

The Creekside News



creeksideah@gmail.com

www.CreeksideAH.com

JANUARY, 2011

Welcome to another edition of the Creekside News. This newsletter is brought to you by veterinarians and staff at Creekside Animal Hospital and is meant to give you the latest and greatest news and information about the clinic and treatment options for your pets.

CONTENTS

Section 1: Welcome 2011! What's new at Creekside?

Section 2: Dental Health in pets. Pets have teeth too!

Section 3: Spring Break is just around the corner! How you can help keep your pets safe while traveling, and/or make the best of a boarding experience.

WELCOME 2011! WHAT'S NEW AT CREEKSIDE?

Creekside experienced a lot of changes in 2010. One of the most devastating changes was the loss of our long time receptionist, Janet. Janet loved the Creekside family like it was her own; she knew your pets by name and spent most of her time making sure our clients were happy and their pets were doing well. It has been difficult for us all to face each day without her by our side, and we know how much she meant to so many of you. We hope that in 2011 we can make Janet proud by offering you a level of care and customer service that would exceed her expectations. She wanted the best for everyone who walked through the door and we will work even harder to make sure that we carry on her legacy here at Creekside.

We do have a few new faces here at Creekside, however. Some of the faces you see as "new" up front are actually long time staff members who are either just helping fill in during the day or have changed positions within the clinic. Alicia, now a full time receptionist, has been with Creekside for several years as a veterinary assistant. She is excited about getting to work directly with clients and looks forward to getting to know everyone on a more personal level. Del and Charlotte have both been part time receptionist at Creekside for several years and we are happy to say they both will continue with us in 2011. Chris is a new receptionist that started with us in late 2010. She works 1-2 days a week and has made a nice addition to our front desk team. We'd like to remind you that during the lunch hour you might catch any one of the Creekside staff working up front. Everyone in the clinic alternates lunches and watching the front desk area so that we can remain open all day to serve you better. (Creekside is closed for lunch ONE day a month for staff training. We use this time to keep all staff up to date on the latest happenings as well as to do group training for any new procedures.)

Last but certainly not least, we owe everyone a HUGE THANK YOU!!!! Because of you, Creekside Animal Hospital was awarded Lafayette's "Best Veterinarian" for 2010 by the Journal and Courier, as part of their Reader's Choice Awards. We are absolutely thrilled to be given this honor for a second year in a row. Thank you to everyone who voted for us!

DENTAL HEALTH IN PETS – PETS HAVE TEETH TOO!

Does your dog or cat's breath clear the room out? If so, it could be a sign of dental disease. The statistics are shocking, 80% of dogs and 50% of cats over 3 years of age have advanced periodontal disease.

Periodontal disease is an infection or inflammation of the gums and the tissues around the teeth. Signs of dental problems can include weight loss, rubbing the face, dropping food out of the mouth, drooling, reluctance to eat dry food, or the dreaded bad breath!

It hurts to have periodontal disease, and because pets can hide the pain, it may not be found until teeth are in danger of being lost. Not only that but periodontal disease has been linked to infections of the heart, liver, and kidneys, which can shorten our pets' lives.

One of the tools we use to fight dental disease and tartar buildup is a dental cleaning. This is very similar to a dental cleaning you get at your dentist. Since pets don't sit still for the cleaning, we will have to anesthetize your pet so that the cleaning can be done pain free. Anesthesia risk can be minimized by performing pre-surgical blood work to check for liver and kidney function prior to the procedure. All patients under anesthesia are hooked up to a full vital scan system that monitors heart rate, respirations, and oxygen levels. We also have a Registered Veterinary Technician observing all patients that are under anesthesia. Before the cleaning begins, (but after the pet is under anesthesia) a detailed examination of the mouth is done. We will check for loose or broken teeth, measure gum recession and probe the gum line, looking for unseen pockets of infection or other problems. The tongue, cheeks and throat are also checked for abnormalities. We are excited to be able to offer dental x-rays, which can uncover problems below the gum line and allows us to diagnose problem teeth before they become obvious problems. Once the cleaning begins, your pet's teeth will be hand scaled as well as cleaned with an ultrasonic scaler. This allows us to remove the plaque and tartar without harming the enamel of the tooth. All sides of the teeth are cleaned as well as under the gum line. After the teeth are "clean", we then polish each tooth to smooth the surfaces of the teeth, making it harder for plaque and tartar to stick to the tooth. The polish contains fluoride, so after the polish is complete, the mouth is rinsed to remove any excess polish/fluoride to prevent your pet from ingesting it when they wake up. The whole dental cleaning and polishing is an outpatient procedure, so there is no need for your pet to stay overnight.

