

SPRING 2009 NEWSLETTER

Welcome, and thank you for taking the time to check out our website. Hopefully, you will find some interesting and useful information here.

Spring has sprung! The trees and flowers are blooming, the grass is green and the sneezing has started! Just as humans can suffer from allergies, so too can your pets. In humans, allergies usually manifest as itchy, watery eyes, sneezing or stuffiness. If your pet suffers from an allergy, the most common symptoms are scratching, chewing or licking themselves. Animals can develop allergies for a variety of reasons, so if you suspect that your pet may be suffering from an allergy, please consult your veterinarian. It doesn't take long for hot spots (red, irritated flesh or even an open sore) to develop if an animal does not find relief from the itchiness.

Warmer weather signals the start of flea, tick and mosquito season. Adult fleas can cause medical problems in your pet if left uncontrolled. Flea prevention is imperative to keep your pet comfortable and help prevent a flea infestation in your living environment. It can also reduce or eliminate the instances of tapeworms, flea allergy dermatitis and even anemia. Safe and effective flea and tick products are available for purchase over-the-counter from your veterinarian. If you live in an area where ticks can be found, be sure to use a product that takes care of both fleas and ticks

Our area continues to see a yearly increase in heartworm disease. If your pet is not currently on heartworm prevention, now is the time to take action! Heartworms are transmitted by mosquito bites, and this is the time of year when mosquitoes start making their presence known. Since preventing heartworm is safer, easier on your pet, and much simpler than treatment of the disease, it just makes sense to keep up-to-date on preventative. There are different heartworm prevention products available, so discussing with your veterinarian which one best suits your pet (and you!) is advised.

Heartworm preventatives are a prescription-only product and are not available over the counter. Heartworm testing is recommended.

We hear every day how beneficial exercise is to us. It helps the heart, it helps with weight control, and it is good for the mind. Did you know that the same is true regarding your dog and daily exercise? Why not make it a part of your daily routine to go for a walk (or if you prefer, a romp!) with your four-legged friend? The benefits are enormous, and with spring here, it is a wonderful way to spend time with your dog!

Foxtails are a very common problem in our area this time of year. The most common place on a pet that foxtails invade is the nose. One sniff of a foxtail on the ground, and the sneezing can start. They can also invade other body cavities, as well as the eyes and feet. What makes the foxtail more dangerous to pets than other weeds is that foxtails tend to travel once they are inside the body, and they can only travel one direction: in! This is why it is so important to get your pet to the vet as soon as you suspect a foxtail. The most common symptom of a foxtail in the nose is sneezing.

If your pet starts sneezing, sometimes in sporadic "fits" with breaks in between, it usually means there is something in the nose.

It is always a good idea to check your pet's feet periodically because foxtails can become imbedded in the feet, especially between the toes.

Now is the time to start preparing for the summer. It won't be long before the temperatures start soaring, so be sure that you have a place for your pet that will be comfortable, cool and safe during the summer.

Pets are good for the soul, so hopefully you will take time daily to enjoy some quality time with your special friend! From all of us at Bradshaw Veterinary Clinic, we hope you enjoy a safe, healthy and happy spring!