



Mountainview Animal Hospital Holiday Newsletter



OHIP FOR ANIMALS

Although we are very fortunate in this country to have OHIP, it has made us extremely unaware of the actual cost of medicine, and has sometimes left us completely unprepared for the financial needs of our pets. Most people consider their pets to be a very important member of their families and yet many owners have put very little thought as to what might happen should Fido or Fluffy need emergency veterinary care. Unfortunately, most pets within their lifetime will have an accident or illness that will require extensive veterinary care, with the cost of that care exceeding a thousand dollars. The last thing you want to worry about when your pet is ill is money. Yet sadly, the most common cause of death in companion animals is financial euthanasia. A term referring to a situation where pet owners must make decision regarding their pet's well being based solely on their financial situation. Will you have the necessary funds available in the event you are faced with an expensive veterinary bill?

Pet insurance gives pet owners peace of mind; it gives them the reassurance that if their pet needs emergency care due to an accident or illness that they will be able to afford the cost of treatment. Pet insurance can also speed the road to recovery. The financial limitation of pet owners often limits the number and types of tests and treatments your veterinarian can perform, slowing the diagnostic process. Without the financial restraints your veterinarian can feel free to perform the necessary medical and/or surgical procedures to achieve a quick and accurate

diagnosis of your pet's illness and initiate the appropriate course of treatment. Finally, pet owners whose pets are insured tend to seek veterinary care earlier, at the onset of the illness, rather than waiting with the hope that the problem will resolve on its own. This increases the chance of a more complete recovery.



Generally, most pet insurance companies have arranged their coverage into packages or plans that vary mainly in

the amount of benefit they will pay for each illness or illness category. Accident insurance and the preventative medicine packages are the exception; they also vary in the types of veterinary care they will cover. Accident insurance will only provide coverage for accidents such as being a hit by car, bone fractures or poisoning, but not if your pet becomes ill with diarrhea. The preventative medicine plan on the other hand is more comprehensive, not only providing coverage for accidents but for illness and preventative health care like vaccines and fecal examinations as well. Remember, pet insurance will only be available to you if your pet is registered prior to an accident or illness; most pet owners regret not having insurance after their pet has been diagnosed with an illness. Keep in mind that there is often a waiting period after applying for insurance; this may vary from 48 hours to 4 weeks depending on the plan.



Most pet insurance companies offer a variety of monthly premiums ranging from as little as \$10.00 per month to as much as \$80.00 per month. Of course, the more comprehensive the coverage and the higher the limits of coverage, the higher the monthly premium. Your premium may also be influenced by the geographical area in which you live (Toronto having higher premiums) and the breed of pet; certain breeds are more likely to have major medical problems. Since pet insurance is designed to share the risk of pet ownership with you and not remove it, most plans also have deductibles and co-insurance. These costs will likely vary depending on the age of your pet and the number of claims that are being made.

We commonly purchase extended warranties when we buy washing machines, stereos and DVDs to protect ourselves from the unexpected. Consider the life of your pet. If they are worth more to you than the above, then doesn't it make sense to at least consider protecting them from the unexpected and giving yourselves the peace of mind of knowing that you will be able to afford for your pet the best possible veterinary care?



Walk-A-Thon

On Sunday October 6th, our Mountainview Animal Hospital team participated for the third year in a row in Georgetown's annual dog walk-a-thon for the Guide Dogs. While the hospital's staff walked the course to collect money for this worthy cause, Dr. Ewing remained at the first aid station for dogs. Fortunately, again this year there were no casualties for the day. Despite our grand efforts to be the winning team for most pledges collected, we came in second place again this year; not bad for a small group. For those of you who pledged us, thank you. We will try again next year.



Greyhound Rescue

Greyhound rescue is a registered Canadian Charity that saves and adopts retired racing greyhounds that would otherwise be destroyed. They provide shelter, medical care, and love to ensure these dogs get a second chance at life. Many of the dogs rescued from the race tracks are malnourished, injured and poorly socialized. People like Silvana and Alex Bezina nurse these gentle creatures back to health, vaccinate and spay or neuter them before finding them loving homes. They receive no government funding or tax dollars; rather, they rely on volunteers and donations to cover their many expenses. If you are interested in adopting a greyhound, or otherwise helping these amazing animals by donating money, food, dog beds or toys please contact Silvana or Alex at 905-873-2943. All donations are tax deductible.

