



PawPRINTS Newsletter
Best Friends Veterinary Hospital
 Fall 2009 Issue

Health Updates

Canine Influenza Virus (H3N8) - There is a new vaccine available to help protect against the Canine Influenza Virus (H3N8). At the present time there is a low risk in our immediate area, but we want to be prepared for our patients. Best Friends Veterinary Hospital has made this vaccine available for our clients who would like to protect their pet in case of a future development of an epidemic in our area.

Canine Influenza (H3N8) is a rapidly spreading virus with confirmed cases in 30 states. The majority of dogs have no natural immunity to this virus. Infected dogs shed and spread the virus before the first clinical signs appear. This virus progresses to pneumonia in up to 20% of cases and in a small percentage of cases can be fatal. The Canine Influenza Virus is easily transmitted by direct contact with a sick dog or contaminated surfaces, or through sneezing and coughing. Please feel free to call our office if you would like to schedule an appointment or ask further questions.

Slentrol - Almost half the dogs veterinarians see are overweight or obese and those extra pounds may have more of an impact on your dog's health than you may realize. Obesity can lead to numerous health conditions, including breathing problems, high blood pressure, arthritis/pain, reduced activity, and skin/ hair coat problems. Now there is a safe and dependable option. Slentrol is the first FDA-approved weight loss medication made just for dogs. Ask us today if your dog may be a candidate for Slentrol.

Referral Bucks!

Did you know that you can receive free money for your pet's future services by referring a friend or relative? For every person that uses your name as a referral, you will get ten dollars in referral bucks. The more people you refer, the more money you will save!

Holiday Hazards for Our Furry Family Members

The holidays are quickly approaching and with all the commotion some common holiday items often go overlooked as being hazardous to our pets. All it takes is one piece of tinsel or chocolate to interrupt a holiday dinner with a trip to the emergency room. Pet owners can easily avoid these hazards by being aware of what items can be potentially harmful and informing guests and relatives as to how unsafe these things can be to our cats and dogs.

Food is a large part of any holiday celebration; and it can be tempting to slip a small morsel of food to our furry friends. **Spicy, rich, or fatty food** should be avoided in pets due to their ability to cause intestinal upset. In some animals, the intestinal upset can progress to serious inflammation of the pancreas or intestines which could lead to a potentially life-threatening emergency. **Bones** are another food item a pet owner should be wary of. Bones have the potential to cause damage to the intestinal tract and even get lodged inside causing a blockage. Anything that you would not eat, your pet should avoid too. A tiny amount of beef or poultry usually won't hurt and would be appreciated, just remember to avoid the fatty portions and the bones.

In addition to some foods causing intestinal upset, certain foods can also be potentially toxic to dogs and cats. **Chocolate** is one of the most common toxic foods that our pets encounter. Theobromine is a substance that is in chocolate which can cause toxicity. The most toxic is baking chocolate, followed by semi-sweet chocolate, dark chocolate, milk chocolate, and chocolate flavored treats. **Raisins and grapes** should also be avoided, because they

can cause acute kidney failure in susceptible pets. **Xylitol** is a naturally occurring sugar substitute found in many sugar-free gums, candies, and other foods. Dogs that ingest this substance may experience rapid, life-threatening drops in blood sugar, liver failure, and bleeding disorders. Due to their small size, cats are very sensitive to any ingestion of **ethanol**. Cats are attracted to mixed drinks that contain milk, cream, or ice cream (e.g. White Russian, alcoholic eggnog).

It is instinctual for most cats to love to play with pieces of string. During the holidays, a tree covered in **tinsel** or presents wrapped with **ribbon** could be very tempting. **Small toys or other decorations** should also be chosen carefully, keeping in mind if it could possibly be eaten by a dog or cat. If you notice your pet eat any non-food items, or if they are vomiting or not eating, you should call our office immediately.

Plants can be a beautiful way to decorate around the holidays, but careful attention should be paid to what plants could potentially be toxic to our pets. **Poinsettias** are commonly known to be toxic to cats, but large quantities must be ingested for signs to develop. Plant members in the **lily family (Easter lilies, tiger lilies, day lilies, etc)** can cause acute renal failure in cats. Any cat that is exposed to lilies should immediately be taken to our vet office, because even small amounts can be potentially life-threatening. Other holiday plants to avoid, because of the moderate toxicity to cats and dogs, are **mistletoe (especially the berries), holly, the Christmas rose, and Christmas tree needles**. Vomiting and diarrhea are the most common symptoms often seen in animals that have ingested small amounts of the plants mentioned above.

