



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2009

CHECK YOUR PET'S EYES & EARS

Getting into the habit of checking your pet's eyes & ears on a weekly basis can quickly alert you if there is a problem. Some minor problems can be treated at home with natural remedies to prevent them from becoming serious.

Check your pet's ears weekly (especially those with floppy ears) and note:

1. any redness or swelling
2. any strong smell coming from the ears
3. any debris or discharge coming out of the ears

How often you clean your pet's ears depends on the pet – more often for those with long floppy ears, for those who swim, those with allergies, etc.. A simple wipe with a wet gauze square or cotton ball will suffice for routine cleaning.

Natural ear cleaners can be used for removing excess wax or for eliminating bacteria, fungus, etc. Natural drops can treat ear mites.

Check your pet's eyes frequently and note:

1. any redness
2. any discharge or cloudiness
3. any tearing or staining from the corners of the eyes

Cleaning out the corners of the eyes can be done with a wet cloth. For discharge from the eyes, cold strong black tea or colloidal silver can be used. For tear stains, "Angels Eyes" is an effective product.

PETS “RETIRE” FROM THE BELFIELD CENTER IN STYLE

Dr. Wendell Belfield, D.V.M. is the founder of the Belfield Centre where palatability testing and stool quality assessments are done for Natura Pet Products (makers of Innova, EVO, Healthwise and California Natural foods).

During the course of their stay, all dogs and cats are given nutritious Natura products and provided with the comforts of home – furniture, socialization (including teaching them manners) and of course, lots of love.

When these pets have finished their course of “employment” (usually due to age), they are adopted out to select families. Those wishing to adopt a dog or cat must fill out a written application and go through an interview process. Many difficult questions are asked in order to choose those who will be suitable “parents”. Those who pass are provided with adoption papers for their chosen pet.

In addition, Natura continues to provide food and preventative veterinary care for all of the “retirees” after they go to their new homes.

HUMAN MEDICATIONS MOST COMMONLY INGESTED POISONS

Veterinary pet insurance companies report that it received more claims for drug reactions from human medications than all other poisoning claims combined in 2007. Here is a list of common poisoning causes for pets

1. drug reactions from over the counter human pain medications given to pets
2. rodenticides used to kill mice, rats, etc.
3. chocolate compounds (caffeine & theobromine)
4. toxic plant poisonings – sago palms, tulips, Oleander, hyacinths, poinsettias, azaleas, lilies, amaryllis, onions, grapes & raisins
5. household chemicals – bleach, liquid potpourri, deodorants and other toiletries
6. metaldehyde – a component of snailbait
7. organophosphates – insecticides absorbed through the skin can affect nerve function
8. toad poisonings
9. heavy metals –mercury, lead, zinc, cobalt and copper (many pets are exposed through paint, soil and contaminated water)
10. antifreeze – because antifreeze tastes sweet to animals, they may ingest spills from under cars

CATS UNDERSERVICED MEDICALLY

According to a study by the American Veterinary Medical Association, cats and dogs do not receive the same amounts of affection or medical attention. Pet owners spend about 45 hours a week with their dogs and about 32 hours a week with their cats.

The study says that pet owners have a stronger bond with their dogs and this attachment translates into medical care as well. It appears that dog owners are more likely to take their dogs for medical attention. It is estimated that one-third of cats go without medical attention, while only about one-tenth of dogs fit into the same category.

When pet owners were asked the reasons, a general concept was that dogs are more active outside and more likely to injure themselves and require medical care.

DOGS THAT SHED LESS_If you are considering a dog that sheds less (all dogs shed a certain amount), terrier breeds are best – Airedale, Boston, West Highland, Miniature Poodle, Shih Tzu, Bichon Frise and Schnauzers are good choices.

Remember that the skin & coat are nourished by good food & supplements. A high quality diet and regular brushing will lessen the amount of fur that ends up on your floors and furniture.

“HYPO-ALLERGENIC” DOGS

If allergies are a concern when choosing a dog, remember that it is the dander and not the fur that is the culprit. Feeding a high quality food will lessen the amount of dander and lower the chance of sensitivities to the dog. Kennel club recommendations for those with allergies are Chinese crested, Portuguese Water Dog, and the Schnauzer. Check out the Canadian Kennel Club website at www.ckc.ca for more details.

In good health, Mike, Lee, Jayne & Moxy

This newsletter is published by Healthy Paws in Sarnia. This information is not intended as medical advice. Please consult your animal practitioner for severe or stubborn problems. If you are receiving this newsletter by e-mail and wish to be removed from our list, please e-mail us at paws@rivernet.net and your name will be removed promptly. Healthy Paws can be reached at (519) 344 3443.