Life According to Nike

They say dogs have masters and cats have servants, well that is certainly true for our Nike. Not only is she the first to be fed in the in the morning (and God forbid your are running a bit behind with her feeding) but she is allowed free access to everywhere except the surgery room, she sleeps on our coats if we neglect to hang them, she naps on the computer monitor, obscuring our view of the screen with her tail and now she even has a pillow for her head. Ann, our new receptionist has been so concerned that Nike's head may not be comfortable when she sleeps on the computer monitor that she has placed an old knitted blanket on the counter for Nike to rest her head on. Of course, I have been attempting for the past 2 years to



discourage Nike from sleeping there since having hands full of cat hair inside a computer is unlikely to be good for its function. I half expect the monitor to vomit up a fur ball one of these days and to my knowledge we have yet to invent a fur ball remedy for computers. Just when I had decided that enough was enough and went to remove the ugly little blanket, didn't I find Nike comfortably resting her head on it, purring away and looking at me with those big green eyes of hers. Needless to say, I melted and Nike kept her head rest. I now even find myself looking for a little pillow for Nike that will at least match the décor of the hospital. How much of a servant am I?

Holiday Hours



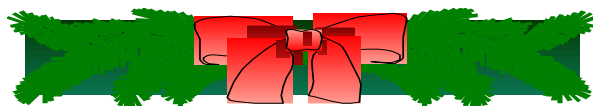
December 24 th - Christmas Eve:	9am - 12 noon
December 25 th - Christmas Day:	Closed
December 26 th - Boxing Day:	Closed
December 31 st - New Years Eve:	9am - 12 noon
Jan 1 st - New Years Day:	Closed

Unless otherwise specified above Mountainview Animal Hospital will be open its regular office hours. Animals

in the hospital over the holidays will receive the same great care and attention as always. For those patients requiring emergency care Christmas and New Years, The Emergency Veterinary Clinic on Hw 10 will be open to serve your pet's emergency needs. You can call ahead at 905-495-9907 or go directly there. The Emergency Veterinary Clinic is located on the south east corner of highway 10 and Wexford Rd, just one block north of Bovaird (Highway 7).

From all of us at Mountainview Animal Hospital,
we wish all of you a

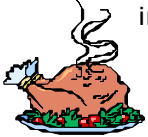
**A Very Merry Christmas, A Joyous Holiday
Season and Happy New Year!**





Beware of Holiday Hazards to Your Pets

Bones and fat can cause severe gastrointestinal upset. The small bones from turkey or chicken can become lodged in your pet's throat, stomach or intestines. Greasy poultry skin, gravies and sauces may cause vomiting and diarrhea. Watch the hot cooking oil too; it can cause nasty burns when accidentally spilt on pets that are underfoot in the kitchen.



Holiday plants can be a hazard also. Holly and mistletoe are extremely poisonous when eaten. The poinsettia although not toxic can certainly cause gastric distress. It is best to keep these plants out of reach.



Electrical cords are a favorite chew toy for playful puppies and cats but cause quite a shock when bitten. Keep them out of reach or cover them with flexible plastic tubing.

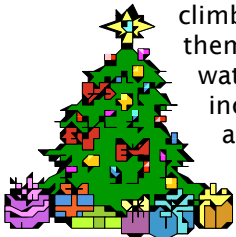
Christmas ornaments are lovely to look at but often not safe to play with. Special caution is required with sharp or breakable ornament and string objects like tinsel.



Candles should never be left unattended; curious pets may burn themselves or even start a fire by knocking the candle over.



Christmas trees should be well secured to the wall so climbing cats and jumping dogs can't knock them down. Preservatives added to the water in a tree stand can be toxic, including the home made kind like aspirin and sugar. Some pine needles can be quite sharp and puncture your pets' intestines if ingested.



Stress and Company not only affects our daily routine but that of our pets' also. Ask your guests to

be respectful if your pets retreat to a quiet place in the house. With everyone coming and going, watch out for open doors and sneaky pets; make sure they are wearing collars and tags just in case they get loose. Also be mindful of children around pets that are unaccustomed to them. Older pets are particularly sensitive to the fast and unpredictable movements of curious and sometimes over-affectionate kids. Fear can cause even the most gentle pet to bite.



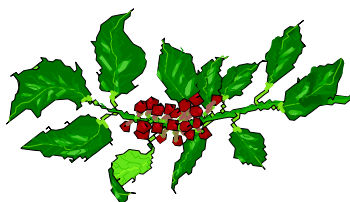
Chocolate is a favorite treat at this time of the year but it is very toxic to our furry friends, so keep them well out of reach.



