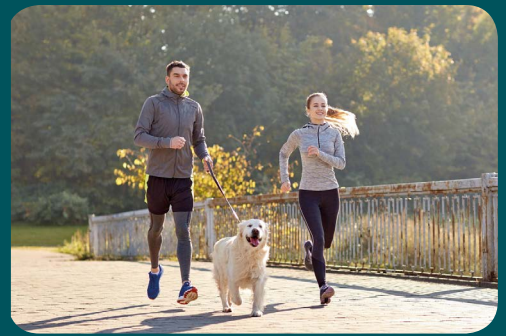


PORT KENNEDY Veterinary Hospital



Monthly Newsletter - November 2016

Issue 11/2016

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Protect your pet and home from fleas NOW!

Fleas love spring so as the weather warms up it is important to treat your pets with a proven flea control product.

Fleas love the warmer weather – humidity and warmer temperatures create the perfect setting for fleas to finish their breeding cycle – and trigger an outbreak in your home.

The adult fleas you can see on your pet represent only 5% of the total flea population. The other 95% lurk in the pet's home environment as eggs, larvae and pupae, waiting for the right conditions before they hatch and wreak havoc. Although they may not be visible, fleas can lay up to 50 eggs a day. These eggs are shed from your pet into the home environment. Eggs hatch into larvae which could be hiding in your carpets, rugs or cracks in the floorboards. Larvae develop into pupae which may be lingering in your couch until the summer weather prompts them to emerge as adult fleas.

Without prevention your home may be at risk of a flea infestation, and it may be from causes beyond your control. Fleas thrive in damp, shady areas found in your garden and especially under your house. Their eggs can be shed

from neighborhood pets, rodents or native animals that have access to your garden or home.



To prevent your home becoming a summer breeding ground for fleas, it's crucial to treat your pets regularly during the summer season – and every season. Missing just one monthly treatment can quickly lead to a re-infestation. For complete protection against infestation, you need a treatment that combats every stage of the flea life cycle.

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HOW CAN YOU INTERPRET A DOG'S EMOTIONS?

Almost every dog owner believes they know what their pet is trying to tell them, but new studies reveal just how well people really understand man's best friend

A landmark study is investigating how people interpret dog emotions and behavior. The study looks at different factors that might contribute to a person's ability to interpret dog emotions. Preliminary survey results show most people think they are experts.

The project builds on a 2013 study using photographs of dogs, in which researchers found no significant differences between the abilities of experts and non-experts. Expanding on this study and using videos to assess which other psychological components may affect how an individual interprets the canine emotional state.

The first step was to characterize good "dogmanship", or those commonly referred to as dog people. The study proposed that a dog's emotional and attentional state can reflect that human's dogmanship. It demonstrated that farmers scoring high on the conscientiousness personality dimension get the best work out of their herding dogs.

Here's a few thoughts on the science behind your dog's feelings.



Laughter

Have you ever heard your dog's panting during play and thought it sounded like a chuckle? Turns out, you might be right! Researcher Patricia Simonet from Sierra Nevada College discovered that certain breathing, or excited exhalations could be the canine version of laughter. Her team brought a parabolic microphone to a park and, from a distance, recorded the sounds that dogs made while playing. They discovered a special exhalation that was different from normal panting. Later, the team played the sound for other dogs who started to play after hearing the "laugh." They also discovered that it helped to calm shelter dogs who were under stress.

Shame

Most dog owners are familiar with the telltale signs that indicate their dog has been "up to no good" while they've been away: the lowered head, ears swept back, the hunched posture, and a doleful gaze. Even if the fruits of the dog's bad behavior are not immediately apparent, his body language seems to point to feelings of guilt. But for dogs, the emotion is slightly less complicated than human guilt or shame. Your dog's submissive

postures are the result of anxious anticipation; an expected disciplinary action. It may have been your reaction to similar behavior in the past, or it may be the change in your energy and body language when you discover his actions in the present. Your immediate reaction in any disciplinary situation creates an association for your dog, he now knows that his actions will lead to discipline or punishment.

Jealousy

A researcher at the University of Vienna in Austria named Friederike Range discovered that dogs do have a sense of "fair play." Her team began with a group of dogs who already knew the command to "shake" and would give their paw whether they received a treat or not. However, if they saw that another dog received a piece of food for the behavior while they did not, they stopped! Dogs are not the only ones who are insulted when they aren't treated fairly. A similar experiment found that monkeys also become jealous if their peers were rewarded and they weren't. It is likely these behaviors resulted because both animals live in cooperative societies.

