

WINTER 2018

PATTON VETERINARY HOSPITAL

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Monday-Friday 8am - 8pm
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The Standard of
Veterinary Excellence



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Cary Moran

Cary joined the Patton staff in April 2017 as a Client Relations Specialist and quickly became part of the PVH family. Cary was promoted to the Animal Care Coordinator position in September 2017, and her daily responsibilities include caring for all of our boarding patients as well as assisting with care for our hospitalized and outpatient pets. Cary does an excellent job of leading our Animal Care team and always promotes the best quality care for patients during their stay at Patton.

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Canine Influenza

Canine influenza was first discovered in 2004 at several greyhound racing tracks in Florida. This flu strain is known as H3N8 and has since spread to 46 states including Pennsylvania. Tests on dogs affected by the 2015 outbreak in Chicago have revealed a new strain of canine flu, H3N2, previously limited to Korea, China and Thailand. H3N2 can infect cats. Neither strain infects people.

Canine flu is spread by airborne droplets released when dogs cough or sneeze, as well as by contact with contaminated surfaces or people's hands or clothing, where the virus can survive up to 24-48 hours. The virus can rapidly spread in situations where large numbers of dogs are in close contact with one another, such as doggie daycare facilities, dog parks, boarding kennels, and shelters. Dogs usually become ill two to four days after being exposed, and can shed the virus and infect other dogs for five to 24 days depending on the strain.

Symptoms include coughing, sneezing, fever and lethargy. Most dogs will recover in about two weeks, but some may develop pneumonia and rare cases have been fatal. Because it is a virus, there is no direct treatment, but some dogs need supportive care in the form of IV fluids and fever reducing medications.

A vaccine is available which combines both the H3N8 and the H3N2 strains of flu. Vaccination should be considered if your dog frequents high risk areas. Limiting exposure to areas where large groups of dogs may congregate may reduce the chances of exposure. Limit contact with any dogs who are coughing and sneezing and wash your hands and change clothes if you work with or contact dogs who may be ill such as at a shelter or rescue.



By Dr. Sabrina Walters

Libre's Law

August 28, 2017 sparked an exciting development in animal anti-cruelty laws in PA. Libre's Law was signed by Governor Tom Wolf in response to a rescued Boston Terrier puppy named Libre that suffered terrible illnesses as a result of neglect. Collectively called the Animal Abuse Statute Overhaul bill, the legislation updates and clarifies the existing animal abuse statutes and increases penalties for abusing animals. Provisions under the law include an updated definition of animal abuse, increased penalties for cruelty, forced mandatory relinquishment of abused animals, tethering stipulations (i.e., dogs may not be tethered for more than nine hours in a 24 hour period, the maximum time allowed to tether is 30 minutes when the

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FIP

Feline infectious peritonitis, or FIP, is a deadly viral disease found in cats. It's not common, especially in homes with only one or two cats, but it is a concern for shelters and catteries. It's estimated that one in 300 cats is diagnosed with FIP in the U.S., and the disease is found world-wide. The victims are usually young cats (under the age of two).

FIP is caused by the feline infectious peritonitis virus (FIPV), which is a mutated form of feline coronavirus (FCoV). While coronaviruses are typically fairly harmless, the FIPV virus is often fatal. These viruses are shed in infected cats' saliva and feces, and passed from infected queens (mother cats) to their offspring. Cats can be exposed when using dirty litter boxes or by coming in contact with other contaminated items.

Signs of infection include persistent fever, poor appetite and weight loss, but often don't occur for weeks, months, or even years after exposure. Although onset can be gradual, most cats don't survive.

The disease manifests in a "wet" form and a "dry" form. The wet form is characterized by fluid build-up in the chest or abdominal cavity, and afflicted cats may show labored breathing or a distended abdomen. In the dry form, inflammatory cells collect in various organs, and signs depend on which organs are affected.

The good news is that there is hope on the horizon. New research with antiviral drugs is showing great promise, so hopefully veterinarians will soon have more options for treating this dreaded disease.

Pruritus

One of the most common reasons for veterinary visits for dogs and cats are skin problems, especially itchy pets. The medical term for itchiness is pruritus. Pruritus is the sensation that causes us to scratch, and it can be useful, for example, if we're scratching a mosquito off of our skin.

The skin is the largest organ in the body. It performs many crucial functions, including preventing dangerous pathogens from entering the body and helping to protect deeper organs and tissues from abrasions. The skin helps prevent dehydration by retaining moisture and nutrients, and helps with temperature regulation. The skin also has numerous sensory receptors for detecting things such as pain, pressure, temperature and light. For most mammals, the skin helps with vitamin D synthesis and storage when exposed to sunlight.