Antifreeze and windshield washer fluid are extremely toxic, as little as a teaspoon will kill a cat. Keep the bottles well sealed and out of reach and use a funnel when pouring it into the car to avoid spillage. Also keep in mind that freezing felines may climb up under the car engine to keep warm, so it is a good idea to knock on the hood of the car before starting the engine.

Swimming pools can still be a drowning hazard in the winter, many pets have become tangled in pool covers, fallen through the ice or drowned in the water above the liner that accumulates after the spring thaw. If your pool is not fenced off, then your pets should be well supervised when they go outside.

Snow and ice although enjoyed by younger more active pets and people often become more worrisome to the elderly, including the hairier members of our families. Older legs and arthritic joints have difficulty walking through the deeper snow and slip easily on the ice. Shoveling a path for our older friends in the yard will make it easier for them to enjoy some fresh air and do their business. It is also better for their bare paws to sprinkle sand rather than salt on the ice.





Holiday Gift Ideas For The Pet Who Has Everything!



Collars – A good quality collar is one of the most important items your pet can have. Most pets wear their collars continuously so a safe, comfortable and durable collar is a good investment. Some of the newer nylon collars are made to fit loosely but tighten as the dog pulls so that they cannot slip out of it.



For cats the break away collars are best so that they cannot choke if they get caught on a branch or fence outside. Of course, looks are important too; even our cats and dogs like to be stylish! Most pet stores carry a large variety of collars and leashes to match.

Pet identification – Even more important than the collar your pet wears, is the identification on that collar. Every year thousands of pets are lost or stolen and more than 70% of those never come home. Personalized identification tags permit people finding your stay or lost pet to return them safely home where they belong. Today pet tags are available in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors. **Better yet, consider having your pet microchipped.**

Dog and cat treats – Special treats are always a favorite over the holidays. But, just because we tend to overdo the high fat and sugar foods, that does not mean our pets need to. Healthy cat and dog treats are available at your veterinary hospital. We recommend the MEDI-TREATS by Veterinary Medical Diets. The dog treats are all natural and are made from fruits and vegetables. The cat treats even have the added benefit of fur ball prevention and dental tartar control. These tasty low calorie snacks are even safe for those pets on special diets for health problems.



Cat tree – A good cat tree not only gives indoor cats the opportunity to practice their climbing instincts safely, but the carpeted surface makes a great scratch post. Make sure it is well secured; a falling tree is never a good thing, even in the house.

Winter coat – Not all of our furry friends are that furry. For those that are less fortunate in the fur department, the pet stores carry a wide selection of coats and sweaters. Even hats, raincoats and boots are available.

Toys – A new toy is always a great hit with our pets. When purchasing a new toy consider its safety as well as its attractiveness to your pet. Many toys have buttons, bells and other small parts that if chewed and swallowed or inhaled can be very dangerous. It is also important to purchase the appropriate size and durability for the breed of pet; small toys for large dogs can also be a choking hazard. We recommend toys and chews made by the Kong Company. Made of hard rubber, these toys are difficult for most animals to destroy. The newer Blue Kong available only through veterinarians are harder and more durable than the other colors and are specially made to be more easily detectable on x-ray, just in case. We have a variety of sizes to choose from for your pet.

Pet beds and dens – What about a new soft and cozy pet bed. Some of the newer beds have zippered covers that can be easily washed. For the dogs that spend a lot of time outside, a doggy den is a nice haven from the cold, rain and snow.



Pet insurance – Truly the gift for the pet who has everything. Pet insurance can give you the peace of mind that should your pet become ill, you will be able to provide the best quality veterinary care available.

Brushes and combs – Although not necessarily enjoyed by all of our pets, a good grooming helps to keep their skin and coat healthy. Regular brushing will also reduce the loose hair on your carpets. Better yet why not give your pet a 'day at the spa' and bring him or her in for a professional groom. Our groomer will also clean your pet's ears and trim those overgrown nails.



Quality time – This gift is by far the best of all. Spending quality time with your pet over the holidays is an inexpensive, low stress gift that can be enjoyed by both you and your pet. It comes in a variety of forms; we recommend a snuggle on the couch, a walk in the park, a game of chase or fetch. One caution, although good for the both of you, these activities may become addictive.