Grief

Dogs don't grieve in the same way that humans do, but they do experience sadness when a pack member passes away. If your family experiences a loss, your dog may react by displaying signs of distress: loss of appetite, fear, depression, sleeping too much or too little, and anxiety. In 1996, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals conducted a Companion Animal Mourning Project which found that 66% of dogs exhibited four or more behavioral changes after losing a pet companion. Give your pet time to cope with the loss. The study found that most dogs returned to normal after two weeks but some took as long as six months. You can help by maintaining their routine and going through your own grief. Your dog will have trouble moving on if you are unable to. If you are afraid these symptoms may be the result of illness, take your dog to the vet.

Joy

Anyone who has watched a dog play knows that our canine companions experience joy! The famous naturalist Charles Darwin noted that "under the expectation of any great pleasure, dogs bound and jump about in an extravagant manner, and bark for joy." Play helps animals to build social bonds, build trust, and learn to cooperate. It also hones cognitive skills and helps in hunting and mating.

Sources: *Companion Magazine*, Q1 2016 p.9;

<https://www.cesarsway.com/dog-behavior/innocuous-behaviors/science-of-canine-emotions>



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HEARTWORM IN DOGS

Heartworm is a serious and potentially deadly disease spread by mosquitoes that are infected with immature heartworms. However, it is also entirely preventable.

Once an animal is bitten by an infected mosquito the larvae is passed on to the animal where it then migrates through tissue, through the skin and into the blood vessels. The arteries of the lungs and pulmonary vessels of the heart become the permanent home of the mature heartworms where they can live and procreate for 5-7 years.

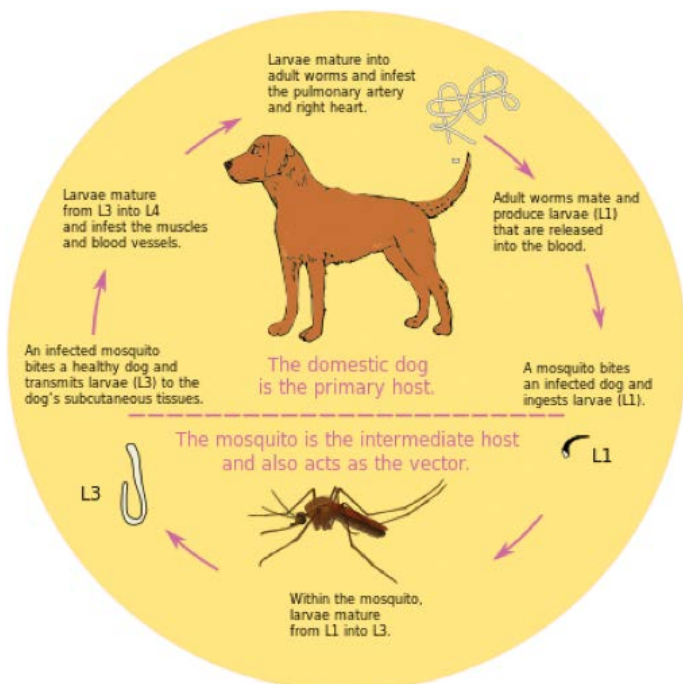
Adult heartworm can grow up to 30cm in length, blocking the arteries leading to the lungs and infesting the heart.

Heartworm disease not only affects the heart and lungs, but can also impact the liver and kidneys. As the number of worms in the body increases, symptoms become apparent and can include cough, exercise intolerance, difficulty breathing and abnormal lung sounds, enlargement of the liver, and fluid build-up in the abdomen.

Some dog owners fail to understand the threat the disease poses, while others think they can get by just by protecting their dog during certain months rather than all year round. Some owners even neglect to take preventive steps against heartworm altogether.

Heartworm can be diagnosed with a simple blood test and is a recommended component of the annual physical exam for your pet. Treatment of the disease is not without risks and usually consists of intramuscular injections, hospitalisation, and strict confinement to limit exercise for weeks.

The best form of treatment is prevention and there are oral, topical, and injectable forms of medication. If your pet is over 6 months of age, it is recommended to test for heartworm disease due to the serious complications that can arise if preventatives are used on a heartworm positive dog.



PET OWNERSHIP CAN HELP YOU STAY HEALTHY AND SAVE MONEY

New research is discovering more benefits of pet ownership and reinforcing the fact that pets have a positive effect, not only on our health, but can also produce meaningful savings for total health care costs.

A new initiative called Hearts Aligned, traced the stories of Australian pets and their owners, uncovering stress reduction and other improvements pets bestow on their owner's lives. They discovered that an owner's heart rate can align with their pets, dropping to match each other and reducing stress.

