



NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2006

KIDNEY DISEASE & YOUR PET

If your pet is diagnosed with kidney disease, you most likely would be advised by a veterinarian to put your pet on a “low protein” diet. There is no scientific proof that foods with high levels of protein are a factor in declining kidney health. What we do know is that poor quality protein is more of a culprit because it is harder to break down, thus putting a greater burden on the kidneys. Lower protein diets are not necessarily made from a quality protein.

Pet nutritionist, Susan Davis recently made the following statement in an article about kidney disease – “The prescription diets for pets willing to eat them are fine, but many times the pets refuse to eat them after a couple of days.” Her colleague and holistic veterinarian, Dr. Feinman, suggests that pet owners include fresh, human quality foods such as chicken, beef and fish. He says “raw food is great because of the natural enzymes, but lightly cooked meat might appeal more to a very ill pet”.

If your pet has been diagnosed with kidney disease, it is not a good stage of life at which to change to a higher protein diet. It is important to ensure that the food you use contains high quality protein that is easily metabolized by the body.

Herbal products that are beneficial in assisting the kidneys to function better are Urinary Relief by Nature’s Herbs for Pets (www.naturespetherbs.com) and dandelion tincture.

PROBIOTICS AND YOUR PET’S HEALTH

The digestive tract contains healthy and not so healthy bacteria. A proper balance between the two is necessary for good digestion, a balanced immune system and good overall health. If the “bad” bacteria multiply to higher levels than normal, health problems such as infections, diarrhea and bad breath, among other health concerns, can occur.

Probiotics are the name for beneficial bacteria that can be added to your pet’s diet (and your own also). They should be added daily to the diet for good overall health. But, if your pet has an infection, digestive problem or is on antibiotics, probiotics are even more important. Even the anti-inflammatory drug Rimadyl (commonly used for arthritis) can disrupt the digestive process. Antibiotics destroy both bad and good bacteria.

For pets on antibiotics or other drugs, the probiotics should be given one hour after the drugs so that the medications do not render the probiotics ineffective. The reverse is not true – probiotics will not render antibiotics ineffective, but rather will add back the healthy bacteria that the antibiotics destroy. We recommend ADDLIFE by Wysong.

If your pet experiences digestive upset before traveling, giving probiotics can help. You can give an extra dose just before travel to lessen any nausea and vomiting.

In a study, puppies getting probiotics showed higher levels of Iga antibodies (indicators of immune system health) at the age of one year as compared to dogs not getting any probiotics.

NEW SHAMPOOS FROM ESPREE

Last year, we started selling Espree shampoos and they have proven to be very well liked products. We have recently added the “RAINFOREST SHAMPOO” and “KNOCK OUT DE-SKUNKER” and to our product line. The de-skunker is a good product to have on hand if you live or vacation where skunks are regular visitors.

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN

Depending on the weather, fleas will begin to make their presence known soon. Now is the time to start using preventative methods to ensure that your pets remain flea-free. If you wait until you see fleas, then your home already is infested with thousands of eggs. The fleas that you see represent only about 1% of the problem. Flea eggs fall off your pets and hide in carpets, cracks in floors, pet bedding and your furniture. They can hatch within 8 days, or remain dormant for up to two years until the circumstances are right.

Rather than toxic chemicals, we recommend a more gentle and natural approach. Combing your pet with a fine tooth flea comb regular will identify whether your pet has any fleas. Put a few drops of dish soap in a bowl of warm water. If you trap any fleas in the comb, quickly dunk the comb in the water to drown the fleas. Comb your pet on a towel (light coloured is best so you can see any flea excrement that falls off). Flea “dirt” will look like specks of black pepper. You may not see it on a dark pet, but it is usually apparent in the comb or on the towel.

An herbal collar containing essential oils like citronella will help to repel fleas. These collars are generally good for 4 months before requiring replacement. They will not kill fleas however, so they should be applied at this time of year before the fleas start.

Herbal shampoos like Espree Citrusil or Cedar Shampoo will gently rid your pet of fleas. A spray like Force Field protects your pets fur with a surfactant that prevents fleas, mosquitoes and other insects from landing and biting.

PESTICIDES & YOUR PET

Pesticides are very easily absorbed through your pet's pads on their paws, on grass that they might ingest and through their respiratory system. Even though you may not be spraying your yard, your pet may be affected by pesticides used in adjacent yards or in public parks,

A local environmental group in Sarnia is working hard to have the use of pesticides regulated, but until that time, be careful of where you take your pets. Although professional pesticide companies are required to post signs where they spray, an individual homeowner is not required to do so. Your pet may unknowingly be walking on a freshly sprayed lawn without a sign, or chewing on grass through your neighbour's fence. Pets may show reactions to pesticides with skin rashes, eye discharge, ear infections, vomiting, diarrhea, or in severe cases, seizures.

<http://pestinfo.ca/main/ns/8/doc/25/lang/EN> - good resource information

As travel for pets and their owners becomes more popular, additional travel related products become available. Who knows, maybe some day pets will have tickets and a passport just like their human companions!!

In good health, Mike, Lee, Jayne & Moxy

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