



Mountainview Animal Hospital

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The bottom Line

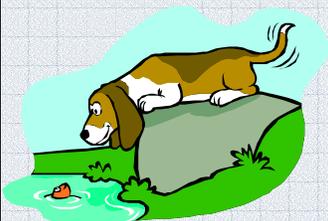
Leptospirosis is a serious and potentially fatal disease affecting the liver and kidneys of infected dogs.

Leptospirosis is a Zoonotic disease; meaning people can become infected too.

Dogs most likely become infected by drinking water contaminated by the urine of other infected animals.

Lakes, ponds, puddles and marshy areas may be a source of infection for your dog.

Vaccinating your dog in the spring will protect your dog from this serious disease.



IS YOUR DOG AT RISK?

In a time when most health care professionals are trying to be more selective about the use of drugs and vaccines, it seems there are more choices than ever. With all these choices how do we select which vaccines to use? Well, we should look at the prevalence of the particular disease in the area, the seriousness of the disease should a pet become exposed, the effectiveness of the vaccine and finally the risks of the vaccine itself. Leptospirosis is a good example of a disease for which selective vaccination is appropriate. Every dog owner should seriously assess their dog's risk of exposure to this potentially fatal disease.

Leptospirosis is a serious and sometimes fatal disease that can afflict dogs of all ages. Dogs most commonly become infected by drinking from rivers, streams, puddles or ponds that have become contaminated by the urine of other infected animals (raccoons, rats and skunks). Since the disease causing agent prefers warm damp weather our dogs are really only at risk during the summer and fall months. Although there have been few, if any cases originating in the Georgetown area, this can quickly change. Until the fall of 2003 Etobicoke was also relatively free of the disease; a sudden increase in the number of dogs falling victim to Leptospirosis has prompted the veterinarians there to more strongly recommend this vaccine to their clients. The sharp increase in the prevalence of the disease in Ontario may be associated with the growing urban wildlife population and warmer fall temperatures. Leptospirosis is a serious disease and tends to attack the liver and kidneys causing a variety of symptoms including fever, nausea, lethargy,

abdominal pain and increased urination. Many dog's afflicted with Leptospirosis will die from it. Since the symptoms are similar to those of many other illnesses and there is no specific test available for this disease diagnosis can be difficult. Treatment involves early detection, hospitalization, fluid therapy and antibiotics.

Because this disease is so serious, we should feel motivated to vaccinate our dogs against Leptospirosis. However, the vaccine is not perfect. There is some question as to how long the vaccine will protect your pet, so it is important to vaccinate dogs in the spring in order to create immunity for the summer and fall months. This vaccine may also have a slightly higher reaction rate than other vaccines, meaning that some dogs may become ill from the vaccine. Typically the reactions are mild facial swelling and skin hives and are easily treated, but rarely the reaction can be more severe.



Clearly, it is important to carefully examine your dog's life style and assess his / her risk of exposure. If your dog has access to wildlife, roams free, or drinks from water sources that may have become contaminated then the potential for contracting this disease is real. Provided your dog has not had trouble with drug reactions in the past, he / she should be vaccinated against Leptospirosis this spring.

If you have any questions about this disease and how it may affect your dog and would like to schedule an appointment for the vaccination call us at 905-702-8822.

The bottom Line

Fleas are tiny (1-2 mm long) biting, wingless insects with powerful hind legs for jumping on your pet.

Fleas are like tiny vampires; they bite and feed off your pet's blood.

Left untreated, just 10 adult fleas can multiply to over 250,000 fleas in only 30 days!



Nike has learned an important lesson, if you are sneaky enough, you can always put a positive spin on a bad situation.

Hot spots are local areas of skin infection.

Hot spots are a common problem among thick coated dogs that swim.

Keeping your dog well groomed may help to reduce the frequency of hot spots.



IT IS FLEA AND HEARTWORM SEASON AGAIN.



We know how important your pets are to you and how you want to make sure you do what is best for them. By testing your dogs regularly and starting them on their monthly heartworm prevention, you can feel confident that they are protected

against this potentially fatal disease.

Cats too need extra protection in the summer months. Those pesky fleas can cause as much irritation to cats as they do to dogs. Those of you who have had fleas in the past know how difficult it is to get rid of them; prevention of flea infestations is much easier, cost effective and safe.

LIFE ACCORDING TO NIKE

As most of you know, our Nike thinks that the world revolves around her (and her world around food); well lately she has had a rude awakening. Around nine weeks ago Nike had her thunder stolen by three little kittens whose mother refused to nurse them. When they arrived at our door step they were only 12 hours old and nearly dead. The first 48 hours were critical but they managed to survive. For the next seven weeks we bottle fed them, kept them warm, cleaned them and mothered them. Nike, of course, was totally put out; how dare we direct this much attention to anyone but her! It

wasn't until we started to wean the kittens from milk to canned food that Nike found her angle. If she was very quiet and very subtle she could sneak onto the counter and eat their food when we weren't looking. The kittens are gone now to their new home, we were sad to see them go, Nike was elated. Nike has learned an important lesson though, if you are sneaky enough, you can always put a positive spin on a bad situation.



HOT SPOTS

Although most of us spend all winter wishing for an early summer, the warmer weather comes with a price. Not only do we see fleas and heartworm but skin and ear infections are also more common in the summer. Certainly the dogs that like to go for a swim are at greatest risk for 'hot spots' and ear infections. Hot spot is a laymen's term for a focal area of moist dermatitis (skin infection). A hot spot often starts innocently enough with a mosquito bite, scratch, or wet skin but can develop into a deep, red, pusy wound that is very itchy and painful. Most dog owners are alerted to the problem because the dogs are scratching or chewing at their skin. Treating a hot spot often requires shaving the fur away from the infected area to allow air to dry the skin, antibiotics and sometimes anti-inflammatories. Because these wounds

are so painful some dogs require sedation to shave the area.

Preventing a hot spot is not always possible, however there are some steps dog owners can take to reduce the likelihood of one developing. Keeping your dog out of the water certainly helps but is not always possible; for many dogs going for a swim at the cottage is the best part of the weekend. If your dog does get wet make sure to rinse with clean water at the end of the day and dry the coat. Keep the coat well groomed; a thick undercoat and mats are a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. Try to keep your dog indoors early in the morning and in the evening when the mosquitoes are most active. Have any moist red areas examined by a veterinarian as soon as possible; it is easier to treat a small infection than a large, deep one.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!