

Mountainview Animal Hospital

SPRING NEWSLETTER

The bottom Line

Most people over the age of 30 understand what a wellness test is. Each time we have our annual physical, the doctor tests our blood for various ailments, as well as our cholesterol levels.

Before we have surgery our doctors run a battery of laboratory tests including blood work, an ECG and chest X-rays to confirm our health and readiness for surgery. Because our pets face the same surgical and anesthetic risks as we do, running a simple blood test the morning of your pet's surgery is strongly recommended.

Although your older pet may still be very active and healthy, his or her body has become more susceptible to disease.

For this reason we strongly encourage everyone with cats 10 years of age or older, and dogs 8 years and older to have a wellness test done annually.



WELLNESS TESTING

The intelligence of the saying 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure' cannot be argued.

For our pets this means regular grooming to avoid disease of the skin, ears, eyes and paws; dental care using special foods, brushing teeth or routine scaling and polishing; heartworm, flea and parasite prevention; proper nutrition to avoid obesity and nutritional deficiencies; annual physical examinations and vaccination; and training and exercise to prevent boredom and behaviour problems.

Yet despite all this effort, how do we really know what is going on inside those furry little bodies? They certainly can't tell us. How can they communicate that they have kidney pain, low grade nausea or heartburn, are a little extra tired lately or that their backs ache? Only once things get really bad do we know it; but do we want to wait until the kidney pain has become failure, or the nausea and heartburn has turned into vomiting, or the lack of energy is a result of severe hepatitis?

This is the purpose of wellness testing. Wellness testing is a grouping of blood and urine tests that are designed to screen the body for disease. Generally we are looking for signs of infection, anemia, kidney and liver disease, diabetes, hormonal imbalances and electrolyte disturbances.

Does this seem like a lot to look for in a pet who appears otherwise healthy? It is, and yet we often find problems in pets whose owners thought there was nothing wrong. Over the past year we have diagnosed kidney disease in a 5 month old puppy who was scheduled to be spayed, elevated liver enzymes from a parasite infestation in a 7 month old puppy scheduled for neutering, diabetes in a cat about to undergo a dental cleaning, thyroid disease in an 8 year old cat who was just in for her annual vaccinations, and the list goes on. All of these pets appeared healthy.

The value of detecting these conditions early is infinite. Often early detection and intervention is the key to a positive outcome and certainly prevents our pets from suffering in silence until we finally become aware that there is a problem.

Besides, wellness testing is easy. We simply take a small sample of blood and sometimes urine and test it here in our hospital laboratory. We often have the test results the following day. Of course, we always hope the test results are normal. However, in the event that they are not, we now have the necessary information to bring our pets back to a healthy state.

When is the best time to do wellness testing? Anytime really, but for convenience sake we often combine it with other procedures. For example, before a pet's surgery wellness testing not only confirms the bodies ability to cope with the surgery, but it will also give us a baseline for the future. We also use wellness testing to monitor a pets response to certain medications. Sometimes blood tests are the only way we can make sure there are no negative consequences to the medication we are giving to our pets. We may also recommend wellness testing for pets when they are at the hospital for their annual examination and vaccination, particularly in older pets. There is a lot we can do to help pets age well, provided we

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Nike has her blood & urine tested at least once a year. Good news! Her latest tests have confirmed her good health.

Kate was born on a leap day. The chances of being born on a leap day are about 1 in 1500. There are about 4 million people in the world who were born on Leap Day.

DID YOU KNOW: that the Urban Dictionary defines a cougar as an older female who is on the "hunt" for a much younger, energetic male?

And a "May-December Romance" is an instance of the romantic involvement of two parties between whom there is a considerable age difference.

Our website also features a FUNFACT section in the sidebar of each page. These small paragraphs are interesting little bits of animal trivia.

Do you enjoy our newsletters so much that you want to read them over and over again? Well now you can; we have posted the previous editions on our website.

know what is happening in their bodies. More frequent check ups and simple blood and urine tests will help us keep ahead of the aging process.

The best time to do wellness testing is when we are already taking a blood sample for other reasons. Over the next few months we will be taking many blood samples from dogs who are having their heartworm test done. This would be a great time to consider a wellness blood test; it would cause them no extra stress to have a few more drops of blood drawn and it could give you the peace of mind that your pet is truly as healthy as you believe him or her to be.

If you have any questions about wellness testing for your pet, please do not hesitate to call and speak to our staff about it.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. SWIFT

Many of you have met Dr. Swift, our associate veterinarian who joined the Mountainview Animal Hospital team just over one year ago. On February 29th, Dr. Swift and her husband had a beautiful baby girl. They named her Kate. Kate is healthy, strong and oh so cute. Dr. Swift will be off on maternity leave until June. Although we hope she enjoys this time with her family, we look forward to her return.



