

# Paw Prints Newsletter

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## Keep Your Pet Heartworm Free

### Heartworm in Dogs

Heartworms are parasites that primarily afflict dogs. The adult worms, transferred to dogs by mosquitoes, live in the heart and the vessels surrounding it, causing fatal heart and lung disease if not treated. In addition, they also migrate to abnormal locations such as the brain and can cause seizures.

Monthly prevention treatments such as Interceptor<sup>®</sup> and Heartgard<sup>®</sup> will protect your pet from heartworms, as well as three major intestinal parasites: whipworms, hookworms and roundworms. Both Interceptor<sup>®</sup> and Heartgard<sup>®</sup> guarantee label claims on their products.

Puppies are especially susceptible to heartworms as soon as they are born, so early prevention is essential. Before administering the treatment, it is important to have your pet checked. Since it takes at least six months for a dog to develop a positive test after infection, puppies are started on the

treatment at two months and tested at one year. Subsequently, yearly heartworm testing is recommended.

Another preventive step is to keep your pet away from mosquito infested areas, especially during the summer months when they are more prevalent.

### Heartworm in Cats

Some species other than dogs can also be infected by heartworm, although the incidence is much lower.

Cats, for example, are susceptible but more resistant to the disease than dogs. To date, cases of feline heartworm have been reported in all 50 states.

Once infected, cats are more difficult to treat because the medication that kills heartworms in dogs is fatal to them.

Heartworm preventive treatment especially formulated for cats is available. Have your cat tested first before

administering this treatment.

### Keep your pet heartworm free!

April has been designated by the American Heartworm Association as 'Heartworm Awareness Month'. Visit our office to pick up informational brochures or speak with any of our doctors if you have any questions or need more information about heartworm disease. Our staff will be most happy to help.

Also, you can find more in-depth information regarding prevention, diagnoses and treatment at

[www.heartwormsociety.org](http://www.heartwormsociety.org)

or at

[www.cherrydalevet.com](http://www.cherrydalevet.com).

Remember, once your pet is infected, it is infected for life. Keep your pet heartworm free!

### DID YOU KNOW...

- that 10 million pets get lost every year?
- that the no.1 cause of pet death is getting lost?
- that microchipping saves lives?
- that microchipping has reunited over 400,000 lost pets with their owners?



## Travelling within the United States



Space is limited.  
Make your  
boarding  
reservations as  
early as possible.

Taking your pet with you across state lines require a certificate of good health from a veterinarian. This Domestic Certificate requires a physical examination to ensure that your pet is healthy, able to travel, and is not a danger to animals in your destination state.

The certificate is valid for 10-30 days, depending on the state you are travelling to. If you travel by air, the commercial airlines usually do not request to see the certificate. However, if asked and are unable to produce the certificate, your pet may be denied entrance onto the plane.

Always bring your veterinary records and vaccine history along when travelling with your pet. This information is

valuable in case an emergency occurs.

If your pet is travelling in the cargo hold of the aircraft, ensure they are acclimated to temperature variations. Most cargo holds are temperature-controlled, but sometimes these systems malfunction. Acclimating can be as simple as taking your pet outside more frequently leading up to the trip so that they can get used to the weather outside. Most airlines require a written, signed statement by your veterinarian that your pet is acclimated.

### Is sedation right for your pet?

Many people ask for sedatives for their pets when travelling by car or by plane so that they are not too stressed. If your

pet is travelling in the cargo hold of a plane, sedation can be very dangerous, especially if the temperature fluctuates. Sedated animals will not work to keep themselves warm, and can be susceptible to heat if they are not able to pant to cool themselves. Airline workers will often deny a pet entrance onto the plane if they appear sedated.

Sedating your pet while in a car or in a plane can also be tricky. If you have never travelled with your pet before, take it for long car rides and see how it adapts and reacts. If it does not adapt well, contact us for trial sedatives before starting the trip. Sedatives can occasionally make a pet more vocal or agitated, and finding out before the trip is better.

April is also  
**Lyme Disease  
Awareness  
Month!** More  
information will  
be available in  
our May issue.  
Watch for it!