Pruritus and other skin problems have a wide range of potential causes. Itchy skin is a common symptom of allergies in pets. Inhalant allergies are most common in pets (such as dust, mold or pollen), but food allergies and contact allergies may also occur. Bacterial and fungal skin infections occur frequently in pets. Thyroid disorders often lead to skin problems. Fleas, mites and other parasites can lead to terrible skin problems, and stress can be a factor in skin conditions as well. Dry, itchy skin is a common problem during the winter, as home heating systems pull the moisture out of the air.

Frequent brushing helps stimulate natural oil production and removes dead hair and dander, and will also help you keep track of your pet's skin and coat condition. Don't bathe your pet too often, as bathing tends to dry the natural oils. If you do bathe, choose a mild shampoo designed for cats and dogs, as most human shampoos are too harsh for pets.

A humidifier may help both you and your pets cope with dry indoor air. Nutrition is one of the fundamental elements of skin and coat health, so feed a high quality diet. Your veterinarian may recommend vitamins and supplements for an extra nutritional boost.

Keep a close watch if your pet starts to exhibit increased itchiness, and consult with your veterinarian if the symptoms persist. Signs of a more serious problem include:

- Open sores or redness
- Dull, dry or brittle coat
- Patches of missing fur
- Persistent licking, especially of the paws

Pruritus and other skin conditions can severely affect a pet's quality of life, and the fur loss and secondary infections that may result from persistent scratching can lead to other problems as well. It's wise to treat these conditions early, so please don't hesitate to take your itchy pet to the veterinarian.



FEBRUARY IS DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

One of the most prevalent health problems in dogs and cats is usually preventable: periodontal disease. 80% of dogs and 70% of cats have signs of periodontal disease by age three. Dental diseases can cause pain, tooth and bone loss, and the resulting bacterial infections can enter the bloodstream, then spread throughout the body and cause permanent damage to the heart, lungs, kidneys and liver.





Top Ten

If your dog has been scratching incessantly, he's not alone in the canine world. Skin allergies and skin infections are two of the top ten reasons that pet owners bring their dogs to the veterinarian, according to Nationwide Pet Insurance. As the country's largest pet insurance provider, they have ample data to get a good indication of the most common ailments in dogs and cats.

Dental disease tops the list for cats and is also in the top ten for dogs. Dental disease can be incredibly painful, but cats are very stoic and have evolved to hide signs of pain. Even astute owners may not notice the symptoms right away. Signs include bad breath, red gums (healthy gums should be pink), drooling, swelling around the mouth, lack of appetite or hesitation to eat, pawing at the mouth or dropping food.

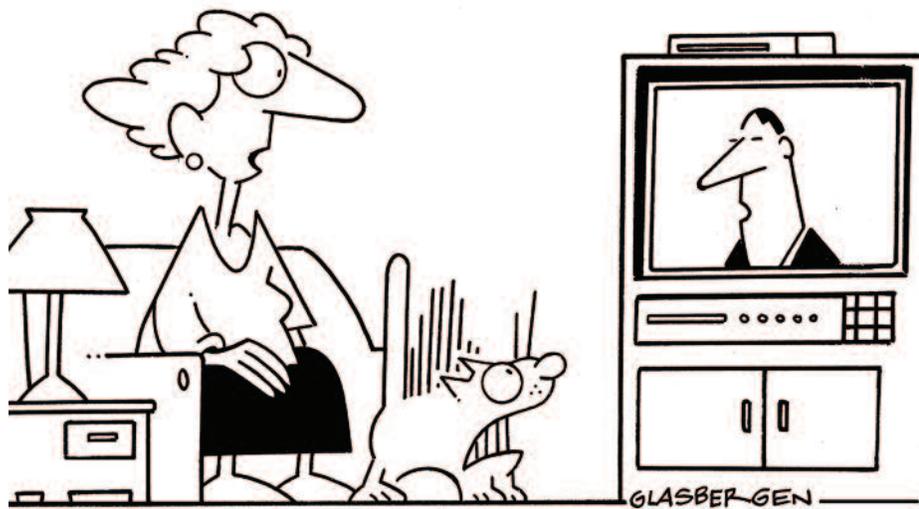
Here are the Top Ten reasons for veterinary visits from 2016:

Dogs	Cats
1. Skin Allergies	1. Periodontitis/Dental Disease
2. Ear Infection	2. Bladder or Urinary Tract Disease
3. Non-cancerous Skin Mass	3. Chronic Kidney Disease
4. Skin Infection	4. Vomiting/Upset Stomach
5. Arthritis	5. Excessive Thyroid Hormone
6. Periodontitis/Dental Disease	6. Diarrhea/Intestinal Upset
7. Vomiting/Upset Stomach	7. Diabetes
8. Diarrhea/ Intestinal Upset	8. Inflammatory Bowel Disease
9. Bladder or Urinary Tract Infection	9. Skin Allergies
10. Anal Gland Inflammation/Infection	10. Valvular Heart Disease or Murmur

It's worth noting that some of the items on the list are "acute conditions," which means they are potentially sudden and severe in onset. Other conditions, however, are "chronic," which means they develop over a longer period of time and may not become noticeable early on. Arthritis, heart disease, dental disease and kidney disease are all examples of chronic conditions that you might not notice right away in your pet.

