



The Paw Print

Quarterly Newsletter

Leptospirosis Update

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease carried by many animals, including livestock and wildlife, that can cause severe illness in dogs and humans. For many years, leptospirosis has not been a problem in suburban and urban areas because it seemed that the biggest risk to dogs came from exposure to farm animals. For that reason, many veterinarians stopped using the vaccine. With the increased pressure of land development on wildlife habitat, the bacteria seems to have taken up residence in the most common urban and suburban wildlife, including rodents, raccoons, opossums, skunks and deer.

The bacteria is passed in the urine into water sources like puddles, ponds and lakes, and even moist soil where it resides and reproduces. Your dog

becomes infected by drinking, walking through, or swimming in contaminated water, or contact with contaminated moist soil. The bacteria enter through breaks in the skin or through intact mucous membranes like the lining of the mouth, eye or nose. The disease is contagious and can be passed from wildlife to dog, dog to dog, or wildlife or dog to humans. The risk of exposure increases during periods of high rainfall and during the summer and early fall months. Cats, fortunately, seem to have an innate resistance to infection and are not vaccinated.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that up to 200 cases are diagnosed in humans each year. The disease is rarely fatal in humans, but causes severe illness.

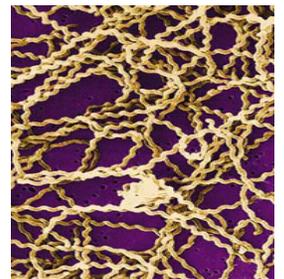
In dogs, the signs of Lepto include; fever, decreased appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, lethargy and jaundice (a yellowing of the skin, gums and whites of the eyes). In the most severe cases, death may be caused by kidney or liver failure.

Unfortunately, Lepto is not easy to diagnose, requiring numerous blood and urine tests that can be frustrating and costly. If diagnosed early, it can usually be effectively treated with aggressive supportive care like intravenous fluids and antibiotics.

Because of the increased risk of exposure of dogs to Lepto, our veterinarians are considering recommending vaccination of your dog on a case by case basis. Vaccines are affordable, convenient and safe, with an

initial two shot series and annual booster vaccination. Lepto can be easily incorporated into your dogs routine vaccination program.

-Dr. Mark Whitley



A microscopic view of the Leptospirosis bacterium

Important Boarding Information:

*For safety and efficacy purposes, we no longer accept toys, beds, blankets, etc. when your pet stays with us. Rest assured, we have plenty of comfy blankets and fun toys for everyone!

*If your pet needs medications administered during their stay, please bring those medications with you. We may not have certain medications in stock, and if we do have them, we have to refill the medication for your pet and charge for the refill. There is also a minimal daily fee for administering medications to your pet.

Meet Dr. Amy Nunemacher!

We are proud to welcome Dr. Amy Nunemacher, who joined us at the beginning of August. Dr. Amy Nunemacher was born and raised in the Greater New Orleans area. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, LA. She also earned her Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine from Louisiana State University. She was a participant in the Parker Coliseum Animal Shelter and Rescue following Hurricane Katrina. While at LSU, she was involved with equine laminitis research, the small animal Critical Care



Club, the Wildlife Rehabilitation Raptor Unit and was president of the Theriogenology Club. Her interests include dermatology, ophthalmology and internal medicine. She is a member of the AVMA and the NCVMA. Following graduation, she and her canine companion "Allie" relocated to Greensboro and joined Cobb Animal Clinic.

Misslon Statement

To provide exceptional pet care in a compassionate, caring, professional environment.

Our Goals:

- Create a positive work environment
- Practice teamwork and lateral service
- React quickly to correct any problem immediately
- Move heaven and earth to satisfy a client



Children and Pets...

Most people are unaware that by the age of 18, 50% of children have been bitten by a dog. Dogs do not necessarily bite to be aggressive, usually there is a misunderstanding between a child and the dog. Here are some myths that, with your understanding, can help protect your children from being harmed by your pet.

Myth 1: Certain breeds, like golden retrievers, are thought of as “children-friendly” pets, but the truth is that any dog may bite at any time, regardless of breed or a flawless history. Therefore, never leave your child alone with your dog, and always monitor them closely.

Myth 2: Some people believe that most dogs will automatically protect a baby or young

child. The reality is that dogs can be afraid of children, due to their high-pitched noises, small bodies, and sporadic movements. Let your dog sniff the baby, and praise your pet for being calm and offer them treats for doing so. When a pet is around toddlers, make sure they do not tug at the ears, or pull on the dog’s fur. Tell the toddler “That makes Charlie cry,” so that they may understand better.

Myth 3: It is a common misconception that dogs are always happy when they are wagging their tails. The actuality is that, sometimes, dogs wag their tail in a sweeping, stiff motion as a warning that they are uncomfortable. If the dog is wagging and wiggling it’s whole body and its tongue is hanging out, odds are that it is in a friendly mood. If the pet seems

stiff and its mouth is closed, it may be best to leave it alone for now. You can also have your child try to call the dog, and if it wants attention, it will come.

Being aware and understanding your pet’s natural habits will help ensure the safest possible interaction for your whole family!



Examination Fees...

A long, healthy life for your pet is our staff’s highest priority. That’s why our doctors have always performed a physical examination of your pet with every vaccine visit. Sometimes, the physical exam uncovers a reason why the vaccination should not be given at the time, or discovers a condition or disease that needs to be addressed. For many years, your invoice presented the fee for the vaccination and read “Physical exam-No charge”. Several years ago, we changed our invoice to display a fee for the physical exam and a fee for the vaccination. Rest assured, we did not increase or add the physical examination fee, we simply assigned part of the existing fee to the physical exam to emphasize the fact that it is performed each time. The cost per visit is the same, we simply wish to underscore the importance of the examination.

-Dr. Mark Whitley



Special Announcements:

Congratulations to Dr. Meekins and her husband, Hayes, on their newest arrival,

Riley Elizabeth!

Riley was born September 5th, weighing 8 pounds 10 ounces and 21 1/2 inches in height.



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