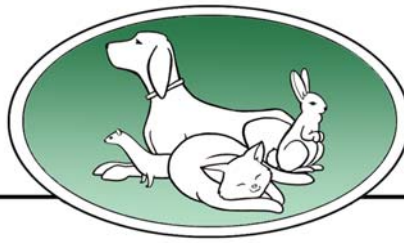


EAST VALLEY

5049 Upper 141st Street West



ANIMAL CLINIC

Apple Valley, Minnesota 55124



Paw Talk



A professional publication for the clients of East Valley Animal Clinic

SPRING 2013

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ONLINE PHARMACY

Have you checked out our online pharmacy? You can shop for your pet's medications and prescription diets on our secure online store and have them delivered to your door. Unlike purchases through other Internet pharmacies, you will receive all manufacturer guarantees when you shop at our store. We also offer automatic refills, so you'll never run out of your pet's medications or food! Simply click on the Online Store icon on our website and place your order. Prescription items will come to us for approval and then be shipped to you. If you enjoy the convenience of shopping from home, visit www.EastValleyAnimalClinic.com.

Would you help?

East Valley Animal Clinic has a box in our lobby that we are filling with non-perishable donations for the Animal Humane Society. Please join us by dropping off gently-used blankets and towels that can be used to provide comfort to a homeless animal waiting for its new home at the humane society.

PARVO! Is it an Outbreak?

East Valley Animal Clinic recently saw two cases of parvovirus enteritis. Not truly an outbreak, but when we don't see the disease for years, then see two in a row, we get nervous!

The first case was an eleven-month-old dog that hadn't been vaccinated properly. He spent eight days in the hospital on IV fluids and supportive medications before he recovered enough strength to go home with his owners. He was a critically sick dog and it was an expensive, stressful ordeal for his family.

The second case was Franklin, a four-month-old Standard Poodle puppy who had had all the vaccines for "parvo" that the manufacturer recommends. Despite his owners' good care, Franklin got sick with symptoms of vomiting and diarrhea and tested positive for parvovirus. He had to be hospitalized for two days, but recovered quickly.

So what is the lesson to be learned? There are several. It is an example that parvovirus, despite our vaccines, is still a real threat in the environment **for all dogs**. It is transmitted to dogs through feces, but that feces may be a tiny microscopic amount stuck on your shoes, car tires or the feet of a pesky rodent. It is a very hardy virus that lives in the environment for a long time. It has been shown to withstand our cold Minnesota winters as well as the hot humid summers.

Parvovirus can be up to 90% fatal in puppies, and certain breeds, such as Rottweilers, tend to have more trouble fighting the virus.

Well, if a dog like Franklin was vaccinated and still got sick, what good are the vaccines? In Franklin's case, being only four months old, his body's immune system was still immature and not able to completely prevent the disease. However, the duration and severity of his illness was much shorter than a full-blown case of parvovirus could be. We feel that Franklin's disease would have been much more serious if he had not been vaccinated.

Franklin had been vaccinated by a veterinarian who used a guaranteed vaccine.

continued on pg. 4



Franklin



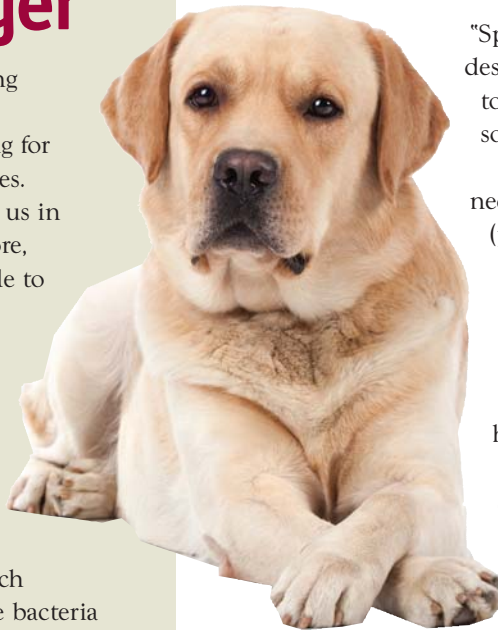
Sniffing Out Danger

Dogs have been helping humans for centuries by herding livestock, hunting for food and protecting homes. Modern dogs are helping us in more ways than ever before, and now they may be able to help keep our hospitals safer from deadly pathogens.

Healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) are infections that patients acquire while receiving treatment for other conditions. One such infection is caused by the bacteria *Clostridium difficile*, or *C. diff*, which is a highly contagious form of infectious diarrhea. The Centers for Disease Control report that *C. diff* infections are "at historically high levels" and are "linked to 14,000 American deaths each year."

