

FALMOUTH VETERINARY HOWLER



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PET SPOTLIGHT THIS MONTH!

Anne & Bruce Myers' two black labs, Marion Leiter's three chocolate labs and Tim Sanders German Shorthair Pointer all had a blast posing for this picture in the Leiter's backyard!



Bentley, Jazzie, Nessie, Moxie, Lottie, Ernie (from left to right)

Keeping Your Pet Safe This Cold & Flu Season

We're knee-deep into cold and flu season now, busting out the tissues and the pills to stop the shivers, sniffles and sneezes in droves.



Great news if you run a cold and flu medication business, but not so great if you're a dog or cat and you've just gobbled up a pill your owner dropped on the floor.

The ASPCA says medications used by humans during cold and flu season present some of the worst dangers to pets.

Just one tablet of extra-strength acetaminophen, for example, could kill your cat. Cats are especially sensitive to acetaminophen (which is often sold as Tylenol), because it can damage red blood cells and interfere with their ability to transport oxygen, the group says.

In dogs, which tend to be bigger than cats, acetaminophen can cause liver damage as well as red blood cell damage at higher doses.

They warn that if you see your cat gasping for breath, or if they develop a swollen face and paws, or discolored gums, they might have accidentally swallowed an acetaminophen pill.

Acetaminophen poisoning in cats requires immediate veterinary care.

Ibuprofen (often sold as Advil) and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like naproxen can cause serious problems even in small doses. Pets are extremely sensitive to their effects, the ASPCA says, and may experience stomach and intestinal ulcers and—in the case of cats—kidney damage.

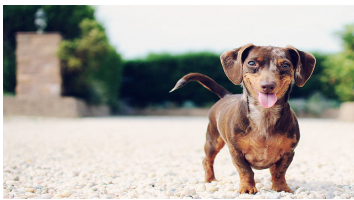


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Partners in Wellness: A Better Way to Keep Your Pet Healthy

Preventative care can help your pet live a happier, healthier life.

Regular visits to your veterinarian are crucial for monitoring your pet's health. These visits help your pet get necessary vaccines, screenings, and treatments, and they also allow veterinarian can identify potential problems before they become serious, and expensive.



FVH has joined with Purina to offer affordable



preventative care to our clients. Partners in Wellness is a new, annual membership plan offered to make caring for your pet easier and affordable! Payments are spread out over 12 months to avoid the spending peaks from clinic visits.

It should be noted that this is a wellness program, not insurance. In other words, accidental injuries and illness are not included but can be added by purchasing a separate pet insurance policy.

Enrolling your pet is easy! Start by reviewing our Partners in Wellness plans on our website: www.falmouthvet.com

Winter Heartworm Prevention

Cold Weather Does Not Protect Pets from Parasites

Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal condition in dogs and cats and is transmitted by mosquitoes.

Because we tend to notice mosquitoes during warmer months, we associate heartworm disease as a summertime threat.

Pet owners, take notice: Heartworm disease can affect our pets at any time, even during winter months, which is why it is important to continue preventive treatment year-round.

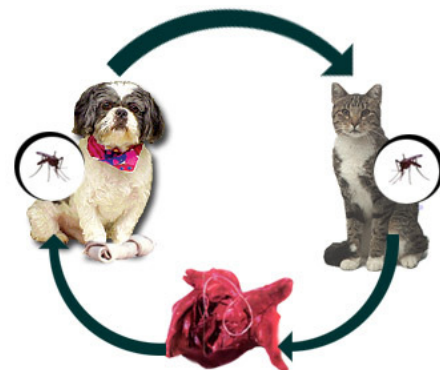
Testing for Heartworms

Veterinarians recommend an annual blood test that detects the presence of heartworms so that your pet can be treated before showing clinical signs of the disease.

Preventing Heartworm Disease

Fortunately, a monthly pill or topical solution, prescribed by your veterinarian, can be given to dogs and cats to prevent heartworm disease. FVH recommends Interceptor, Sentinel, and Revolution for heartworm/parasite prevention.

