

July/August 2005

www.BradshawVet.com
(916) 685-2494



BRADSHAW VETERINARY CLINIC

July/August Newsletter

Summertime... Pleasure or Peril for Your Pet?

With high temperatures during the summer months, heat stroke is always a major concern. Be aware of the symptoms of heat stroke as early detection can save your pet's life. Signs of heat stroke include: panting, staring, anxiousness, depression, refusal to obey commands, warm or dry skin, high fever, rapid heartbeat, vomiting and collapse. If you suspect your pet is suffering from heat stroke call your veterinarian immediately. In the meantime, lower your pet's body temperature by applying towels

soaked in cool water to the body. It is common for a pet to respond only after a few minutes of cooling only to quickly return to a high temperature. It is imperative that you take your pet to a veterinarian in the event of heatstroke, be it "under control" or not. The veterinarian can treat the pet with intravenous fluid therapy to counter shock, and/or medications to prevent or reverse brain damage. Even with emergency

care, heatstroke can be fatal.

During the heat, there are many things you can do to keep your pet cool and help prevent heat stroke. Provide adequate shelter to protect him/her from the sun and heat. A large doghouse or other type of shelter with a
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Fourth of July Tips

The Staff at Bradshaw Vet would like to wish you a safe Fourth of July and hope that you have plans to enjoy the holiday with your friends, family and pets! Every year it is

common for pets to escape their yards due to fear of fireworks. If you lose your pet or find someone's pet, below is a checklist of things to do:

- Contact all veterinary hospitals in the area regarding the lost/found pet; giving a description of the pet and your information

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Dates to Remember:

- *Low Cost Vaccination Clinic*
1st Saturday of Each Month
9am-11am

Summertime (cont.)

cool floor works well. Keep the shelter out of the sun or out of the sun as much as possible with proper positioning in the yard. A proper, breathable shelter should be large enough for your animal to spread out without its body touching the sides. Keeping your pet well groomed will help keep your pet cool and his/her coat/fur healthy. Keep a pet's coat mat free and even short in length. Be careful however to keep a pet's bare skin covered because fur on pets naturally works to prevent their skin from sunburn. Sunburn on pets can cause problems just as on people such as pain, peeling, and



skin cancer. Keep your pet out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. and when you do go out, apply some sunscreen to exposed areas of skin such as the tips of the ears, nose and around the lips. Be careful not to over-exert your pet and provide lots of fresh, cool water at ALL times. If your pet seems exhausted or

is panting a lot, it is time to stop --- monitor your pet for heat stroke even when stopped exercising for the day. Overweight pets can suffer more than other pets in the heat. Ask your veterinarian about Eukanuba Restricted Calories prescription foods to help your cat or dog reach his/her healthy weight and get through the summer months easier.

Fourth of July Tips (cont.)

- If you have found the pet ask if it would be possible to bring the pet in to be scanned for a microchip (a computer chip, now commonly placed between a pet's shoulder blades under the skin, that references a specific number that will identify the pet to a national database with the owner's information)
- Post lost/found flyers around the neighborhood the pet was found in
- Call the Sacramento County Animal Control at 916-875-5246 – to report a lost/found pet
- If you are missing a pet it is best to go to Sacramento Animal Control and look physically for your pet several times a week for a few weeks

Heartworm

During the summer there can be stagnant bodies of water from pools, bird baths, and puddles. These types of bodies of water are breeding grounds for mosquitoes and mosquitoes are the carriers of the heartworm. When a dog is bitten by an infected mosquito, a worm is transmitted into the body and will take about

6 months to establish itself within the pulmonary artery. This means that your dog could become infected and it is possible that you will not see symptoms of heartworm in your dog or cat until six months after being infected. Symptoms of heartworm include lethargy, sometimes coughing, as well as belly

swelling. Sometimes there will be no symptoms leading up to the death of your pet from heartworm disease. Ask your veterinarian's office about Sentinel and Interceptor for your dog and Revolution for your cat.

The Summer Months and Ticks

In addition to the concern with heartworm, what do you know about the ticks that may be in your environment? A tick has a one-piece body. It has "harpoon-like" barbs in its mouth that attach to the host, the host being most warm-blooded animals. This includes cats, dogs, you and even your kids.

Ticks are not insects like fleas, but are considered arachnids like mites, spiders and scorpions. They have a four-stage life cycle: eggs, larvae, nymphs, and adults. Adult females of some species lay about 100 eggs at a time. Others lay 3,000 to 6,000 eggs per batch. The United States has about 200 tick species. Habitats include woods, beach grass, lawns, forests, and urban areas as well. Ticks can carry various infectious organisms that can transmit diseases to cats and dogs, which can include the following: babesiosis – lethargy, appetite loss, weakness, pale gums; ehrlichiosis – high fever, muscle aches; lyme disease – lameness, swollen joints, fever, poor appetite, fatigue, and vomiting (some infected animals show no symptoms); and tick paralysis in dogs – gradual paralysis, seen first as uncoordinated back legs (some infected dogs don't develop paralysis). To protect pets from the discomfort and illness caused by fleas and ticks, it's important to rid the pets of the pests. It's also important to treat a pet's environment to prevent or reduce the incidence of re-infestation.

If you find a tick on your dog you can take the following steps for proper removal:

- Grasp the tick by its head either with your fingers or with tweezers as close to the skin of the dog as possible (wearing gloves is optional)
- Slowly twist and pull in an upward motion away from the skin of the animal and the tick should come free
- If you accidentally separate the body from the head, you can either attempt to remove the head again or leave it and monitor it – it should fester and pop off (this method is

not as effective because it can still transmit toxins into the body – remove the entire tick ASAP)

It is also important to take the proper precautions with your environment to prevent tick infestation. You can do the following to protect your pets and family:



- Apply tick killing medications to your pets, such as Frontline Plus for your cat or dog
- Mow grass regularly
- Avoid allowing your pet in a grassy, wooded or beach areas. If in areas of tick exposure, examine pets closely for ticks on a daily basis, especially around the head and inside the ears.
- If ticks are found, remove ticks immediately. This is important because it can take hours for an infected tick to transmit disease.
- Never try to burn a tick off or to smother it with petroleum jelly or nail polish, as these methods don't work.

There are also steps you can take to protect yourself when in the woods or grassland areas:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts tight at the wrists, long pants tight at the ankles and tuck in socks, and shoes covering the whole foot
- Wear light colored clothes that show ticks easily
- On clothing, use a repellent containing permethrin. However, do not apply it to clothing while it is being worn, and allow the clothing to thoroughly dry before wearing
- On skin, use a repellent containing DEET. Be conservative with the amount you use, as too much bug spray can cause breathing difficulty, especially in children.

Adult females of some species lay about 100 eggs at a time. Others lay 3,000 to 6,000 eggs per batch.

From the staff at Bradshaw Veterinary Clinic, we hope that you have a safe, warm and informed summer season!