



CASTLE HILLS
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

April | June 2021

PET GAZETTE

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PAWS FOR GARDEN SAFETY

A QUICK LOOK AT TIPS TO HELP MAKE YOUR BACKYARD PET-SAFE

Make sure your backyard plant selections are pet-friendly!

April showers may bring May flowers, but some of those beautiful blooms can be toxic to our furry friends! With the warmer weather finally here - it's a great time to get out and repair some of the winter damage to your garden. When selecting your plants at the nursery, take some time to review your choices, and make sure to avoid those which could be dangerous for your pets.

TOXIC PLANTS

Below are just a few of the most common pet-toxic plants found in Texas gardens:

AZALEA
DAFFODIL
SAGO PALM
VERBENA
FERNS

HYDRANGEA
WISTERIA
GERANIUM
LILIES
TULIPS

For a more complete list of pet-toxic plants, visit:
PetPoisonHelpline.com/Poisons

GARDEN TOXINS

In addition to plant matter, avoid using toxic chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizers around places your pet may come into contact with. A pet who walks through a treated area and then licks his or her paws can become exposed to harmful chemicals. Many rodenticides and pest baits can often smell and taste enticing to curious pets - so it's important to keep them stored safely out of the reach of snooping noses. It is also important to note that 'organic' does not always mean pet-friendly. Many 'organic' gardening compounds such as fertilizers can be toxic if ingested. Be mindful of what neighbors may be using in their yards too!



WE ARE VCA CASTLE HILLS!

MEET MEMBERS OF OUR VCA CASTLE HILLS TEAM!



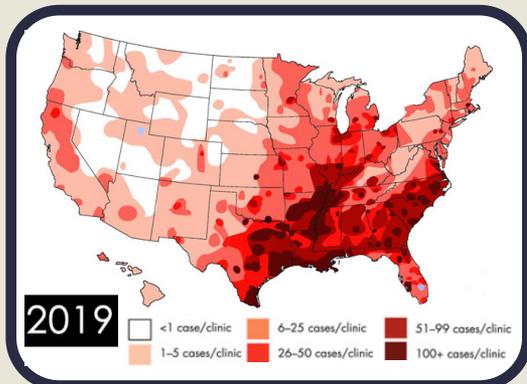
Liz -

Elizabeth (or Liz, as she likes to be known), came to VCA Castle Hills in 2017. She relocated from California with her rescue dog Mila and has now added another rescue to her family, Ezra. She comes with experience as a groomer and animal shelter kennel technician.

HEARTWORM AWARENESS MONTH

APRIL IS HEARTWORM AWARENESS MONTH

The American Heartworm Society's incidence chart reflects data gathered from over 5.5 million patients at almost 6,000 veterinary practices across the United States.



Data is reported every three years, with the most current report being released in 2019.

April is National Heartworm Awareness Month - and the timing could not be better, since the advent of spring marks the beginning of peak parasite season here in the Texas Hill Country. Heartworms are a potentially deadly parasite transported from host to host by mosquitoes.

When larval heartworms are introduced into a pet's bloodstream through a mosquito bite, they begin to make their way towards the heart. Once there, the larvae attach themselves and begin to establish a colony. The larval worm colonies grow until they reach maturity, after which they then begin to reproduce and release tiny larvae into the bloodstream. While traveling throughout the host's bloodstream, these larvae are then picked up and transported to a new host by a feeding mosquito - and the whole cycle begins anew.

Because mosquitoes are so prevalent here in San Antonio, it is essential that we keep our pets protected with year-round heartworm prevention. Left untreated, heartworm infections can be fatal. Even treatable infestations are difficult, costly and painful to treat in dogs - and there is no cure for infection in cats.

Thankfully, there are a variety of effective parasite prevention medications available to help you keep your furry friends safe...and we're here to help!

Your pet's veterinarian can help you select the type of medication that is best suited to your family and pet's lifestyle. Give us a call today if you would like to schedule a consultation to develop a protection plan, or if it is time to get a refill on Fluffy and Fido's parasite prevention.

SEARCHING FOR A FELINE FRIEND?

JUNE IS NATIONAL ADOPT A SHELTER CAT MONTH!

