



The McClave Tailwagger

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Veterinary School Admission

Wondering how difficult it is to get into veterinary school? Check out the most recent statistics shared by U.C. Davis for the Class of 2022:

1046 students applied, 183 were admitted and 150 accepted the admission. Of the 150 future veterinarians, 136 are female and 14 are male. The average age upon admission is 23. 120 students are California residents, 7 are WICHE states residents and 23 are non-residents. California and WICHE states resident had a cumulative GPA of 3.7 while non-resident's GPA was 3.91. All students had an average 1475 hours experience of working with animals at application time!

There is a second veterinary school in California: Western University of Health Sciences but they have not released their 2018 data yet.

Good Bye to Summer Madness

While I am mourning summer because of the loss of travel and the fun activities available in Los Angeles, I am not mourning the madness that occurs in veterinary medicine each season. This summer has been particularly hard for us and we had a difficult time accommodating many of you who wished to make appointments for your pets. We can't stop fielding calls from many loyal clients who are unable to book an appointment, particularly for wellness exams. Yes we are aware and we are working hard to rectify it.

The reasons for our appointment shortage include being short staffed at the doctor level and the increased emergency traffic during the summer months. The sick pets displace the healthy ones and the critical pets displace the less sick. Such is life in a 24-hr hospital!

While we can't control the number of emergencies that walk through our front doors, we can certainly control our staffing. We have hired more doctors to remedy our situation and are increasing our team size further (meet Drs. Lobanov and Baghoyan below). We truly apologize for the inconvenience we may have caused you and please allow us to fix the problem in the months to come. A huge thank you for those of you who have shared your concerns: your opinion matters!



Praying For Rain and Not Just Leaves!

Meet Our New Veterinarians

As stated above, our two new veterinarians are Dr. Betty Lobanov who joined our team in April and Dr. Hygan Baghoyan who joined our team in July.

Dr. Betty Lobanov grew up in Santa Monica and received her Bachelor's degree in Biology from Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. She obtained her Veterinary Medical degree from Ross University in St. Kitts with completion of clinical studies at Cornell University. Her areas of special interest include internal medicine, surgery, dermatology and cardiology with a growing interest in exotics and basic wellness/husbandry care. Dr. Lobanov is fluent in Russian and proficient in Spanish. In her spare time Dr. Lobanov enjoys dancing, traveling, going out for sushi and spending time with her husband and cat Ziggy.

Dr. Hygan Baghoyan was born and raised in the suburbs of San Diego. Like many veterinarians, her love for animals began almost at inception. It was her love for animals and science that motivated her outstanding academic performance. She earned her Bachelors of Science in Wildlife Conservation Biology with an emphasis in Wildlife Health from the University of California, Davis. She then moved back to Southern California and earned her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Western University of Health Sciences. Dr. Baghoyan's dream has merged into her practice. Her objective is to provide the best patient care possible, coupled with properly educating her clients. She also loves to brag about her fur baby, Prada. A few of the other things she enjoys are traveling, yoga, reading and family. Dr. Baghoyan is bilingual in English and Armenian.

Nursing Care For Your Cat

Cats are wonderful company, yet their solitary and fastidious nature can present many challenges when caring for them during an illness. Those of you who have risked losing fingers pilling a cat or have ended up with a smorgasbord of open canned food can attest for the challenge of caring for a sick or elderly cat. The following is a collection of practical tips that may improve your experience while nursing your sick kitty.

At the Vet:

The American Association of Feline Practitioners has created a brochure called "Getting Your Cat to the Veterinarian". It can be found online at <http://catvets.com/GetCatToVet>. Consider spraying your cat's carrier, 30min beforehand, with Feliway, a natural cat pheromone (<https://www.feliway.com/us>). Place a familiar blanket or toy in the carrier and take treats with you. Cats can sense your anxiety and apprehension so try to stay calm. If your cat is very anxious in the waiting area, ask a staff member to be placed in an exam room. Do not handle nor remove your cat from the carrier until requested by a veterinary team member. Try not to use verbal reprimand nor "shhhh" your cat as cats do not always react well to discipline and it may trigger a fight or flight response. A towel or your jacket placed over your cat's carrier is often helpful in providing privacy and a more secure environment.