## Lyme disease trivia

### Did you know that ...

- ✓ according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), about 20,000 new human cases of Lyme disease are reported annually?
- ✓ Dogs tested to be Lyme positive have been reported in all 50 states?
- ✓ all dogs are at risk of contracting Lyme disease?
- ✓ Lyme disease gets its name from the Connecticut town of Lyme, where it was identified after a human outbreak in 1975?

## Flea and Tick Preventatives Key

As Spring Fever kicks in and you spend more time outdoors, your pet is more vulnerable to diseases borne by fleas and ticks.

Fleas can transmit tapeworms to a dog or cat with just one bite. Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and Canine Ehrlichiosis (a disease that attacks the immune system), are passed through tick bites.

Although all three tick-borne diseases exist in Northern Virginia, Lyme disease is easily the most prevalent and is spreading more everyday.

Protect your pet against these diseases with flea and tick preventatives. Given Virginia's climate, using these preventatives year round is recommended. Also, be aware that

shampoos containing soap or detergents can decrease the effectiveness of these treatments. Check your pet shampoo's label to make sure it is soap or detergent free.

For more information on these preventatives or a list of recommended shampoos, contact us and we will be happy to assist you and your pet.



## Cocoa Mulch Fertilizer Warning

Now that spring is here, most likely you are tending to your lawn and garden. When buying mulch, you may be tempted to get cocoa bean mulch fertilizer, sold at any home and garden stores.

This mulch contains cocoa beans shells that keep slugs and snails away, but also emits a sweet smell that attracts not only home owners but dogs as well.

The cocoa bean shell contains *theobromine*, a chemical found to be toxic to animals. Ingesting this chemical causes poisoning. Early signs could be gastrointestinal distress. More advanced symptoms include fatal heart arrhythmias and seizures. *Theobromine* is also present in chocolate, tea and cola beverages.

Avoid using cocoa mulch. What your pet perceives as a yummy snack could

lead to serious health problems and even death.

Many pet owners are not aware that this mulch is dangerous because there are no warnings printed on the label. If you suspect that your dog has eaten cocoa bean mulch, contact your veterinarian, 24 hour Veterinary Emergency Center or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 1-866-426-4435.

### SPECIAL OFFER

Dentals are 10% off through the month of April, take advantage of this great offer today.

## Pet Medication Safety Tips

It's easy to overlook details about storing pet medications. For instance, some pet medications have to be kept at room temperature or in the refrigerator so they do not spoil in the heat. Spoiled pet

medication can have adverse effects or become ineffective. Pet medication should always be stored in its original packaging. Unmarked pet medication containers are hazardous and can increase the likelihood of

misuse. Expired or old medications are equally risky. After completing a pet's treatment, discard excess pet medication by flushing it down the toilet. And remember, keep all medication out of sight from young children.

## 2008 Top 10 Pet Poisons

There are a lot of household products at home that could be toxic to your pet. In 2008, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (APCC) in Urbana, IL, handled more than 140,000 such cases, many of which included everyday household products. Here's their list of 2008 top 10 pet poisons:

1. Household Cleaners
  2. Heavy Metals
  3. Fertilizers
- Even though veterinary medications are intended for pets, they are often misapplied or improperly dispensed by well-meaning pet parents. In 2008, the ASPCA managed nearly 8,000 cases involving animal-related preparations such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, heartworm preventatives, de-wormers, antibiotics, vaccines and nutritional supplements.
- For more information, visit [www.asPCA.org](http://www.asPCA.org).
4. Human Medication
  5. Insecticides
  6. People Food
  7. Rodenticides
  8. Veterinary Medications
  9. Plants
  10. Chemical Hazards

## Spring Allergies

If you notice your pet

- rubbing its face
- licking its feet
- scooting its butt
- scratching its belly
- shaking its head
- has irritated skin
- has patches of hair loss

chances are it is having an allergic reaction of some sort.

Pollutants and allergens

are at their peak in the spring and animals can and do experience allergic symptoms like humans.

Before you go to the store to buy over-the-counter shampoos or conditioners, contact us. We will help you determine the best solution for your pet's allergy.



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## Go Green: Pick up your free seedling

Cherrydale Veterinary Clinic is committed to beautifying our community and saving our fragile planet.

Each year, we give away seedlings to encourage our clients to plant them in their yards.

Pass by the office any time to pick up your free Norway Spruce seedling while they last.