June is National Adopt a Shelter Cat Month!

If you or someone you know is looking to welcome a new furry family member into their family, we encourage you to begin your search at your local Humane Society of Animal Shelter.

SHELTER STATISTICS

According to the ASPCA, approximately 6.5 million pets enter animal shelters across the United States. Of these animals, 3.2 million are cats and kittens. Thankfully, the numbers of lost pets entering shelters who are reunited with their families - and of those who are given a second chance at life through adoption are on the rise. Right here in our own community, in 2019 almost 5,000 pets were adopted into forever families from the San Antonio Humane Society - and more than 6,000 pets found new families through adoption from San Antonio's Animal Care Services.

NEVER A BETTER TIME

There's never been a better time to welcome a new cat into your family! Spring and summertime sees a rise in the number of litters born, and June is peak 'kitten season'. That means that shelters are often overflowing with litters of kittens needing homes.

DO WHAT YOU CAN

If you aren't currently looking to adopt, there are still a number of different ways you can help make a difference for pets in need throughout our community! Check with your local shelter or rescue organization and see if they are currently in need of foster homes to help free up space in the kennels. Most shelters will always have volunteer opportunities available - and even the smallest donation of money or pet supplies will be greatly appreciated.



DEAR DOC...

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS FROM OUR DOCTORS HERE AT VCA CASTLE HILLS



Dr. Roxana Michel

Hi Antony!

What a lucky little pup Caesar is to have such a wonderful family, who is looking forward to pampering him a little extra! And it's a great that you are interested in making sure your celebrations are safe and healthy.

One of the easiest and most impactful ways you can show your pet a little extra love is to just spend

some extra time with them. Spend a few extra minutes playing with a favorite toy in the backyard, take an extra lap around the block on your daily walk or enjoy some cuddle time in the afternoon sunshine.

If you want to surprise your pet with something new for their wardrobe, ensure that everything fits properly. Harnesses and pet clothing should be snug - but roomy enough that they allow for unrestricted freedom of movement. Check for any signs of uncomfortable rubbing, especially under the armpits. Also make sure that your pet can easily relieve themselves while

wearing their new gear.

If you're looking to pamper your pet with a little tasty treat, and are looking for an alternative to the traditional biscuit, some healthy dog-friendly options include: carrot sticks, green beans, apple slices (with NO seeds), or a few pieces of unsalted and unbuttered popcorn. For kitties, try offering a few pieces of tuna, peas - or, of course, cat nip! Just remember, don't overdo it with treats. Treats should not make up more than 10% of your pet's overall caloric intake.

Finally, if they enjoy the experience, consider treating your pet to a spa day! Giving your furry friend a luxurious bath, pet-icure and massage is a great way to show them a little extra love!

- Roxana Michel, DVM

Dear Doc...
We are excited to celebrate "Pet Appreciation Week" June 6th-12th!
Can you give us some recommendations on some safe and healthy ways we can do so? We want to avoid just giving Caesar a bunch of treats!
- Antony

SPOTLIGHT

Care Club

Our preventive nose-to-tail wellness plans are now, better than ever!

Our new and improved CareClub plans offer your pet the preventive wellness care they need, at a price you can afford!
Our customizable plans include:

- Unlimited Exams -

- Live Chat -

Access to live chat 24/7 with a licensed veterinary professional through the MyVCA app

- Personalized Wellness Care -

Such as doctor-recommended vaccines, labwork and add-on options such as professional teeth cleanings and spay/neuter services

- Earn Rewards -

Earn rewards on qualifying purchases!

Ask us how to enroll your pets today!



LIMITED TIME OFFER!

Now through June 30th, we are waiving the enrollment fee for new CareClub Members!

That's a savings of \$49.99!

RESCUE AND ADOPT

Looking to adopt?

Check out these great local rescue groups!

Save a life...gain a friend...adopt today!



HUMANE SOCIETY

Phone: 210-226-7461

www.sahumane.org



ANIMAL DEFENSE LEAGUE

Phone: 210-655-1481

www.ADLtexas.org



AUSTIN BOXER RESCUE

Phone: 512-968-1343

www.austinboxerrescue.com



ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES

Phone: 210-207-4738

www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare



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