potentially toxic plant, do not hesitate to contact us.

The best method of prevention is to remove any of these plants from your yard. The ASPCA has a web site that has an extensive list of toxic and non-toxic plants. Go to ASPCA.org and click on National Animal Poison Control.



## Caveat Emptor!

Every day, East Valley Animal Clinic receives requests from clients for prescription medications to be purchased from Internet pharmacies. While we will continue to honor these requests when appropriate, we want you to be aware of some concerns regarding these pharmacies.

Currently, there is no way to distinguish a "good" pharmacy from an unethical one. A program called VIPPS (Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Site) certification ensures that the Internet pharmacy site adheres to a number of quality control policies and submits to inspection and review. This certification has been in place since 1999 and is administered by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy. Unfortunately, only a small number of pharmacies have obtained this certification, and no pet centered pharmacies carry this certification.

When a medication is sold by a veterinary clinic, the drug manufacturer supports

*continued on pg. 4*

**PET INSURANCE** *continued from pg. 1*

high expense of unplanned or "catastrophic" treatments.

Pet insurance is something that requires research and thought on your part. Each company sets its own requirements and restrictions regarding what it will and will not cover. Most companies won't cover pre-existing conditions, and many have exclusions based on breed-related genetic conditions. It is important that you research the companies you are considering based on your breed of dog or cat. If you have any questions, please contact East Valley Animal Clinic and we will be happy to help you.

## AAHA Certification



We are an AAHA-accredited practice, which means that we meet AAHA's extensive standards for patient care and hospital services. AAHA's standards help ensure

that we provide your pets with the highest quality healthcare possible.

**CAVEAT EMPTOR!** *continued from pg. 1*

that product, and in some cases, will even provide a guarantee of performance. Heartgard, for example, is a guaranteed product. If your dog or cat develops heartworm disease or any of the intestinal parasites that the product is labeled to prevent, the Merial Company will work with us to significantly reduce the cost to the client in treating the problem. Reactions or problems associated with Internet pharmacy purchases provide no support from the drug manufacturer and the pet owner is on their own to deal with the issue.



Brigitte, C.V.T., applying Frontline to Otis

approved by the FDA, it should be labeled "Caution: Federal law restricts this drug to be used by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian." If the warning has been removed or is not present, do not use the product.

At East Valley Animal Clinic, we are committed to the health of your pet. Our clients always have the option of filling prescriptions wherever they want. It is important that you insist on the same quality that you would expect from your veterinary clinic or your local pharmacy. Your pet deserves nothing less.

Safety is a concern with all medications. In the U.S., the FDA inspects and approves prescription medications, which must then be packaged and labeled according to U.S. government regulations. Medications purchased from Internet pharmacies may have been bought outside the United States and repackaged for sale here. Such "counterfeit" products may have different strengths and labeling.

Always read the label carefully. If

## PET PORTALS

Pet Portals are secure, private websites that give you online access to your pet's health

information. It's free to sign up—all you need is an email address. You can use your Pet Portal to schedule an appointment, refill a prescription and check the due dates for your pet's next annual wellness exam and vaccinations. Log on to our website and select Pet Portal to find out more.



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**ANIMAL CLINIC**



**EAST VALLEY**

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