

COMPANION ANIMAL NEWS SUMMER 2004

ALLERGIES – Does your pet seem itchier this time of year? Recent research has shown that 9 out of 50 dogs have allergies. Only one of those nine has allergies due to food. The other eight experience allergies caused by a range of environmental factors. Like humans, dogs and cats can be allergic to many things inside the house, including dust and mold. Contact with everything from trees to rugs can also elicit an allergic response. A single fleabite or a simple sniff of pollen can send a dog over his itching threshold. Animals respond differently to allergens than humans do. Instead of sneezing and having runny eyes and nose, they itch. They will often scratch themselves to the point where they have open sores.

So what do we do? There are several options. Shampoos, antihistamines, and sometimes antibiotics are often necessary. Another effective (and easy) option is to change their food. Even if they are not allergic to their food, if you find a food with the right amount and ratio of omega 3 to omega 6 fatty acids, it can really help cut down on the amount of itching. Remember that there is no cure for allergies, we are just trying to control things. We have available both canine and feline veterinary diets designed to help with allergies and itching. Cats can also have chronic vomiting from food allergies. We have foods that can help with that. Please call or stop by and ask us which one is appropriate for your pet.

MICROCHIPS – The Clark County Humane Society and Grassland Veterinary Service are trying to make people aware of the importance of placing microchips in all your pets. The Humane Society has started placing microchips in all the pets they adopt out, and have already had a lost pet returned to its owner because of the microchip. Dr. Jean had her lost dog found because of a microchip several years ago.

To promote microchipping, we have decreased the price of having a microchip placed in your pet to \$15. It can be done at any routine appointment. The Humane Society is also sponsoring a microchipping clinic on Saturday September 11, from noon to 2 p.m. at the fairgrounds. Watch the newspaper for details.

GOOD NEWS! Dr. Jean has now received her certificate for becoming a certified veterinary acupuncturist. Remember that acupuncture can be helpful for many things, including arthritis and allergies. Please give her a call if you have any questions.

NEW BABY ADVICE – Do you have a new baby on the way? Remember that Mom should not be handling the litter box, nor playing in the garden without gloves. Cats feces can carry a parasite called Toxoplasma, which can cause abortions in certain stages of pregnancy. If you have no choice, please wear gloves to clean the litter box, and wash hands thoroughly after cleaning out the box.

We are often asked for advice on how to prepare a pet for a new baby in the house. There are several things that are suggested to ease the transition for the new pet. Before the baby comes, get the pet used to a regular schedule that you believe is realistic and that will be kept when the infant is present. For dogs, this would include a regular walking schedule. For cats and dogs, this includes regular feeding and playing schedules too. The worst thing you can do is to ignore the pet after the baby comes. They need to be included in everything. When setting up the nursery, let the pet explore. Get them used to those new smells of baby powder, lotion, and diapers. Don't get in the habit of letting the pet sleep in the baby's room, though.

After the baby comes, include the pet during nursing, changing and playtime. If you put the animal away every time you interact with the baby, it may soon begin to resent the newcomer. Let it smell the child and lick those tiny hands. Discourage any licking of the face.

If you would like a more specific protocol for how to introduce a new baby, we can make a copy for you. Just let us know!

IT'S FLEA SEASON!! It was a very bad tick year, the mosquitoes are thick, and now it's also flea season. Remember that it is much easier to PREVENT fleas, than it is to treat them. The easiest way is to incorporate your dog flea control into its' heartworm prevention with Sentinel tablets. For cats we have an

injection that lasts for 6 months called Program. Let us know if you have any questions regarding flea control.

NEWS! Dr. Denaë Wagner will be joining our staff part time. She originally hails from Marshfield, and will be back in the area for several months. She had agreed to help us out while she is here. Dr. Jean will be on vacation from August 6-13. We hope to have a veterinarian here for most of those days to cover any needs you might have. There will not be any emergency vet available.

WISHING YOU A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!!

Jean Liljegren DVM

Lori Peterson, receptionist

Jeannette Bymers VT, office manager

Tina Gonzalez VT

Wendy Lindner CVT