

Lake Country Veterinary Care Newsletter



June 2009

Focus on Cats

We have decided to devote a newsletter to cats this time, since we pay quite a bit of attention to dogs. First we'll concentrate on vaccines.

As with our canine vaccine protocol, we have changed a few things with our feline vaccines. The distemper vaccine actually vaccinates for several of the common viruses that cats can get. Those are feline rhinotrachitis, calici virus and panleukopenia. Studies have shown that cats can acquire sufficient immunity to these diseases if vaccinated several times. This immunity may last up to several years. Therefore, we are not vaccinating house cats every 3 years providing the criteria is met. On the other hand, we are using a rabies vaccine designed specifically for cats and the manufacturer recommends this be done every year instead of every 3 years. If your cat is allowed outdoors, we also recommend vaccinating for feline leukemia. This virus is transmitted via body fluids such as blood and saliva. Kittens can be born with it as it crosses the placental barrier. Cats allowed outside free roaming can become infected either fighting (saliva & blood) or grooming each other (saliva). Our new vaccine for feline leukemia is not an injection but a vaccine that is administered transdermally, or forced through the skin. It is more or less an aerosol spray that goes through the skin under pressure.

Feline heartworm disease we touched on briefly in a previous newsletter. Cats can get heartworm disease, also from mosquitoes, but it does not progress the same as with dogs. The syndrome is called Heartworm Associated Respiratory Disease (HARD). Usually, the parasite load is very small, but can result in sudden death from respiratory complications. It is also difficult to diagnose and one reason is because of the low parasite count. There is also no safe or approved treatment for cats. The best option is a once a month preventative as with dogs. There is an oral treat type preventative and a monthly topical available. Even indoor cats need to be on preventative because about 25% of the cats that were diagnosed are indoor cats only!

We certainly have to discuss the subject of fleas and ticks. There are many topical products available that are safe and effective in preventing ticks or a flea infestation. It only takes a flea an instant to jump on your cat, even if they are outside for only a few minutes. The rabbits and squirrels that provide amusement for your cat when watching out the window, can harbor a multitude of unwanted guests. Fleas can also cause many other health problems such as Bartonella, anemia and tapeworms. Bartonella is also contagious to people in the form of "Cat Scratch Disease". We strongly recommend a monthly product for your cat.

Hot off the press, a recall on Nutro Natural Choice Complete Care Cat Foods and Nutro Max Dry Cat Foods with the expiration dates between May 12, 2010 and August 22, 2010

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is voluntary. This recall is due to incorrect levels of zinc and potassium resulting from a production error by a US-based premix supplier. Consumers who have purchased product affected by this recall should return it to their retailer for a full refund or exchange for another product.

Let's Talk About:

♦ Cat Health

"Cat's motto: No matter what you've done wrong, always try to make it look like the dog did it."

- Unknown



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