For the majority of health conditions, early detection gives your pet the best chance of a good outcome. Preventive care examinations can help detect diseases in the early stages, saving pet owners money on treatment, and keeping pets healthier and happier.

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"He said flat tax — not cat tax."

Health Benefits of Pets



A growing body of research tells us that pets are good for us in many ways, and new research shows that even prenatal exposure may have benefits. Researchers recently found that children whose mothers are exposed to dogs while pregnant are significantly less likely to develop eczema, or atopic dermatitis, as toddlers. The protection was shown in early childhood, but does not appear to persist for older children.

Dr. Gagandeep Cheema of Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, along with several colleagues, examined data from a large longitudinal study involving 794 mother-child pairs, and included the data for those who had completed a prenatal interview and had attended at least one of two study-related clinic visits at age 2 or 10 years. Eczema was determined by a physician, and dog-exposure was defined by the mothers reporting "one or more dogs indoors for at least one hour daily during pregnancy."

Researchers have not yet determined why this correlation exists, and some speculate the exposure to dogs affects the children's microbiomes.

"I have felt cats rubbing their faces against mine and touching my cheek with claws carefully sheathed. These things, to me, are expressions of love."

— James Herriot



LIBRE'S LAW

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temperature is above 90 degrees or below freezing, dictates the type of tethering material that can be used, and animals may not be tethered in area with excessive waste), and members of the veterinary community cannot be slapped with frivolous lawsuits for reporting animal abuse. This law is a great advancement for our furry friends in Pennsylvania.



By Dr. Kathleen Spencer-Schmidt



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FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

Upcoming Events

Pet Loss Support Group
March 18, 1-2:30pm

Waiting Room Etiquette

...at the veterinary hospital

Some dogs are gregarious love-bugs, and easily make friends wherever they go. Dog parks and pet-friendly stores are joyful locations for these canine goodwill ambassadors. Not all dogs feel the same way, though, and it's important to remember that when you're visiting the veterinarian. You should not allow your dog to intrude upon other dogs' space.

Going to the veterinarian is a scary experience for many dogs. Fearful dogs

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

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Although Cary's time at Patton has been relatively short, she is no stranger to the veterinary industry. In 1994, Cary applied to be a shelter volunteer and left that interview as an employee. She enjoyed working at the shelter but wanted to learn more, as she often came across pets with sickness or illness that would need to be treated. She completed a Veterinary Technician Proctorship at Erie Animal Hospital, which gave her the training and experience she needed to become a Veterinary Technician. Cary has held a

variety of roles, including, but not limited to: Director of Marketing and Fundraising, Education and Volunteer Director, and Shelter Manager. She has experience with both small and large animals, and has a sincere love and appreciation for all animals.

Cary's home is full of many critters, including nine dogs, nine cats, two ducks, two ferrets, a parrot, a rabbit, and about 20 chickens.

While Cary's job has many duties, her favorite aspect is spoiling the boarding animals. Thank you, Cary, for taking care of our furry friends!



By Kelli Swanson

may act out in ways that are completely unexpected by their owners, and that includes growling at a dog that comes in to their space.

Some dogs may not be fearful, but they may be in pain. Dogs dealing with injuries, arthritis, or infections might not welcome an encounter with a playful new friend.

Some dogs visit their veterinarian because they're sick, and they may be contagious. While we try to make special accommodations for cases that we suspect may be contagious, it isn't always obvious when people call to make an appointment. Canine influenza and some other illnesses can be spread by casual contact.

Most cats have no experience traveling except to the veterinarian, so they are often terrified while waiting in their carrier. Luckily, with our cat wing, cats can now wait in their carrier without the presence of dogs. We provide Feliway spray, and towels, that can be used to help your kitty relax while in our cat lobby.

The bottom line: when visiting the veterinarian, all cats must be in carriers, and all dogs must be on a leash. So, please do not allow your dog to greet other dogs in the reception area, unless you first ask the person if it is ok and if their dog is healthy.

