

THE N.O.A.H. NEWS

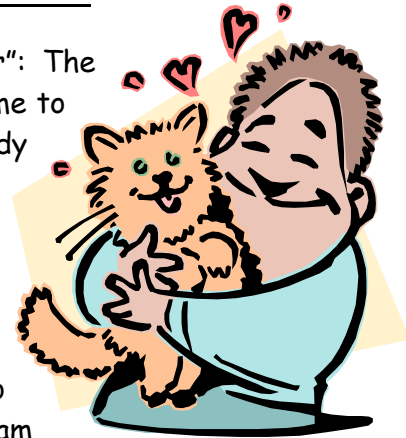
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THOUGHTS of spring are in the air. It's time to pack away the parka and take your canine companion on an extra long walk. Don't worry about your feline friend, he or she will be busy sitting near the sun-filled window waiting for the robins to return.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ANNUAL HEALTH EXAM

We all know when it's "that time of the year": The reminder postcard appears in the mailbox and it's time to bring the family pet in for its "shots". Although nobody here is doing any shooting, we do recommend that vaccinations are kept up to date. Over the years, with improved efficacy of vaccines combined with owner compliance, we have seen once common diseases of the dog and cat become a rarity.



However, vaccinations are not the only reason to bring your pet into the clinic. It's the physical exam that tells the important story. Although it may not seem to take long, a skilled Veterinarian can learn valuable information about the overall health of your pet during the annual health exam. A head to tail exam is performed, starting with an assessment of the eyes, ears, and mouth. Next, lymph nodes are palpated and the heart and lungs auscultated for rate, rhythm and clarity. The abdomen is felt for any abnormalities and the overall general appearance, including coat condition and body weight, are assessed. To evaluate internal organ health, especially on pets over 7 years of age, a sample of blood can be taken during the exam. This is a very important diagnostic tool because it gives us information on what we can't see.

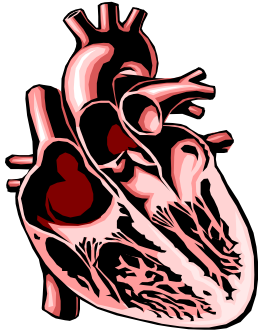
Not all symptoms suddenly appear. Many times they gradually change over time causing them to go unnoticed by the owner. This is why we encourage the yearly exam; to make sure problems are picked up on a timely basis and appropriate treatment started.

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North Oakville Animal Hospital Professional Corporation, 2530 Sixth Line, Oakville, ON
Ph (905) 257-3700 Fax (905) 257-8115 E-mail noah@on.aibn.com

YOUR FAMILY PET WELLNESS CENTRE

HEARTWORM DISEASE



There are two truths when April rolls around: Taxes are due and heartworm season has begun. Just as there are ways to protect your hard-earned money from the government, there are ways to protect your dog from the disease-transmitting mosquito.

A blood test is recommended to any dogs born before the previous September to check for positive heartworm carriers. If your dog's test comes back negative, then the next step is to prevent the disease from occurring this season. Ideally, the blood test should be performed in early spring and prevention should begin by the first of June.

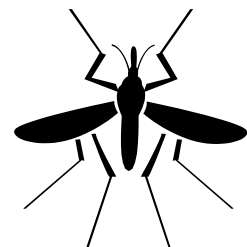
So What Exactly is Heartworm Disease and How is it Spread?

The female mosquito ingests the juvenile stages (microfilaria) of the heartworm as she takes a blood meal from an infected animal. The microfilaria develop further in the mosquito for about 10 to 30 days. After that time, the microfilaria migrate back up to the mouthparts of the mosquito and are transmitted to an unsuspecting dog with the next mosquito bite. The microfilaria continue to develop in the bloodstream of the dog for the next three to four months, reaching adulthood as they make their way to the heart and pulmonary artery. Adult heartworms can grow up to a foot long. They cause disease as they block off major vessels, restricting blood flow to the heart, lung, kidney, and liver.

Heartworm disease is expensive and risky to treat. Prevention of the disease is the best course of action. There are many effective and economical products available. We will be happy to explain the topical and oral medication choices.