For example, this initiative found an impressive positive influence between one owner and his dog, Lyric. Lyric helped nurse its owner, who after a work injury, struggled with mental issues for three years.

Further research also found pet owners commonly exercise more, have higher self-esteem and deal better with social rejection than their non-pet owning counterparts.



There is decades of research showing how dogs can help their owners stay both physically and emotionally healthy. In the U.S., studies show significant cost savings in health care which can be directly linked to pet ownership.

The largest savings was determined based on a lower incidence of doctor's visits by pet owners as compared to non-owners. According to the U.S. study, 132.8 million pet owners in the U.S. visit a doctor 0.6 times less than the average non-pet owner.

Additional savings were calculated for dog owners who walk their dog 5 or more a week. This group, totaling more than 20 million people, shows a lower incidence of obesity and were responsible for saving \$419 million in related healthcare costs.

Source: Vet Practice, June 2016 p.5; Companion Magazine, Q1 2016 p.9

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Call us at 9524 6644 to find out what you can do to protect your pet from Heartworm disease!



DOGS AND CAR TRAVEL

With careful planning and the right safety equipment hitting the road with your canine companion can be fun and hassle free.

More often than not, dogs make for willing and eager travel companions. Some dogs have even achieved literary fame as canine car companions, like John Steinbeck's French poodle Charley.

But whether your dog is eager or reluctant, having the right equipment and attitude can help to assure that the trip is safe and satisfying for all.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Before you hit the road, make sure that you have everything you'll need to keep your dog happy and healthy. Here's a list of must-haves and probably-should-haves:

- Lead, collar and ID tag. If your dog were to get loose far from home – that's bad. If your dog were to get loose far from home without any form of ID – that's really bad.
- Food, water, bowls. Bring along a sufficient supply of the food your dog is accustomed to eating. Bring along plenty of water, too – and bowls, of course. Changing to food and water that are different from what the dog normally consumes can combine with the car's motion to create, shall we say, unpleasant bodily reactions.
- Blankets and baggies. Bring blankets for bedding, and in cold weather, for warmth. Bring waste disposal baggies for parking lot rest stops (You wouldn't want to accidentally step in that, would you?).
- Old washcloths. Handy to have on hand for wiping muddy paws that have just bounded through roadside puddles.

CRATES AND RESTRAINTS

Some dogs love to get in a car, hang their heads out the window, and revel in the experience, jowls and ears flapping in the breeze.

But that's not a good idea.

Even if your dog is a happy traveler, it shouldn't be allowed to roam free within the confines of your car. That could be very bad for your dog in the case of an accident, and an unrestrained dog could even be the cause of an accident. And all dog body parts should remain inside the vehicle at all times.

Dog crates are great for car travel, assuming that the size of your dog isn't a limiting factor.

When choosing a crate for your dog, it should be large enough to permit the dog to stand up completely inside and turn around, but there shouldn't be so much room that the dog can slide around inside in response to the car's movements. It should be well-ventilated, and structurally sound.

And it's important that the crate be securely fastened in place; a loose crate isn't much of an improvement over a loose dog.

If a crate won't work for your dog, there are other options.

A harness that is fastened to a seat safety belt is a great alternative. It provides the dog some freedom, but restrains the dog in an accident. Be sure to buy a harness that's specifically designed to be used with safety belts.

Barriers can also be effective restraints, and are great for securing a dog in an open area, such as in a van, or in the back of a wagon or SUV.

Be careful, though, when you're shopping for a barrier. Be certain that the barrier you select can be securely attached to the interior framework of your vehicle, and that it's rated to restrain the weight of your dog in an accident.

STOP, REVIVE, SURVIVE

YOU might be up for grinding along hours at a time on the road, but your dog isn't. And keeping your dog restrained and contained in your car for hours on end is a good way to sour it on car travel.

Plan on making frequent stops, just as you would if small children were along for the trip. (And if there are small children along, well then – two birds with one stone!)

Frequent potty breaks and opportunities to burn-off a bit of pent-up energy will help to make your dog a happy traveler. Just be careful not to have an escapee on your hands when you let your dog out of the car!

And when you do stop, be sure to never leave your dog in the car in the hot sun – even if you do crack the windows. Temperatures can climb to levels that aren't dog-friendly very quickly.

CHECK WITH YOUR VET

If this will be your first trip with your dog, you might want to discuss your plans with your vet briefly. There are medications that can help with problems like motion sickness and anxiety.

It would be good to know what's available – just in case.

PREPARE FOR FUN

It's often said that dogs are man's best friend. With the proper equipment and with planning, there's no reason to leave your best friend behind when you hit the road.

