



WINTER 2008 Gazette

A newsletter for people and their pets



JORDAN CREEK
ANIMAL HOSPITAL
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DENTAL HEALTH

How Does Your Pet's Mouth Measure Up?

Regular dental care is important to the long-term health of your pet. By beginning a program of prevention at an early age, periodontal disease can be avoided. Imagine what our visits to the dentist would be like if we didn't brush or care for our teeth for years between appointments! Home dental care for your pet is just as important as brushing your own teeth, even if it is a bit more challenging.

Starting at a young age, pets begin to form plaque on the surface of their teeth after eating. Soft plaque can harden over time to become dental calculus, which becomes solidly adhered to the teeth. If not removed, plaque and calculus cause gingivitis, which can then lead to bone and tooth loss. The best way to prevent plaque and calculus build-up is to begin regular home dental care (such as brushing, rinses, or dietary control) early in your pet's life.

Brushing your pet's teeth on a regular basis is the best way to prevent dental disease. This can be done with a soft tooth brush small enough to fit in your pet's mouth and toothpaste made for pets that is safe to swallow. Many types of toothpaste are flavored to be pleasant tasting to your pet. If your pet will not allow brushing, consider a dental rinse or spray. These are applied to the mouth and teeth daily as a plaque prevention tool. Many "dental" treats, chews, and foods (such as C.E.T. brand chews, Greenies, and Oral Care formulated foods) exist to help keep teeth clean.

Even with routine at home dental care, pets often need professional dental cleanings as well. If left untreated, periodontal disease may lead to systemic disease. The bacteria in the mouth can enter the body through the blood stream, showering the lungs, kidneys, heart, and liver. Recent studies have shown that routine home dental care coupled with regular professional dental cleanings can extend your pet's life by up to 5 years. Our veterinarians can tell you if your pet is in need of a professional dental cleaning and what you need to do to prepare.

A DAY AT THE DENTIST

What is a Professional Dental Cleaning?

Pets develop plaque and gingivitis as they age. Each pet is different as to how fast dental calculus builds. Our veterinarians can tell you if your pet needs a professional dental cleaning. Pre-anesthetic blood work may be recommended based on your pet's age and/or health status to ensure it is safe to undergo anesthesia.

In preparation for the dental cleaning, food will need to be withheld for 12 hours before anesthesia. Dogs cannot have water after 6 a.m. on the morning of the procedure. On the day of the dental cleaning, the doctor and dental nurse will review your pet's history, any recent labwork, and perform a preanesthetic physical exam. Your pet is then sedated and monitored closely while under anesthesia. When your pet is under anesthesia, the doctor and nurse will examine, clean, polish, and evaluate your pet's teeth and gums. If it is determined that additional work needs to be done during the course of the procedure, the doctor or nurse can call you to discuss the areas of concern, treatment recommendations, and costs.

In most cases your pet's dental cleaning will be performed in the morning and she will return home in the afternoon with a healthier mouth and fresher breath. The nurse will give you instructions about starting your pet back on water and food at a gradual pace. While your pet may be tired that evening, most people report that their pets are back to their normal routine the next morning.

Contact us by calling 515-224-9500 or visit our website at www.jordancreek.myvetonline.com





H BENEFITS OF YEAR-ROUND Heartworm Prevention

Heartworm is a parasite that dog owners and many cat owners have to be concerned about. Heartworm is transmitted to your pet by mosquitoes. Here in the Midwest, mosquitoes live during the warm months and die in the late fall and winter. Heartworm can be prevented by administering a once-a-month treatment in the form of a treat, pill, or topical medication to your pet. The heartworm season in Iowa runs from approximately May until November.

If your situation is appropriate, you may want to consider keeping your pet on heartworm prevention all months of the year.

This would include if your pet travels south of Iowa during the winter months, if you have small children at home, or if there are individuals with immunocompromised health conditions (including chemotherapy) in your home.

All pets can benefit from year-round heartworm prevention. Heartworm medications also have deworming properties that can keep your pet free of intestinal parasites throughout the year. Ask our veterinarians or nurses about year-round heartworm prevention at your next visit.