Don't Forget About External and Intestinal Parasites

External (fleas, mites, and lice) and intestinal (roundworm, and hookworm) parasite infestations coincide with heartworm season. Protect your pet even further with products that treat for a combination of these diseases.



CONFUSED ABOUT DOG FOOD?

In the past several years, the number of pet foods available has increased dramatically. With a variety of products lining the shelves, consumers are finding it very difficult to choose the right one. Each dog expert seems to have a different opinion about what is best for your pet. To make informed choices, pet owners should consult with their Veterinarians. Together they need to wade through the marketing hype and rely on the science of pet nutrition.

Marketing Techniques

1. Pet food companies know that it is easy to sell high protein, high fat food. Dog food owners have been conditioned to believe high protein levels are necessary for maximum health. In fact, not only do increased protein levels lead to increased consumption by dogs and increased sales for a company, but also lead to a greatly increased risk of obesity.
2. Pet food companies know that consumers read labels and like to see an animal - based protein at the top of the list. Legally, ingredients must be listed in decreasing order of weight. No single ingredient can be emphasized. However, companies can separate the different forms of a single ingredient so that it can be split up and appear further down the list. For example, a dog food may have kibbled wheat, wheat flour, and wheat bran listed in different areas.
3. Pet food companies know that consumers can be convinced to purchase a dog food that states it's a "quality", "natural", "premium", or "super premium" product. However, there are currently no scientific or legal definitions for these statements. In fact, the quality of the ingredients cannot be determined from the ingredient list. The only thing that can be determined from the ingredient list is if the main components of a food are of animal or plant origin.
4. Cost is another marketing tool. Foods advertised as low cost are not necessarily economical or nutritious. Using cheap, poor quality ingredients produces lower cost dog food. Pet food companies that produce cheap foods don't have adequate funding to properly test their product. Dogs must eat larger volumes of cheap, low quality dog food to satisfy their need for calories. In the long run, dog owners end up buying more pet food than if they had been using a better food.

The scope of this topic is far too large for this article. What we would like to encourage is a dialogue between dog owners and their Veterinarian. We are not here to sell food but to maintain the overall health of your pet, of which nutrition plays an important part. Come talk with us regarding any questions or concerns you may have about your dog's diet.



May 30th is our **5th Anniversary!**

We are so proud to have served our animal-loving community for this long. We are looking forward to the next 5 years.

Pet Food Company Update

Walthams, Royal Canin, and Medi-cal Foods are merging to form one company. You can expect to see many changes over the next couple of years. The first such change will occur this June when the Walthams Wellness line, which includes Growth, Adult, Weight Control, and Senior will be discontinued. Don't worry loyal clients; we will have comparable Medi-cal foods available for you to switch to. They include Development, Preventive, Weight Control, Mature, and Dental Formula.

New Logo

Keep your eyes opened for our new logo. It will be proudly displayed on business cards and letterheads. Hopefully, in the future, you will see the entire staff wearing scrub tops adorned with the new design!



AMAZING STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

- ❖ A Brazilian MP has drawn up a new law to ban people from giving their pets "human" names. Under his new law, anyone who gives their animals a human name could be fined and also ordered to carry out community service. The law, which was approved in the first round of voting, still has to be approved by a community commission to finally become active.
- ❖ A German Sheppard has had an operation to remove 28 golf balls from her stomach. The owner couldn't understand why his dog had gone off her food and was losing weight. Apparently she'd been swallowing the balls while being walked near the putting greens at Didsbury Golf Club in Manchester where the owner works. It took 2 ½ hours to get the golf balls, which weighed over 6lbs, out of her stomach.
- ❖ A cat has escaped injury despite clinging to the roof of a car traveling at 60mph for four miles. The owner couldn't understand why other drivers flashed their lights at her as she sped to work in Rhyl, North Wales. When she finally pulled over she was horrified to find her cat Joe on top of her car. A couple of days later the cat was attacked by a dog. Joe suffered three cracked ribs and a punctured lung, but survived.

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