



## NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2005

**HAPPY & HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO YOUR FAMILIES & YOUR PETS!**

### SUGAR FREE GUM & CANDY IS HARMFUL TO PETS

The Poison Control Centre of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals wants pet owners to know that xylitol, an artificial sweetener found in sugar free candy, gum and soda pop, can be dangerous and life threatening if your pet ingests it. Xylitol can cause a sudden drop in blood sugar, loss of co-ordination and seizures within 30 minutes.

Give your pet natural treats made from human grade ingredients without colouring, flavouring or sugar/sweeteners (may be listed as sucrose, fructose, glucose, maltitol, aspartame, xylitol, etc.).

### WEB-SITE FOR PUPPY MILL INFORMATION

Many pet stores selling dogs & cats purchase their animals from “mills” that mass breed in unhappy, unhealthy conditions. The focus here is profit, not animal health.

Check out [www.helpuppies.com](http://www.helpuppies.com) for more information regarding the abuse that is inflicted on animals raised in puppy mills and sold to unsuspecting owners.

### LARGER MEALS INCREASE THE RISK OF DIGESTIVE BLOAT IN DOGS

A study published in the Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association reported that dogs fed a larger number of cups of kibble per pound of body weight had an increased risk of a condition called “bloat” resulting in distention of the abdomen in which the stomach twists. The dog will attempt to vomit unsuccessfully, salivate excessively and perhaps go into shock. This life threatening condition is more common in large dogs with barrel shaped chests (boxers, Great Danes etc.) but can happen in other dogs also. It is important to feed your dog a nutrient-dense food that requires feeding a smaller amount of food per meal. Also restricting access to water immediately after eating prevents overfilling of the stomach.

### ARE YOU LEAVING YOUR PET'S FOOD DOWN 24 HOURS A DAY???

Many pet owners think that it is necessary, or beneficial to leave their pet's food constantly. This may be convenient for us as pet owners, but it is not healthy for our pets for many reasons.

Each time an animal smells or eats food, their body ph (acid/alkaline balance) changes to an alkaline state. A chronically alkaline state can lead to some health problems; the most common one is bladder disorders (infections, crystals and stones). We are seeing a drastic increase in the number of animals with bladder problems.

Animals who have food down all the time have a tendency to be more finicky about their food. If they are nibbling constantly, they never truly feel hungry. In order to feel hunger, the digestive system must be breaking down and moving food through to the intestines and emptying the stomach. This does not happen if the animal is constantly “grazing”. Smelling food all day actually decreases an animal’s appetite. Animals will start to look less healthy – dull matted coats, overweight or underweight, compared to pets who are fed smaller meals 2 or more times per day. Constant access to food also has a negative effect on the immune system due to a toxic build-up in the digestive system from food stagnation.

Kittens, puppies, pregnant or lactating animals will need smaller, more frequent feedings each day (3-4 meals). Adult pets should be fed twice daily. Food should be left down for no more than 30 minutes. If the pet does not eat it, pick it up and put it away until the next meal. Also, clean up any crumbs left behind on the floor. Your pet will become hungry and eat. It will require some retraining on your part and on the part of your pet, but it can be done. Be careful with cats who refuse to eat for a few days – they can develop liver disease when they begin to eat again.

Make sure each pet has their own bowl so that you can monitor the amount that each individual animal is eating. This also avoids territorial behavior in which less assertive animals become fearful about eating.

If you think that your cat needs to “graze”, grow some kitty grass in a pot in your house. Try our new “GrazerQueen” kits. This is different from regular grass – it does not have “barbs” on the blades that cause animals to vomit grass after eating it.

Always make sure that your pet has access to fresh, pure drinking water – anything but tap water (unless it has been through a charcoal filter).

Think about this issue in relation to your own meals – would you find it appetizing to have your breakfast, lunch and dinner to be put in front of you each day and left for 24 hours?

#### SANDY RIDGE PET CEMETERY

One of our customers who recently lost her beloved dog has made us aware of this alternative to home burial or cremation. Sandy Ridge is just east of London and south of Tillsonburg in Eden. Their web-site is **[www.sandyrpetcem.com](http://www.sandyrpetcem.com)** (they have a very nice web-site with a map). They offer pre-arranged funerals and burials for your pets. Their phone number is (519) 866 3243.

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](mailto:paws@rivernet.net) and your name will be removed promptly. Healthy Paws can be reached at (519) 344 3443.