

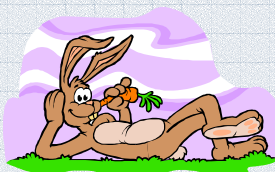
Mountainview Animal Hospital

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The bottom line

It is a myth that once a young animal is handled its parents will reject it, but over handling should be avoided.

Young rabbits are independent at 4 weeks of age, when they are approximately only 4 inches long.



Nesting boxes should be small, have drainage and high sides to avoid the young bird from falling out again. Line the nesting box with tissue or paper towel. Avoid fabric with loose threads or green grass (it contains too much moisture). Small plastic strawberry cartons make the best nesting boxes. Wood or cardboard boxes hold water and dampness.



TIPS FOR YOUNG WILDLIFE CARE

Every spring we receive and care for young wildlife brought in to us by well intentioned neighbours who believe the animal to be orphaned. Unfortunately many of these animals need not have been rescued and would have had a greater chance of survival if left where they were found. The natural instinct of young animals to freeze when discovered often make it difficult to distinguish an injured or sick animal from one just waiting for mommy to come back from gathering food. We hope that the following information, recreated from Wildcare, will help you to decide how to handle a found bird, rabbit or squirrel.

1. Leave the animal alone if:
 - ☺ the parent is nearby. An immature animal's best chance for survival is with its parents. It is not unusual for some species to leave their young for several hours while foraging for food. Watch from a hiding place some distance away so the infant and parent are not frightened. Keep children and other animals from disturbing the area.
 - ☺ the animal is bright-eyed, appears healthy and is in no apparent danger. Observe for a period of time to determine if the animal really needs to be rescued.
2. Rescue if:
 - ☹ the parent is known to be dead and the baby is too young to care for itself. Keep in mind that baby rabbits are independent at 4 weeks of age or about 4 inches in size.
 - ☹ the animal is weak, thin and cold or in any way appears to be sick or injured.
 - ☹ there are flies or insects on or around the animal; this can be a sign of injury.
 - ☹ the animal is in obvious danger, including problems with other animals.
3. If you decide that the animal needs to be rescued:
 - ☺ use gloves or a towel to pick the animal up, being careful not to get bit. Remember some mammals can carry Rabies.
 - ☺ handle the animal as little as possible, many orphaned or injured wildlife will die simply from stress or fear.
 - ☺ place the animal in a secure and safe box with air holes.
 - ☺ if you cannot take the animal to a veterinary hospital or a rescue center immediately, place a hot water bottle wrapped in a cloth in the box for warmth and place the box in a dark, warm and quiet place.
 - ☺ do not feed or offer water to the animal unless instructed to do so by a qualified person.
 - ☺ never transport wild birds in a bird cage. They may damage their feathers on the bars while attempting to escape.

Birds: An immature bird's best chance for survival is with its parents. A chick fallen out of its nest should be placed back in quickly and quietly. If the nest cannot be located, a young bird that is warm, active and chirping will be found by the parents and they will continue to care for it. A weak and cold bird should be warmed and placed in a nesting box lined with tissue paper, and placed back where it was found for the parents to find it. If it is near dark, keep the bird warm and dry overnight and place it back out again at dawn.

Rabbits: Often rabbits will build their nests in tall grass or under shrubs that become disturbed by other animals, children or lawn mowers. Stress can be fatal to rabbits, so handle them as little as possible. Unless the young rabbit appears to be injured, it should be left in its hiding place or put back in the nest, if it can be located. The mother rabbit will return at night to feed her young.

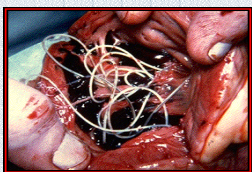
Better yet, call our office or contact Earth Rangers at 1-905-417-3447 ext. 1 or visit their website www.earthrangers.ca for advice before handling any wild animals.

The bottom Line

Caution! Some flea products marketed in the pet stores to dogs are extremely toxic to cats. Always read the labels carefully; better yet ask us about choosing the safest products for your pets.

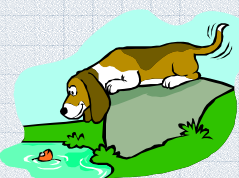


An infected dog can have over 200 heartworms in the heart and adjoining blood vessels.



The sharp increase in the prevalence of Leptospirosis in recent years may be associated with the growing urban wildlife population and warmer fall temperatures.

Although the newer Leptospirosis vaccine are considered safe, some dogs do have reactions to this vaccine. If your dog has had any type of reaction to medication in the past, please inform us prior to having him or her vaccinated against Leptospirosis.



LIFE ACCORDING TO NIKE

Ever wonder what your pets do when you are away? In Nike's case, we all assumed it was more of the same – SLEEP. But apparently our calm, quiet and subdued Nike has a whole other personality after dark. While remaining late one night to attend a staff meeting, we had the opportunity to observe a rather shocking transformation that one could only liken to Jeckel and Hike. At the end of the day, Nike usually heads to my office, climbs into her cat bed and curls up for the night. Apparently she doesn't remain in her cat bed for long. Approximately 30 minutes into the staff meeting Nike suddenly started running around the treatment room, jumping on top of the kennels, climbing over the laboratory equipment and chasing some imaginary object in the air. At one point she even stared us down and howled at us as if to say 'get out, you are in my way'. Needless to say, I lost complete control of the meeting; it is hard to compete with a one cat circus act when you are reiterating the same old hospital policies over and over again. Maybe next time I should throw in a few tricks of my own.



IT IS FLEA AND HEARTWORM SEASON AGAIN.

Because we know how important your pets are to you, we are reminding you that flea and heartworm season is once again fast approaching and your pets will need protection against these terrible parasites.

Both cats and dogs are at risk of becoming infested with fleas during our warm summer months. Fleas are extremely irritating to your pet. Flea bites can cause itchy skin rashes and even serious allergic reactions. Left untreated, just 10 adult fleas can multiply to over 250,000 fleas in only 30 days!



Your pet can come into contact with fleas on walks, at the park, or even in your backyard; though most pets get fleas by having contact with other animals that are infested with fleas.



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.

Our dogs have an additional risk during the summer: the common mosquito can spread the deadly heartworm to your dog. The heartworm is a long slender worm that lives in your dog's heart and lungs causing permanent and potentially fatal damage.

Fortunately, prevention is so easy. Simply give your dog the preventative medication once a month from June through November. There are various types of heartworm medication available; some will also include prevention for intestinal worms and/or fleas. Blood testing your dog prior to starting the medication is an important part of prevention and is strongly recommended. Early detection of a heartworm infection before your dog gets sick will not only increase the success of the treatment and ensure a complete recovery, but will also help reduce the spread of the disease.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office for guidance in choosing the safest and most effective flea and heartworm protection for your pet.

DOES YOUR DOG NEED A LEPTOSPIROSIS VACCINE THIS SPRING?

Leptospirosis is a serious and often fatal bacterial disease that can afflict dogs, and occasionally humans. This disease tends to attack the liver and the kidneys causing a variety of symptoms including fever, nausea, lethargy, abdominal pain and increased urination. Currently diagnosis can be difficult. Treating a dog sick with Leptospirosis involves early detection, hospitalization and aggressive fluid and antibiotic therapy.

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).

Fortunately, there are now new vaccines available. If your dog has not been vaccinated for Leptospirosis in the past six months and he or she goes camping, cottaging or for runs in areas where there may be standing bodies of water to drink from, please call us to schedule an appointment to discuss the necessity of this vaccine.