Once your pet's teeth are clean, there are many products that Creekside keeps in stock that help maintain healthy teeth and gums. The best prevention is to brush your pet's teeth. Please do not use your own toothpaste as it is not safe for your pets to swallow. We have available toothpaste that is safe for pets and not expensive. If brushing is not an option, there are specially designed gels that only require application to the teeth - minus the brushing. These gels help to fight off the bacteria that create plaque buildup. They are intended to be applied daily and most pets accept them without too much of a fuss. If handling your pet's mouth daily doesn't sound like something that fits into your lifestyle or schedule, then we do have other options that can still help. CET chews are specially designed with enzymatic cleaners that help to remove new bacteria with every bite. We also carry a special diet called T/D. This food has a patented design that actually scrapes plaque from the teeth. The kibble is quite large, but even 5 pound dogs LOVE to chew on this food. In fact, what we hear most commonly is that pets will pick all the T/D from their bowl and eat it first. We recommend feeding it as 1/3 of your pet's daily diet in order for it to help. It can be fed as a sole diet and is nutritionally balanced to do so. If your pet isn't a chewer and brushing isn't an option, there is an additive you can put in their drinking water which contains the same enzymatic cleaner that is in the CET chews. Every time they drink, it helps to kill the bacteria, thus keeping the teeth cleaner. You can also use this water additive in conjunction with any of the other recommendations above for an added boost to your normal cleaning regimen. Last, there is now a dental vaccine that can be given to reduce the bacteria that causes periodontal disease. We have not had extensive experience with this vaccine, but the clients who have given their pets the vaccine have only reported excellent results.

Creekside Animal Hospital feels that dental health is an important part of keeping your pet happy and well. Through the month of March we are offering FREE dental exams and consultations with one of our experienced technicians. Availability for these appointments is limited to Tuesday or Friday from 2:00 - 5:15pm. During this time, the technician will go over the general health of your pet's mouth and offer recommendations that will get (or keep) your pet's mouth in great shape. Pets of all ages would benefit from this exam. If it is found that your pet needs to have a full dental cleaning, you will receive a coupon good for \$20.00 off this service. The coupon will be valid for 30 days after the date of the exam. If this program goes well, clients are happy, and we are finding this to help with the excessive dental problems in pets, then we will continue the program through the remainder of 2011. Call today to schedule your FREE dental examination 765-742-0140. (Please know that this offer is ONLY for a free DENTAL exam - if your pet has other problems or needs vaccines, please make an appointment with one of our veterinarians and let the receptionist know you would like the free dental exam to follow your appointment with the Doctor.)

SPRING BREAK IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. HOW YOU CAN HELP KEEP YOUR PET SAFE WHILE TRAVELING, AND/OR MAKE THE BEST OF THEIR BOARDING EXPERIENCE.

There is a lot of vacationing just around the corner. Spring break is near and that means a lot of people are making their plans to travel to warmer destinations for “sun therapy”. What does that mean for our furry friends? Many people take their pets with them on vacation, others will board their pets and a few will have pet sitters come to their home (or stay at their home) while they are away. Here are some ways we can help make sure your fur babies are safe and comfortable no matter where they fit into your vacation plans.

