

Spring 2009



14993 Kutztown Road
Kutztown, PA 19530
610-683-7988
smvc@enter.net

www.silvermaplevet.com

Ticks are Carrying a New Disease: Anaplasmosis

Anaplasmosis is a bacterial agent caused by either one of two organisms. Anaplasma phagocytophilum or Anaplasma platys. This bacteria is carried by BOTH the brown dog tick, Rhipicephalus and the American dog tick, Dermacentor. Anaplasmosis was first reported in 1996 in Minnesota and Wisconsin. It is now endemic in the upper Midwest, the East and Northeastern United States.

Clinical signs of Anaplasmosis are similar to Lyme disease: joint pain and lameness. In fact, it may be difficult to differentiate this disease from Lyme. Other symptoms may include vomiting, diarrhea, meningitis and respiratory signs. Unlike Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis can cause Thrombocytopenia or low platelet counts. Platelets are cells in the blood stream that are responsible for clotting. Approximately 80% of dogs diagnosed

have low platelet counts. We are now testing for this disease when we do a Lyme/Heartworm test annually. In the past month, we have seen five positive animals.

Please call us if your animal was tested prior to February 2009 and was found negative for Lyme disease but you still suspect it. In addition, this is a Zoonotic disease humans get and we contract the same symptoms as dogs.

We suspect this is the beginning of another potentially crippling disease; at this time, there is no vaccine.



American Dog Tick



Brown Dog Tick

Calendar of Events

- May 21st, 6:30pm
First Aid Seminar
- July is Arthritis Awareness Month
- September 18/19/20
Pennsylvania Renewable Energy and Sustainable Living Festival

First Aid Seminar, May 21st at 6:30pm

With the most recent rat poison case, as described above, and the other hazards at this time of year, we thought it prudent to offer a FREE First Aid Seminar. Knowing immediate options that can ease any suffering our pets might experience at the time of an

emergency is certainly worthwhile. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, Dr. Lopez, Missy George and Deanna "the Great Dane" George, will be talking about and demonstrating first aid techniques. We will be supplying pertinent handouts and there will be a

Question and Answer opportunity after the seminar. We do ask that you RSVP by May 14th.



Thyroid Disease in Cats - Hyperthyroidism

Hyperthyroidism occurs when the thyroid gland enlarges and starts producing excess amounts of thyroid hormone. This is usually caused by a benign tumor on one or both of the thyroid gland's lobes. Although thyroid tumors can be cancerous, the chances are only 2% to 5% of malignancy. Some of the symptoms of this disease are: increased appetite, unexplained weight loss and loss of muscle mass, irritability or nervousness, frequent vomiting, unkempt looking coat, diarrhea, excessive thirst, weakness and lethargy. Not all of these will be seen, but, if one

or two are seen, your cat should be seen as well. If the physical exam and blood work show that your cat is hyperthyroid, there are two primary treatments, all of which offer a strong possibility of returning the thyroid gland to normal function. Typically, the first mode of treatment is the medication, Methimazole, which controls the production of thyroid hormones. This medication is given once or twice a day, every day, for life and requires regular tests to monitor hormone levels, so dosage can be regulated. This medication can also be administered

in a cream form which is applied transdermally to the ear tissue. Another option is radioiodine treatment. The radioiodine treatment consists of extended hospitalization after a single injection of radioactive iodine is given. This treatment modality provides a permanent cure in 95% of the cases with no serious side effects. Although hyperthyroidism is a very serious disease in cats, it does have several very effective treatments. As with any medical condition, early detection can increase the chances of successful treatment.



Geriatric cats (those over 7 years of age) can have periodic blood testing to screen for hyperthyroidism as well as other health problems. With proper treatment, most cats with hyperthyroidism can live a normal, high quality life. So if your older kitty seems to be eating well but losing weight, has a poor coat and acts somewhat restless... be alert for **Feline Hyperthyroidism**.

July is Arthritis Awareness Month

Arthritis doesn't discriminate. It affects not only people of all ages - including children -- but also strikes our furry friends, too. If you're a dog-owner, you make sure your buddy takes his heartworm medicine, eats well, looks bright-eyed and playful, and greets you as only a dog can when you come home. You notice changes in mood and activity, so if your pet isn't feeling his best you may suspect a cold or stomach virus - but it could be arthritis. In fact, arthritis affects one in every five adult dogs in the U.S. and is one of the most common sources of chronic pain that we treat.

Signs that your dog may have arthritis:

- Favoring a limb
- Difficulty sitting or standing
- Sleeping more
- Seeming to have stiff or sore joints
- Hesitancy to jump, run or climb stairs

- Weight gain
- Decreased activity or less interest in play
- Attitude or behavior changes
- Being less alert

If your dog seems to have any of these symptoms for more than two weeks give us a call to set up an appointment for an arthritis evaluation, which will involve a physical exam and possibly X-rays. The best thing to do for your dog in managing his arthritis is to get a diagnosis and start a treatment plan as soon as possible. Treating canine arthritis is similar to that of human osteoarthritis.

Therapies may include:

- Healthy diet and exercise to help maintain proper weight.
- Working with us to find a drug treatment that helps relieve the pain.
- Over-the-counter pet treat-

ments, such as pills or food containing either glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate or Omega fatty acids. Both have shown to help relieve the symptoms of arthritis in dogs.

- A veterinarian-prescribed NSAID and an over-the-counter treatment that together may help decrease pain and disease progression.

Never give your dog human medication without checking with us first. Certain medications can be toxic to dogs - particularly acetaminophen and ibuprofen - and a safe dose will differ between a greyhound and a dachshund.

No matter how you decide to treat your dog's arthritis, make sure you work with a veterinarian to ensure that you select a program that helps your best buddy.



Signs that your dog may have arthritis:

- * Favoring a limb
- * Difficulty sitting or standing
- * Sleeping more
- * Seeming to have stiff or sore joints
- * Hesitancy to jump, run or climb stairs
- * Weight gain
- * Decreased activity or less interest in play
- * Attitude or behavior changes
- * Being less alert