Standard testing for *C. diff* is a slow, expensive process that is prone to errors. However, health care workers have noted that feces infected with this bacteria have a distinct odor, so researchers in the Netherlands had an idea – why not train a dog to detect *C. diff* infections?

A two-year-old beagle named "Cliff" was trained to identify *C. diff* in stool samples, and subsequently asked to identify *C. diff* in 300 patients in two hospitals. Cliff was able to identify *C. diff* in 100% of the stool samples, but more importantly, he was also able to correctly detect infected patients without ever touching them. Cliff positively identified 25 of 30 patients with known infections. The study determined that it is feasible to train dogs to detect *C. diff* in the air surrounding patients, which could be a quick method of screening entire hospital wards.



Canine Hypothyroidism

"Spot's slowing down lately and putting on the pounds despite the new diet food we're giving him. His coat looks bad, too. I wonder if something's wrong with him." Does this sound familiar? Spot might have a thyroid problem.

The thyroid gland is a butterfly-shaped organ found in the neck of all vertebrate animals. The gland secretes hormones (primarily T4), which reach all tissues of the body and are responsible for maintaining normal metabolism, heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature and bowel function. In cats, the most common disorder of the thyroid is overactivity, or hyperthyroidism, while in dogs and people the most common problem is underactivity, or hypothyroidism.

Because thyroid hormones have such a wide range of systemic effects, underactivity can result in a spectrum of symptoms that range from very few to multiple and severe. In fact, by the time some of these symptoms are noticed, much of the thyroid function may be impaired.

- Lethargy
- Weight gain, even while eating "normal" or below-normal amounts of food
- Chronic ear and skin infections
- Mental dullness
- Poor skin and coat condition, including slow hair growth if the coat is shaved
- Heat seeking behaviors
- Behavior changes

Thyroid hormone levels naturally fluctuate. They can vary at different times of the day and as a result of different foods or medications your dog may be taking. For this reason, your veterinarian may suggest additional blood testing when hypothyroidism is suspected or when baseline test results are inconclusive.

Dogs typically respond quickly to treatment with thyroid medications once a diagnosis has been made. Most owners report changes in energy levels and alertness within a week or two, and improvements in skin and coat condition within four to six weeks. The drugs are not curative, and must be given for the rest of the dog's life, however they are relatively inexpensive. Follow-up testing is important to ensure the correct dosage is being given, and regular monitoring of thyroid levels during your pet's annual or bi-annual exams are important too.

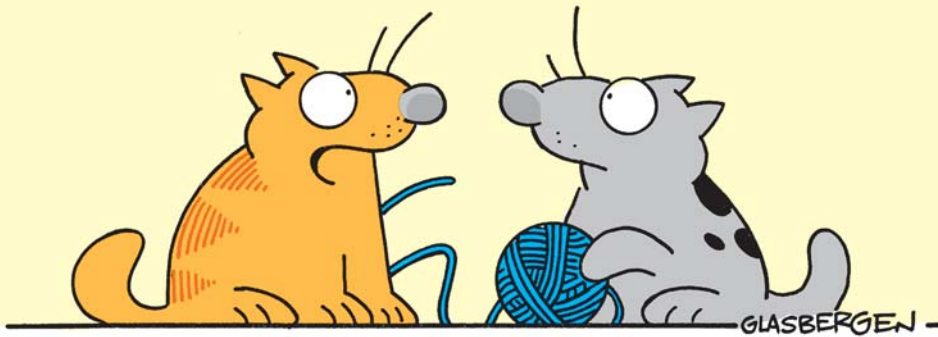
**"If I could be
half the person
my dog is,
I'd be twice
the human I am."**

– Charles Yu





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“With all the cool electronic toys and video games in this house, why are we playing with a ball of yarn?”

Happy Cats

Cats are curious, intelligent, athletic creatures. To thrive in the wild, they develop finely tuned skills to hunt and avoid predators, and usually remain quite fit. Today, more cats are being kept indoors, where they're safer and tend to live longer. Without appropriate stimulation, however, indoor cats can become bored and sedentary, which can lead to obesity and behavior problems. Enriching your cat's indoor environment can help to ward off those problems and keep your cat mentally and physically active.

PLAY: Cats love to chase things. You can buy toy mice or small balls, or you can make your own ping-pong sized balls out of aluminum foil. Short play sessions are fun boredom-busters for cats. While watching TV, use the commercial breaks to entertain your cat with a feather toy.

PERCH: Cats are naturally drawn to higher spots. Consider providing a window perch or a cat "tower." Also, consider placing a bird-feeder in a location your cat can view from a nearby window.

