Archived Pet Health Tips

Previous Pet Health Tips

December- Holiday Decorating and Party Safety

Give your pet a place to retreat if your party guests become too overwhelming for them. Set-up a quiet room that is off limits to your guests.

Place all candles out of reach of your pets and never leave candles burning unattended.

Keep breakable ornaments away from the bottom of the tree. They are less likely to be broke by a curious pet towards the top of the tree. Secure your tree to a wall by using some high gauge fishing line and hooks or nails. This will prevent your tree from being knocked over by the pets rough housing around the tree or trying to climb the tree.

Tinsel is pretty, but it can obstruct the digestive system of pets who may eat it. It is best to not use tinsel for decorations in houses with pets.

Keep all wires and cords hidden to prevent your pets from chewing them.

Mistletoe, holly berries, lilies and poinsettia plants can be potentially dangerous. If eaten, pine needles can result in internal puncture wounds. Keep plants out of reach of your pets and keep a mindful eye on your pets while playing around the tree. Keep the pine needles vacuumed up as much as possible.

(Courtesy of: Associated Veterinary Services)

****

November- The Great American Smoke-out (November 15, 2012)

Everyone has heard the risks of second hand smoke (SHS) to people. What you probably don't know is that SHS could be harming your "best friend" as well.

Studies done at Colorado State University and Tufts University found a dog exposed to SHS had a 1.6 times greater chance of getting cancer as a dog not exposed to SHS and found a direct link between a cat's chances of developing lymphoma and the number of smokers living in the home. A cat exposed to SHS had double the risk of getting lymphoma.

In dogs with long noses, the most common form of cancer was nasal cancer, for the short nosed dogs lung cancer was the most common. Most dogs with nasal cancer will not live longer than a year after diagnosis.

If the cat had lived with a smoker for 5 years or more, the risk was tripled. If there were 2 smokers in the house the risk increased 4 times. Researchers think the way that SHS affects cats is that they lick the smoke residue off their fur. Feline lymphoma kills 3 out of 4 of the cats infected with it in the first year.

Another risk is nicotine poisoning from pets eating unattended cigarettes or butts. Nicotine poisoning can lead to death within a short period of time.

(Courtesy of: Associated Veterinary Services)

****

October- Halloween Pet Safety

1.Remember the bowl of candy is for trick-or-treaters, not for your fluffly loved ones. Chocolate in all forms, especially dark or baking chocolate, can be very dangerous for dogs and cats. Candies consisting the artificial sweetener xylitol can also cause serious problems.
2.Be sure to keep wires and cords from decorations out of reach of your pets.
3.Use caution if using candles in carved pumpkins.
4.Don't put your dog or cat in a costume unless you know he/she loves it.
5.If you do dress up your pet, be sure the costume isn't annoying or unsafe. Do not allow it to constrict the animal's movement, breathing, or hearing.
6.Keep all but the most social dogs and cats in a separate room and away from the front door during trick-or-treating hours.
7.Be sure your pet is wearing a current registration and name tag. If for any reason your pet escapes and becomes lost the tags and/or a microchip can be a lifesaver and increase the chances that he/she will be returned to you.
****

July- Summer Barbecues

Summer-time gatherings lend to barbecues and other gatherings with an abundance of rich foods. Allowing your pet to eat these party appetizers, main dishes, and/or desserts interfere with your pet's scheduled feeding patterns and can cause digestive problems.

Also, keep all trash out of reach of your pet. Potentially life threatening illnesses and/or choking may occur if your pet choses to snoop in the trash.

****

May- Taking Care of Your Pets in the Heat

Animals are unable to sweat like humans do. Parked cars can become death traps in a matter of minutes, even on a mild summer day.

Always provide a shady spot for your animals
Always provide plenty of fresh drinking water; even while traveling
Don't let dogs ride loose in pick-up truck beds.

Signs of Heat Stroke/ Heat Exhaustion

Uncontrollable panting
Bright red mucous membranes on the gums & conjunctiva of the eyes
Hyperventilation - Fever - Staring - Glassy Eyes
Anxious Expression- Refusal to Obey Commands
Warm, Dry Skin - Rapid Heartbeat
Diarrhea - Vomiting
Collapse - Seizures
Staggering - Salivating
Weakness - Confusion

To lower body temperature, gradually give the animal water to drink, place a cold towel or ice pack on the head, neck, and chest, and/or immerse the dog in cool (not cold) water. Call your veterinarian immediately after.

Brachycephalic (flat faced) animals are prone to sunstroke more than the 'normal nosed' types.

Do not shave such dogs as malamutes and/or huskies in an attempt to cool them. Their coats actually provide insulation from the heat. Do keep the long-coated type animals well-groomed and free from mats so air can circulate around them more effectively.

Immediately seek advice from your veterinarian if you suspect your animal is experience heat exhaustion.

****

April - From Unseasonably Warm Winter

We have had an unseasonably warm winter this year. With this, fleas and ticks tend to be more abundant in the warmer summer months. The best time to start prevention is before the little pest invades your home or pet. Fleas multiply very quickly and once you notice them you could already have millions in your home. Ticks carry a various number of diseases that could make your loving pet ill.

Talk to your Veterinarian about types of prevention that will be the most effective for your pet and family.

****

March - Spring is Coming

Many people have begun to notice their pets are shedding excessively. This happens to all animals in the spring and again in the fall. Although this can be a nuisance for many there are ways to control the amount of hair. Regular brushing, at least weekly, will greatly reduce the amount of hair left around the house. Another way to help remove loose unwanted hair is to bath your dog using bathing brushes at least monthly.

****

February is Dental Awareness month.

Good dental hygiene prevents illnesses such as heart and kidney disease. Annual cleanings, regular check ups and brushing your pet's teeth weekly is recommended.

Some vets may offer specials and discounts during the month of February.

Source URL (retrieved on *03/10/2014 - 11:25am*):
http://www.greatfallsmt.net/animalshelter/archived-pet-health-tips