

Newsletter of the
Community Practice Service

College of Veterinary Medicine
 Washington State University
http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/cliented/community_practice.htm

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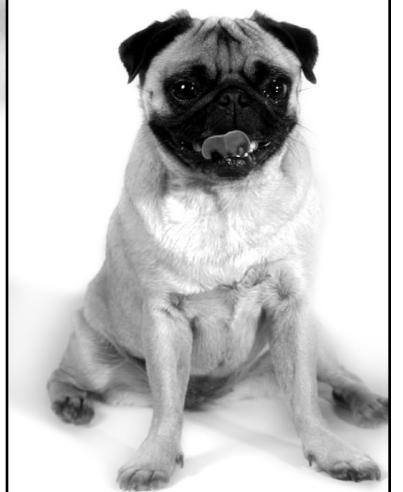


dog days
 of **SUMMER**

Your pets have special needs this time of year.

Warm weather is here, and with it many opportunities for you and your pet to enjoy the outdoors. Although this is a wonderful season, it is important to remember that your pets have special needs this time of year. (See "Warm Weather Tips" on page 3.) If you have not taken your pet to the veterinarian within the past year now is the perfect time to schedule a visit.

Pets are often outside more during the spring and summer months and are more likely to encounter animals that spread disease. Even if you have an indoor cat, some diseases can be spread via aerosolization. If indoor cats spend time near opened, screened windows, they risk contracting disease from sick cats drifting through the neighborhood.



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**WELCOME TO COMMUNITY PRACTICE
 AT WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY**



It seems that a lot of people in the communities surrounding Washington State University are not aware that there is a "Community Practice" service in the veterinary teaching hospital. We offer a full range of services, from basic care such as vaccinations, dental prophylaxis, and geriatric check-ups to more comprehensive diagnostics and care for sick animals. Our primary staff consists of three doctors and two licensed veterinary technicians. We work together as a team to provide efficient and comprehensive care for all of our patients. Although the doctors in Community Practice have access to specialists in virtually every area of small animal medicine and surgery, the service is set up to function like a regular veterinary practice. Washington State University Veterinary Teaching Hospital is the most well-equipped hospital in the Northwest with 24-hour emergency and ICU care. You can be sure that your pet is receiving the quality care he or she deserves at Community Practice in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital at Washington State University.



Ticks can pose a serious health risk for your pet and your family. Ticks carry many diseases such as tick paralysis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Lyme disease, which can affect both humans and animals. The best way to prevent these diseases is by preventing tick attachment to your pet. There are several good products available which are easy to use and they should be employed now. **Preventic**® collars have been available for several years and have been fairly effective in most areas. Other good options are the use of topicals such as **Frontline**® and **Advantix**®. The only product labeled for tick prevention in cats is **Frontline**®. Most cats are fastidious groomers and are less in need of tick prevention. Any dogs that visit grassy, bushy, or timbered areas are vulnerable to tick infestation and should be protected.




Fleas are not as much of a problem in our area because of the cold winters and arid summers. Still, quite a number of our patients seem to have flea problems sporadically.

For the pet that travels to Seattle or other flea infested areas, prevention should be used before traveling to keep your pet from bringing fleas home with them. Some pets have an allergy to fleas and if they even get one flea bite they become itchy all over. They can scratch so much that a secondary skin infection called a pyoderma can develop. This can be difficult and expensive to treat. Clearly, with these patients, an ounce of prevention (or, in this case of a flea control product!) is worth a pound of cure.



Once again, several products are available such as **Frontline**®, **Advantage**®, **Capstar**®, and **Revolution**®. Remember **NEVER** use dog products on cats unless they are specifically labeled as safe for cats. Since cats tend to groom a lot, they may ingest topically applied products and some products that are safe for dogs are very toxic if ingested by their feline friends.



Heartworm disease has not yet been a problem in our area. If your pet travels to heartworm areas, prevention needs to be administered within 30 days of exposure to infective mosquitos. Adult dogs (older than 6 mos.) need to be tested before starting preventative. Cats should also be given the preventative in some circumstances, but testing should be discussed with your veterinarian. Several preventatives such as **Heartgard**®, **Interceptor**®, **Sentinel**®, **Proheart6**® and **Revolution**® are available, but as with all medical products you should discuss which one is safe and appropriate for your pet.

Heartworm Lifecycle



Heatstroke can be fatal if not treated soon enough. We all know that pets should not be left in a closed car in warm weather. Even with the windows rolled down, the temperature in a car parked in the sun can reach over 160 degrees within minutes. Pet owners should also be aware that dogs left without shade, ventilation or water outdoors are also at risk for heatstroke. Remember that the sun moves during the day, so be sure that there is shade available at all times. Dogs will run alongside a bike, or chase a Frisbee without quitting, until they collapse, seizure, and possibly die. Please be aware that if you need water, rest or shade, so does your pet.

SIGNS OF HEAT STROKE:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Excessive panting | Increased, thumping heart rate |
| Body temperature of 104° or more | Depression or stupor |
| Collapse | Seizures or coma |
| Diarrhea or vomiting | |



WARM WEATHER TIPS

Dog bites can be a problem any time dogs run at large. These dogs pose a risk to other dogs, cats, humans and themselves (hit by cars). Common sense and a leash can avoid these problems.



Be sure your pet is fitted with an appropriate **collar** (breakaway or elastic collars for cats) and **identification tags**. Consider having your pet microchipped as well. Proper identification is your pet's ticket home should he or she become lost.

If you use lawn-care products be sure they are pet friendly and keep your pets off the treated area for 24 hours.

Remember that some **summer foliage** is toxic to pets if ingested.

This is a great time of the year for **outdoor entertaining** but leftover food can attract wild animals and induce gastrointestinal problems if your pet "cleans up" after you.

Curious pets may discover **bee hives** or **wasp nests**. Inspect your home and yard and eliminate these hazards.

Exercise is great for your pet, but try to exercise in the mornings or evenings when it is cooler and avoid it on extremely hot or humid days. Build endurance gradually especially in pets that have not been exercising during the winter months.

Remember that **flies** can be pests, especially to pets living outdoors. Flies typically bite the ear tips, and an

approved fly repellent should be used to prevent fly bite dermatitis.

Pets can get sunburned just like people! Keep exposure to direct sunlight to a minimum, especially if you have your pet shaved during the summer. Also remember that hot sidewalks or concrete can burn pets' feet. If you can't walk on a surface comfortably with bare feet then your pet probably can't either.

Some pets normally eat less in warm weather. Try feeding them in the evening. If you leave food out all day, be sure that it is dry; canned pet food spoils rapidly in the heat. If your pet refuses food altogether may be a sign that your pet is ill.

Do not let pets ride in the back of an **open pick-up**. We see the tragic results of this practice all too frequently here at the clinic.

Many pets love to swim. It is great exercise and fun for all. Remember to always keep a close eye on your dog when it is swimming.

Collars can snag on debris in the water and pets can be pulled under if they get caught on or tangled in underwater rubble. Just like people, dogs can be caught in currents so be sure to pick safe swimming places. If you have a pool be sure that it is pet safe. Handrails and vertical steps are not dog-friendly and if your pet should fall in he may not be able to get out.