Mosquitoes can live in your house for an extended period of time, and you can never be sure exactly when mosquitoes die off in the cold and come back in the spring. If your dog or cat is bitten by a mosquito during spring or summer months, the heartworms will continue to grow well into winter months, hence the need to continue preventive treatment.



Stay one step ahead of this potential threat: Protect your pets from heartworm disease by limiting exposure and providing preventive treatment year-round, even during these chilly winter months.

FACT OR FICTION?

Ever wonder why cats purr or dogs wag their tails?

There are various theories floating around to explain why our four-legged friends do what they do; some are true and some are false.



Below VPI Pet Insurance takes a look at some common animal behaviors and attempts to debunk the myths.

Cats Purr Because They're Happy

Purring, for the most part, has been known to signal that a cat is happy. Although purring by domestic cats is usually a sign of contentment, purring, in general is a way for cats to communicate. Used as a self-calming technique, cats have been known to purr when they're injured, nursing or even dying.

Cats Rub Against People as a Sign of Friendliness

While getting a friendly rub by a cat may be a sign of affection, it also serves another important feline function: scent-marking. Cats have scent glands in many parts of their bodies, and use them to 'mark their territory' by leaving their scent on objects they come in contact with.

Scent-marking is an important cat habit. By leaving their scent on everything they touch, they become familiar with the smells around them, thus helping them to establish or claim a particular person or object as 'their own'.

Dogs and Cats Eat Grass Because They Have an Upset Stomach

Dogs and cats eat grass for a number of reasons; it doesn't necessarily mean they're

not feeling well. While some people believe dogs and cats eat grass as a digestive aid, they tend to eat grass (and other plants) because they like the taste.

If you find your kitty likes chewing on houseplants, you might consider providing her alternative things to nibble on, such as a small pot of grass or other young plants (avoid toxic plants that can threaten your cat's health).

Dogs Wag Their Tails When Happy

A wagging tail is normally associated with a happy dog, and has even been compared to a human smile. However, a wagging tail can indicate a number of emotions ranging from friendliness and excitement to agitation and aggression.



An important communication tool, a dog's tail needs to be read along with the dog's body language to determine exactly what the dog is 'saying'. Is the dog growling while wagging his tail? Are his teeth showing? Or is he is relaxed and perky? Evaluating a dog's overall body language can help you decipher the emotion behind the wag.

Mixed-Breed Dogs Are Healthier Than Purebreds

This is not necessarily true; while mixed-breed dogs are not susceptible to many of the genetic diseases common in purebred lines, there is no guarantee of genetic health or temperament in either type of dog. Both purebreds and mixed-breeds alike are vulnerable to rabies, distemper, parasite infestation among other non-genetic ailments.

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ACHOO! from page 1

Pseudoephedrine, a popular decongestant used in many cold and sinus products, acts like a stimulant if accidentally ingested by pets. In cats and dogs, it will cause a racing heart, increased blood pressure as well as increased body temperature. It can even lead to seizures.

Vitamin D supplements are great in the winter for humans, but in pets, calcitriol or calcipotriene capsules can cause life-threatening spikes in calcium levels in pets. The signs of such poisonings include vomiting, loss of appetite, increased urination and thirst due to kidney failure. These

symptoms usually take more than 24 hours to kick in.

These are just some of the cold and flu meds that can pose a danger to pets; there are plenty of other kinds of medications that are just as dangerous.

In 2007, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center received 89,000 calls related to pets ingesting over-the-counter and prescription medications.

The ASPCA says if you catch your pet gobbling up medication, you should call your veterinarian right away, even if the pet seems fine, since a poisoned animal might appear fine for several hours or even a day or two after the incident.

FACT OR FICTION from page 3**Dogs Age Seven Years for Every Human Year**

It was once believed that for every human year a dog aged, you simply multiplied by seven to calculate your dog's age.



Contrary to popular belief, there is no exact formula; aging for dogs is individual to the specific dog and breed.

However, as a rough approximation, a one-year-old dog is estimated to be between 10-16 years, a two-year-old dog adds another three to eight years, and each year afterwards equals approximately four or five human years.

Should you ever have a question on your four-legged friends' health or behavior problems, give us a call!

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"We will treat your pets with the same care and concern as we would our own."