Nursing Care at Home:

If your pet will be going home on medication, ask a veterinary technician to show you how to administer the medicine and if possible, administer the first dose before leaving. When home, identify a quiet, private and familiar place with good lighting and make your cat comfortable in that location. A cat who feels good often sleeps in a curled position, grooms itself and

interacts readily with family members. Do not forcibly remove your cat from its hiding place to administer medication; instead, establish a routine daily and stick to it. Placing your cat on a soft towel on an easily accessible area such as the bathroom sink is a good routine to establish in the morning for oral medicine administration. Do not use food aid to administer medicine unless instructed otherwise. If you hide medicine in the food, cats can develop a food aversion and decreased food intake. Warm canned food slightly in the



microwave before feeding (unless it is a new can). If your cat is not on a special diet, try stimulating your cat's appetite by feeding poultry based baby food (for human babies). One of the tastiest baby food brands is Beechnut Chicken and Broth or Turkey and Broth. Baby food is only designed as a supplement or appetite enhancer and is not a balanced diet by itself. Finally, give your cat positive reinforcement such as brushing or petting or even a treat after accepting medication.

Elderly Cat Needs:

There are many accommodations that may need to be adjusted at home for elderly cats. Things to consider are carpet lined steps to reach a favorite couch or bed, increasing the number of accessible litter-boxes, particularly in two-storied homes, and selecting easier access litter boxes by using ones with a lower ledge. Pay attention to your elderly cat's ability to reach its food and water and consider taking the food to your cat if his/her appetite is reduced. Discuss the use of appetite enhancers with your veterinarian if indicated.

Providing nursing care at first may seem overwhelming, but be patient as even small changes may deliver big outcomes.

Animal News and Tidbits

- Do dogs willingly deceive? Researchers at Cornell University proposed that smaller dogs lift their legs higher when they urinate, possibly to exaggerate their body size. By walking and filming 45 male shelter dogs as they marked, the research team found that small dogs marked more often than larger ones and more interestingly, they raised their leg much higher-some to the point of falling down. Marking higher is a form of deceptive marking or an indirect bluff on any bigger dog who may come by later as he/she may be fooled by thinking their opponent is actually larger. Skeptical? Next time you walk your dog, pay attention to the angle of leg lifting!
- A Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF) outbreak in Northern Mexico is starting to spread to the US according to the CDC. The outbreak which began in 2008 in the border town of Mexicali has affected 4000 people and an unknown number of dogs. RMSF is a tick-borne disease caused by a bacteria called Rickettsia rickettsii, mostly transmitted by a tick called Dermatocenter. Of particular interest is that recent epidemics in Sonora and Arizona have shown RMSF to be transmitted by Rhipicephalus or the brown dog tick whose preferred host is a dog. Both humans and dogs can get the disease which carries a 10% mortality rate. Discuss an appropriate tick preventative with your vet.
- If your pet accidentally ingested mouse and rat bait, make sure you rush him to the veterinarian along with the box of bait. There are many types of bait with a wide variety of shapes, color and active ingredients. Products may look the same or have similar names yet have very different ingredients. As a matter of fact, D-Con is phasing out its anti-coagulant (blood thinner) bait and replacing it with a vitamin D analog called Cholecalciferol, which, sadly, is harder to treat. While both products may be on the shelf, it is crucial to know which product was ingested by your pet. Even better, do not apply any mouse/rat or snail bait at anytime in your yard or home.

A New Pet Food Crisis

The FDA has recently alerted veterinarians to a potential link between a form of heart disease in dogs and the consumption of certain food abundant in vegetables and legumes such as peas, lentils, beans, white and sweet potatoes. The heart condition in question is called DCM or Dilated Cardiomyopathy.