LIFE ACCORDING TO NIKE

You may remember me writing, in a past edition, about an older male tabby named Harley who, during his hospital stay with us, tried desperately to capture Nike's attention. Although Nike did acknowledge his flirtatious advances, she quickly ended the romance with pride, dignity and a bit of that princess attitude we know. Well, the classy old dame, Nike is no longer. Recently a handsome young (rob the cradle young) male took a liking to her. He pranced around his kennel with his



head high, his chest puffed out (the way young men on the prowl do) calling to her; and she liked it. In fact, she encouraged it. She sat in places where he could see her, she sauntered past his kennel with a little wiggle and she returned his affections with flirtatious side glances. Imagine our astonishment as we watched our little old cat Nike transform before our very eyes, into a cougar. Unfortunately for this May - December romance, Nike's young stud had just been neutered.

www.mountainviewanimalhospital.ca

Have you checked us out yet? Our website has been up and running for several weeks now and we are very proud of it. Rather than using this site as another means of contact, we have designed this website as an opportunity for you to get to know the people who are taking care of your pet. We have included biographies of the doctors and staff of Mountainview Animal Hospital as well as descriptions of our policies and services. There is a pictorial tour of the hospital and of the day in the life of a pet having surgery at our hospital. Our pet centre provides information on animal care, links to other websites and services we trust, as well as lost & found, pet adoption and pet memorial pages. We really hope you enjoy it.

E-MAIL vs. CANADA POST

We would really like to start e-mailing you our newsletters. If you would prefer to receive our newsletters via e-mail please let us know. You can contact us at 905-702-8822 or e-mail us your address at mvahpetcentre@mountainviewanimalhospital.ca. We will only use your web address to send the newsletter three times per year. Please do not e-mail us any medical questions; we are happy to receive your telephone calls instead.

The bottom Line

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

The drug companies that produce the various heartworm preventative medications will guarantee your dogs protection only if you use the medication correctly and have your dog's blood tested every year.

Most boarding facilities will require your dog to have had a Kennel Cough vaccine at least five days before admission.

Many puppy training facilities are also strongly recommending the Kennel Cough vaccine to their clients.

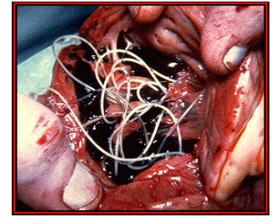
Leptospirosis is a Zoonotic disease; meaning people can become infected too.

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

*** IMPORTANT SUMMERTIME REMINDERS ***

Heartworm Disease

Heartworm disease is caused by a large worm which can live in a dog's heart and adjoining blood vessels. Permanent and potentially fatal damage to the heart, lungs and liver can occur long before there are any visible signs. The heartworm is spread from one dog to another by the mosquito. Treatment is available but is often costly and difficult. A long recovery time can be expected and often irreparable damage to the heart, lungs and liver has already occurred.



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.

Kennel Cough Vaccine

Bordetella bronchiseptica, better known as Kennel Cough, is a bacterial infection that causes tracheobronchitis. Affected dogs will exhibit a characteristic dry, harsh, hacking cough that can last up to 3 weeks. Dogs are most commonly infected in kennels, pet stores, exhibitions and off leash parks where they are in close contact with other dogs. Although most dogs require only supportive care to recover, young, older or otherwise weaker dogs can develop a serious bronchopneumonia that may require them to be hospitalized. Vaccination is recommended for dogs going to boarding kennels, puppy classes, grooming facilities or off leash parks. If your dog is not vaccinated against Kennel Cough and is likely to be exposed, please call us to schedule an appointment for a vaccination against *Bordetella bronchiseptica*.

Leptospirosis Vaccine

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). Leptospirosis tends to attack the liver and kidneys causing a variety of symptoms including fever, nausea, lethargy, abdominal pain and increased urination. Many dogs afflicted with Leptospirosis will die from it. If your dog has access to wildlife, roams free, or drinks from water sources that may have become contaminated, he or she should be vaccinated against Leptospirosis this spring. We would be happy to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of vaccinating your dog against this disease.

Fleas



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. 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. Call us to start your pet on the safest and most effective flea prevention this spring.

Mountainview Animal Hospital

Dr. Stephanie Ewing BSc., DVM

INVITES YOU TO OUR OPEN HOUSE!

SUNDAY MAY 4TH, 2008

FROM

1 PM TO 4 PM

To show our appreciation to our wonderful community, we are having an Open House.
Everyone is welcome to attend, including your furry friends.

Why should you come to our open house?

- 🐾 Meet our doctors and staff on a more personal level
- 🐾 Tour the hospital
- 🐾 Learn more about our various services and equipment
- 🐾 Play some games and test your knowledge about pet trivia
- 🐾 Learn more about important topics in pet health care
- 🐾 There will be face painting, games and treats for the kids
- 🐾 Enjoy food & refreshments, weather permitting we will have a barbeque

Curious about how we do surgery?

Then come watch a surgery at our hospital.
We have recorded a surgery and will play the video at the open house.

333 Mountainview Road South, unit # 4

We are located in the South Georgetown Center, on the North East corner of Mountainview and Argyll roads
905-702-8822

*** * * MARK YOUR CALENDARS * * ***