

MARCH NEWSLETTER

In this month's newsletter we would like to remind everyone of Bradshaw Veterinary Clinic's Spay Month and Neuter Month. In addition to clinic updates we will be looking at the topic of exploring how to choose the right breed when adopting a new pet as well as a look at the importance of heartworm preventative.

Bradshaw Veterinary Clinic, starting new this year, will be holding Spay Month in March and Neuter Month in April. For all spays scheduled during the month of March, (THIS MONTH!!!) a 15% discount will be offered on the procedure and in April a 15% discount will be offered on all neuter procedures.

About 60% of U.S. households have at least one dog, cat, bird or other companion animal. Pets provide joy, companionship, and sometimes a service and animals are fun! If you are looking to own a pet, taking the time to consider which animal best suits your family will ensure the best pet-owning experience. A pet becomes your daily responsibility so making an informed pet selection is important. Selecting a pet should involve everyone in the household to address everyone's needs, concerns, fears, and medical history. Be realistic and the idea to keep in mind is that you are attempting to identify the best animal for your living space, lifestyle, and budget.

Roland Tripp, DVM has established what is referred to as the Tripp Test for selecting a new dog, which is a series of considerations that should be examined prior to getting a new dog. Categories such as home environment, dog age and gender, dog body shape and size, coat, dog personality, and human personality are the cornerstone for determining the right breed. If you are interested in targeting specifics about introducing a pet into your environment log onto www.animalbehavior.net to take the Tripp Test. Typical questions that may come to mind when selecting a pet include thinking about what type of residence you have, what size is an available yard, can you keep a dog secure on your property, how much daily exercise would you give a dog, what type of people are involved in your life, how active are you, how energetic should your dog be, how much are you prepared to spend on weekly feeding for your dog, and how much grooming would your dog receive each week – and the list goes on. The point being, selecting a companion pet involves some serious thought, because dogs and cats or any animal can differ in types of care, activity, diet and other aspects. In making the decision, question your lifestyle as well and what would work best for you.

In addition to considering the right breed or type of pet, spaying or neutering is an important factor that can influence your pet's health

and well being. A pet is of mature age to be spayed or neutered at a minimum of four months and the procedure can be done anytime after that. Spaying and neutering means sterilization and can cause weight gain and can make some dogs less active. Spaying and neutering is done for a variety of reasons. Besides preventing pregnancy or overpopulation, it is important for your pet's health. Pros to spaying your female dog can be to prevent your dog from going into heat, can make her more gentle or affectionate, prevents her from getting breast cancer later in life, and prevents her from getting an infection of the uterus later in life. Pros to neutering your male dog can be preventing a female from being impregnated, can make a male dog more gentle and affectionate, keeps him from roaming or getting into fights with other animals, and helps prevent him from getting cancer in the testicles or prostate gland later in life. Depending on your needs and your pet's needs, discuss spaying or neutering with your veterinarian to determine what would be best for your pet.

Heartworm, whether you are familiar with it or not as a veterinary issue, is an important issue on the community level. The Sacramento and Elk Grove area has a large mosquito population because of the Delta, rivers, creeks, and large amount of farmland and as you may or may not know heartworm disease is spread by mosquitoes. The heartworm disease cycle begins when a mosquito bites a dog infected with heartworms. The mosquito picks up microfilaria (heartworm larvae) from the dog's blood and it is then that the microfilaria goes through two life stages while in the mosquito. The mosquito bites another dog and passes along the microfilaria into its bloodstream. The microfilaria begins to grow and complete several more life stages while in the dog's bloodstream. The microfilaria reaches an adult stage six months after infecting the dog and begins migration towards the heart and pulmonary arteries. It is at this point that symptoms and effects, such as increased blood pressure, congestive heart failure, kidney and liver failure, coughing, lowered exercise tolerance, collapse, fluid accumulation in the abdomen, and labored respiration, occur.

A dog infected with heartworm can be diagnosed through a blood test done at your veterinary clinic, however the test only detects adult worms and the animal must have been infected for at least 6 months to test positive for the disease. It is possible for a dog to receive a false negative on a test, and for that reason a second test should be performed six months after the initial test and repeated every 2 years thereafter. Treatment for heartworm disease can be a costly and an involved procedure with many complications. It is for this reason that prevention is recommended in order to avoid contraction of the disease and take a proactive prevention approach. It is possible for

cats to contract heartworm disease, however it has happened in only rare cases. For more information on heartworm protection in your cats contact your veterinarian.

It is the recommendation of Bradshaw Veterinary Clinic that when pursuing heartworm prevention Interceptor® and Sentinel® provide your pet with the best possible protection. In addition to heartworm protection, they provide protection against internal parasites as well. Internal parasites can be zoonotic, which means they can be transmitted to humans; such parasites include whipworm and hookworm. Whipworms are spread by infected soil and feces, can cause diarrhea, anemia, and dehydration, and their eggs can live in the soil for several years. Hookworms are spread by infected soil and feces as well, and attach themselves to the intestinal lining of their host. Interceptor® is a once a month, oral flavor tablet that is recommended to be given year round to protect against heartworm, hookworm, and whipworm. Sentinel® like Interceptor® is a once a month oral flavor tablet that protects against hookworms, roundworms, and whipworm as well as offering flea protection by inhibiting the growth of flea populations. When purchased through veterinary clinics, Sentinel® and Interceptor® products are backed by a 100% satisfaction guarantee. At this time Bradshaw Veterinary Clinic and Novartis are offering a rebate when you purchase a 12-month supply of either Sentinel® or Interceptor®. The rebate goes to you automatically with the purchase of the product and you receive an additional rebate in the mail. For details call and contact Melissa Schmidt at 916-685-2494. For more information on heartworm preventative for your dogs contact your veterinarian to discuss starting on Interceptor® or Sentinel®.

Don't forget our first vaccination clinic of the year. It will be held here at the clinic on April 2, from 9-11 am. All dogs must be on leashes and cats must be in carriers. Other services offered at the vaccination clinic are heartworm testing, FELV-FIV testing, microchipping, county licensing and heartworm and flea prevention.

We hope everyone has a wonderful Easter, and be sure to hide the chocolate eggs from your pets!