Coming Soon: VETERINARY ACUPUNCTURE

Dr. Anne Kueter and Dr. Kim Wilke are currently in the process of becoming certified in veterinary acupuncture. Since October, they have been attending classes through the International Acupuncture Society in San Antonio, Texas; classes will conclude in February. In March, they will complete 2 days of written and practical exams. Certification requires completing the class sessions and exams, 40 internship hours with a licensed veterinary acupuncturist, and a written scientific case study.

Your pet may benefit from acupuncture for a variety of conditions including musculoskeletal problems, skin and respiratory problems, gastrointestinal upset, and pain management. According to Chinese medical philosophy, disease is the result of an imbalance of energy in the body. Acupuncture works to restore balance by stimulating the nerves, increasing blood circulation, and causing the release of hormones and endorphins.

Acupuncture points can be stimulated

through acupressure, dry needling, laser, and electro-stimulation. These services may also be used in conjunction with Chinese herbal medicine. Jordan Creek Animal Hospital will officially be providing veterinary acupuncture services in the spring, although Dr. Kueter and Dr. Wilke are currently working with some specific cases while completing their training.

If you are interested in these services, please call our office or speak to one of our staff members for more information.

MEET THE STAFF/our editors for this issue of Pet Gazette



Dr. Pam Erdman, originally from West Bend, Iowa, received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Iowa State University. She then went on to receive her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from ISU in May 2005. Before joining the staff at Jordan Creek Animal Hospital in January 2006, she practiced at a pet hospital in Darien, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

Dr. Erdman and her husband Matt share their home with their black lab Clover and cat Ace. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, playing guitar and piano, boating, and reading.



Amy King, Registered Veterinary Technician, grew up in Milford, Iowa near Lake Okoboji. In September 1999, she received her Associate of Applied Sciences degree from the Medical Institute of Minnesota. She moved to the Des Moines area shortly after and began working at Jordan Creek in April 2001.

Amy, husband Rawley, and daughter Elizabeth share their home with their "3 Felines" – Rudy, Buzz, and Ace. Amy & Rawley will be expecting their 2nd child in March 2008. When she isn't busy at work or spending time with her family, she enjoys biking, swimming, and shopping!



The Animal Relief Fund was started by members of the Jordan Creek Animal Hospital staff in order to help animals that are brought to the clinic orphaned or injured and without owners. To give these animals the care they need and deserve, staff members often donate time and money to provide the needed medical attention. Eventually, caring clients learned of the fund and made donations, bringing the Animal Relief Fund to life! Due to the generosity of all of these animal lovers, many animals have been helped, but there are many who still need our assistance.

Unfortunately, there is a constant supply of homeless animals that need medical

attention as well as homes. The fund can only help these animals through the generosity of their human counterparts. We ask anyone who loves animals and would like to help, make a donation. Donations of any amount are appreciated. Any cash donation of \$100 or more will be recognized with a nameplate on the Animal Relief Fund plaque that hangs in our lobby. The nameplate may bear the name of a beloved pet, favorite friend, or whatever your wishes are.

Thanks to all who have already donated. Please feel free to ask us about the pets we have already helped!



Your Donations Are Appreciated

We would like to thank everyone that donated used or new towels to our hospital. Thanks to your donations, our hospitalized patients and boarding pets are kept warm and dry even in the coldest winter months.



The doctors and staff of Jordan Creek Animal Hospital feel that monthly employee meetings are essential to promoting communication and educational opportunities. Because of this, we will be closed from **1:30-2:30 pm** on the following Wednesdays: **January 9, February 13** and **March 12**.

Putting Your Pet Under Anesthesia *What you should know*

Anesthetic drugs numb the senses so that pets do not feel pain during procedures. Anesthesia is often necessary but it can pose health risks; issues can arise even with seemingly healthy pets under anesthesia. This is why the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) requires accredited clinics to use monitoring equipment on all anesthetized patients.

Jordan Creek Animal Hospital has been accredited by AAHA since 1994. We follow the strict guidelines that AAHA has set for monitoring patients under anesthesia. We believe that these guidelines are the safest way to monitor your pet when anesthesia is required. Our veterinarians will create an individual anesthesia plan for your pet, depending on age and medical history. While under anesthesia, monitoring equipment will track your pet's vital signs (temperature, oxygen saturation, and heart rate). The surgery nurse and doctor will keep a close watch over your pet's vital signs during the procedure and while waking up from anesthesia to ensure his or her safety.