Additional items commonly found during the holiday season that cause toxicities if ingested are **silica gel packs, Christmas tree preservative, sidewalk ice melts, liquid potpourri, electric cords, and glow in the dark novelty items**.

Even if all the precautions are taken, sometimes an accident occurs and our pets manage to ingest a potentially toxic food, plant, or material, or have swallowed a foreign object. If this should occur, you should immediately seek medical attention for your pet from a veterinarian. A delay of even a few hours can mean the difference between life and death. There is no substitute for a thorough examination and evaluation by a veterinarian if there are potentially life-threatening concerns. Feel free to contact us at Best Friends Veterinary Hospital 614-889-7387 if you are concerned. If we are not available you may contact one of the local emergency clinics: MedVet 614-846-5800, Ohio State 614-292-3551, or Animal Poison Control 1-800-548-423.



Best Friends Hospital on Facebook



Join us on facebook and become a fan of Best Friends Veterinary Hospital. By becoming a fan you will be able to view pictures from recent hospital events and possibly even have your own pet's picture posted! Just search for "Best Friends Veterinary Hospital" and you will find our facebook page.



Twenty- Five Years of Service with Best Friends!



Then

Two thousand and nine marks 25 years that Barb Lyndes has been employed here at Best Friends Veterinary Hospital. Soon after graduating from Columbus State Community College as a Veterinary Technician she was hired as Dr. Ritchie's first and only employee in 1984. She acted as Technician, Receptionist, and Kennel Staff! Barb is currently the Accounts Manager and Receptionist here at Best Friends. On occasion Barb still fills in when needed for emergency surgeries!



Now

Barb has been a lifelong resident of Columbus, however, she prefers the southern weather and hopes to someday move to either the Carolinas or Florida. She and her husband, Jim, have raised their two daughters, Nichele and Natalie here in Powell. Nichele is currently attending The Ohio State University (Barb is a rabid Buckeyes fan). Natalie is finishing High School at Olentangy.

Barb has a love for cats, which she fulfills by volunteering at Cozy Cat Cottage in her spare time. She also catches and spays or neuters feral cats, then she ei-

Welcome Taylor!

Best Friends Veterinary Hospital has recently added a new addition to our family. We welcome Taylor, who will be our new Vet Assistant as well as Receptionist. Taylor has worked in a variety of veterinary hospitals over the past nine years gaining experience in various positions. Her favorite hobby is riding horses which she has been doing for the past 15 years. Her pets include 2 dogs, Matilda the pug and Fritz the dachshund.

Sneak Preview

February is Dental Health Month and included in the next issue will be an overview of the dental services that we offer for your pet's well being. There will also be a special promotion that you will want to take advantage of while it lasts!

Pet Food Recall

As a precautionary measure Nutro Products announced a voluntary recall of select varieties of Nutro, Natural Choice, Complete Care, Dry Cat Foods, and Nutro Max Cat Dry Foods with "Best if Used by Dates" between May 12, 2010 and August 22, 2010.

This recall is due to incorrect levels of zinc and potassium in the finished product resulting from a production error by a US-based premix supplier. Two mineral premixes were affected. Both zinc and potassium are essential nutrients for cats and are added as nutritional supplements to Nutro dry cat food. Affected product was distributed to all 50 states.

Consumers who have affected product should immediately discontinue feeding the product to their cats, and switch to another product with a balanced nutritional profile.

Cat owners should monitor their cat for symptoms, including a reduction in appetite or refusal of food, weight loss, vomiting, or diarrhea. Feel free to ask us about alternatives if your food has been affected.

Cat Haiku

You never feed me	You must scratch me there!
Perhaps I'll sleep on your face.	Yes, above my tail! Behold,
That will show you.	Elevator butt.

Holiday Wishes

We at Best Friends Veterinary Hospital would like to wish you and your family a safe and joyous holiday