No matter if your pet stays or they go along with you, the #1 most important thing of all is to make sure your pet is up to date on ALL of their vaccines. You never know what viruses will be present during travels, or at a boarding facility with many pets. While we can't prevent everything and even vaccines are not a 100% guarantee against illness, vaccines are the best defense we have. If your pet will be at a boarding facility or around other animals, you will want to make sure they have the additional bordetella vaccine. This protects against kennel cough - a bronchitis type virus in dogs. We are often told, “the place I board them just gives them the shot when we get there.” While that is great that your pet will at least receive the vaccine, there is no vaccine that offers immediate immunity. Ideally your pet needs to be vaccinated 2-4 weeks prior to boarding so that the vaccine has time to work and produce immunity to this virus. If your pet has never before been vaccinated against kennel cough, it will require a series of two vaccines to build proper immunity. These vaccines do not require a veterinary examination if we have seen your pet within the last year. You are welcome to make a technician appointment which will save you from paying an exam fee. The technician will come in and give your dog a quick shot, and you will be back out the door in no time.

The second item on our list is heartworm, flea and tick prevention. Some do not keep their dogs on heartworm preventative year round - please keep that in mind when if you travel with your dog to a warmer climate where mosquitoes are likely already abundant. The same goes for fleas and ticks. While we might not be seeing them here in Indiana yet, they never go away in warmer climates. You don't want to bring home any hitchhikers with your pets so make sure to put their flea and tick preventative on them prior to traveling. If your pet is being boarded you certainly want to put a dose on them before arrival. Your pet might not have fleas, but you never know who their neighbor will be while boarding. The local facilities do their very best to check pets and make sure that fleas do not become a problem, but we all know how sneaky fleas can be. The best thing you can do is to protect your pet! (Be sure to not bathe your pet 24 hours BEFORE or AFTER applying a topical spot on flea preventative such as Advantage, or Frontline)

The top complaints of traveling with or leaving pets behind while you travel are anxiety, digestive upset and motion sickness. Each of these can cause tremendous stress on both animal and owner. If your pet has problems with any of the above let us try to help make this vacation a much calmer, happier and less messy one. ☺

Traveling with your pet can be fun; it can also put your patience to the test if your pet isn't a seasoned traveler and/or doesn't enjoy the ride. Many pets suffer from motion sickness. It is not uncommon at all, and up until recently we really didn't have many options to treat this that worked well without sedative effects. Today we are glad to be able to offer “Cerenia”. It treats motion sickness in dogs and cats. It really can be a life saver if your pet starts vomiting when the car begins to roll, and you would like to bring them with on a trip.

A medication that might help during periods of stress or anxiety is Anxitane. This is an all natural anti-anxiety medication that doesn't require a build up in the system to work. It is safe for pets to take with other medications, and doesn't require pets to be weaned off. Anxitane works for a variety of situations and is non sedating. So whether your pet is stressed in the car, pacing and nervous at the boarding kennel, or having anxiety about you not being at home, you might find that a huge benefit by trying Anxitane for your pet. It is safe for both dogs and cats and they actually eat it willingly most of the time (Even cats!). Your pet will act like themselves, just less stressed.

Often pets experience digestive upset when their routines are upset, foods are changed or added stress is introduced into their lives. Cleaning up diarrhea is NOT part of the fun in vacation, right? Often this problem can be helped with a product called Provable. There are two parts to this medication, the paste, and the tablets. The paste is somewhat a mixture of a “kaopectate” type drug and high doses of pro/prebiotics. It is given for the first 24-48 hours until the stool firms. You start the tablets in the pack the same time as the paste but you will continue them for 10 days.

Like any medication, not all pets will respond to the above treatments. If your pet has motion sickness, it is best to take a “test drive” with Cerenia and see what type of response you get. Anxitane and Provable are both safe to be given on a daily basis, but you won't know how your pet will respond in a situation of extreme stress (unfortunately) until the situation presents itself.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND "THE FINE PRINT"

We hope you have found the newsletter to be helpful and informative. If you have any questions or concerns please call our office at: (765)742-0140. Our hours of operation are Monday - Friday 7:30am - 6:00pm and Saturday 8:00am - 12:00pm.

If you do not want to receive further newsletters from Creekside please send us an email at CreeksideAH@gmail.com and let us know you want to unsubscribe from the newsletters. We will take you off the mailing list.

Please note that while we always strive to help our clients learn as much as possible to help provide them with the knowledge and tools to give their pets the best quality of life, the newsletter is not a replacement for medical attention. While our goal is to give the best possible medical treatment at a reasonable price we cannot treat your pets over the phone or via email. This newsletter is intended for informational purposes only.