EAT: Cats in the wild often hunt at night. You can simulate a hunt for food by leaving pieces of their favorite treats in various places around the house before you go to bed. Wake up in the morning and see which ones are gone! Food puzzles are another fun way to stimulate your cat to "work" for its food. There are many unique and inexpensive brands available, or you can make your own. Finally, some cats adore fresh greens. Catnip and cat grasses can easily be grown indoors, much to your cat's delight.



SCRATCH: Scratching is a normal feline behavior, so it's important to provide your cat with an acceptable place (or two) to scratch. Scratching helps remove the old, outer nail sheath called the "husk." Choose a post that is sturdy and allows a full stretch. Entice your cat to scratch her post by occasionally sprinkling it with catnip. To help deter unwanted scratching in other spots, try placing double-sided tape on the spot your cat has scratched.

TRICKS: If your cat comes running when you open a refrigerator door or use the can opener, then you've already begun training. Dogs are not the only ones who can be taught to come, sit, lie down, roll over and fetch! Consider kitty agility training, where you teach your cat to negotiate an obstacle course.

Is It An Emergency?

It's midnight. Your male cat has been meowing for a while, and now you notice he's straining to urinate in his litter box. Do you call your vet or wait until morning?

Emergencies rarely happen at convenient times, and sometimes it's difficult to know whether a situation constitutes a true emergency. If you are unsure, you should call your veterinarian and ask for guidance.

Among the situations that are true emergencies:

- Trauma, such as getting hit by a car
- Active bleeding
- Collapse or loss of consciousness
- Possible broken bones
- Seizures
- Difficulty breathing
- Blue or pale gums
- Suspected bloat (tight, swollen, painful abdomen and/or gagging or unproductive vomiting)
- Persistent vomiting
- Excessive bloody, watery diarrhea
- Any suspected poisoning
- Difficulty urinating (especially in male cats)
- Difficulty giving birth
- Eye injuries

If it is possible for you to call while you're on the way, do so. It's helpful to an emergency facility to know the symptoms of an urgent case that is en route, so they can prepare a treatment room and staff.

Be prepared. Ask your veterinarian about their emergency protocols, and who you should call after hours. Keep the phone numbers for your regular veterinarian and the closest emergency veterinarian readily available by pre-programming them into your cell phone so you won't have to search for them during a crisis.



PARVO!... continued from pg. 1

The vaccine manufacturer was immediately notified, and the company covered the expenses involved with Franklin's hospitalization and treatment.

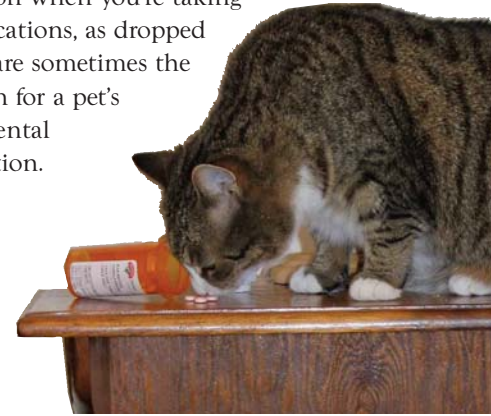
Until their vaccines are complete, it is important to keep puppies away from areas that other dogs frequent, especially dog parks. Keeping your dog current on their vaccines according to your veterinarian's recommendation is the best way to protect against this deadly disease.

Poison Control

According to the ASPCA Poison Control Center, ingested medications are the reason for the greatest number of calls to their hotline. This includes human prescription medications such as blood pressure medications, pain medications and antidepressants, over-the-counter drugs such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen and naproxen, and pet medications as well.

Some common human medications are highly toxic to pets, even in very small doses. Pet medications are often

flavored, so if a container inadvertently spills, your pet may think he's hit the bonanza for treats. Keep all medications safely out of reach of your pets, and use caution when you're taking medications, as dropped pills are sometimes the reason for a pet's accidental ingestion.



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The Standard of
Veterinary Excellence

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Gummie Bear

Gummie Bear

This is Gummie, or "Gummie Bear," as we affectionately call her. Gummie was abandoned in a box at our front door last August. She is very petite and from a distance you could mistake her for a kitten. She is actually very elderly. We guess her to be 16 or 17 years old. We named her Gummie Bear because she has no teeth. At times you will see her trotting around the clinic acting quick and spry, but most of the time she is snuggled up, content in her bed under Dr. Ranzinger's desk. We are giving Gummie a loving home for whatever time we are lucky enough to have her stay. She is special to us, as is her unusual story.