DCM is a disease of the heart muscle where the heart chambers become dilated and the heart becomes enlarged as a result with difficulty pumping. DCM leads to congestive heart failure and is usually seen in giant breeds such as Great Danes, Irish Wolfhounds and Dobermans. Of smaller breeds, the disease can also affect Cocker Spaniels. When recent cases however started to include golden retrievers, Labradors, a whippet, a Shih tzu, a bulldog and a miniature Schnauzer, the veterinary



Consult Your Veterinarian on the Best Diet Selection for Your Dog

cardiology community raised a red flag. 150 reports as of July 12, 2018 have been reported by cardiologists, 30 of which have been reported to the FDA.

All affected pets had been fed, for months, a category of food labelled “grain free” where the main ingredient had been one of the legumes or vegetables labeled above. It is not known yet how these ingredients are linked to cases of DCM. In reports of four atypical DCM cases tested by the FDA, all dogs had low blood levels of the amino-acid Taurine which is found primarily in muscle meat and is absent in legumes. Taurine deficiency is a well documented condition leading to the development of DCM.

The diets in question have not been identified but all are labelled as “grain free”. Please note that this does not mean that all grain free diets

are causing DCM. The FDA is currently working with veterinary cardiologists and veterinary nutritionists to help further the investigations. For further information, visit the FDA site at <https://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/NewsEvents/CVMUpdates/ucm613305.htm>.

What should you do if you feed your dog a “grain free” diet? Promptly look at the ingredient list and make sure that the legumes listed above are not listed first or early in the list, which indicates they are the main ingredients. If they are, consult your veterinarian immediately to seek potential alternatives. Seek veterinary care immediately if your pet is showing signs of exercise intolerance, coughing or difficulty breathing.

Please be aware that this article does not intend to attack all “grain free” diets; all are not created equal. Little is known yet about this recent development, but please beware of all diets that seem to be “in vogue” as they open doors to inappropriate mass marketing. We will share more information as it becomes available.

Hoodoo’s Diary: Nights of the Possum

Ahh how I love the summer nights. In case you do not remember me, I am Hoodoo the really good Dachshund. Even my mom says so—well... most of the time.

I love the summer night and I am always on night duty. We have a ritual mommy and me. After we are home from work, mommy feeds me, then she cares for cat and grandpa and feeds them and we go on a little walk. Afterwards, mommy does some chores around the house and it is time to relax. Momma is often tired by then and since it is late in the day, she sits down doing whatever adult do to relax like read or watch the news— which is not truly relaxing if you ask me, but no one does since I am a dog. So when my mommy is “relaxing”, I go on full patrol.

You see my momma hates the AC. When summer nights are nice, momma opens the French doors and the nice breeze comes in. It is so peaceful and quiet outside, a cricket or two, may be the distant voice of a kid, the rustling of a summer breeze, mom’s

wind chime. I sit on the porch and guard the house from pesky intruders. Cat sometimes sit with me, but you really can’t count on him to chase an intruder, it involves moving which is certainly not his strong point. **I have known for a while that it is up to me to defend this household**, so at night, I am on full prowl.

You may be laughing, but believe me, those intruders come on a nightly basis. Most often, the culprits are these dumb animals called Possums. I smell them a mile away and when I charge with my full might and speed, you would think they’d taunt me like my arch-enemies, the squirrels. Or, you’d think they run away from fear... but no! You know what they do? They freeze and drool, just like that, and that does nothing to stop my frantic warning to momma: “intruder, intruder, hurry, hurry, up there on the block wall, drooling as we speak”... Those guys would actually be quite cute if it weren’t for their ugly tail. I hate them. I want one badly. Alerted, Momma

comes over. Comforted, I feel stronger and mightier and by then all my neighbors are alerted of a potential intruder as invariably, momma picks me up and allows the pesky creature to go next door. Job well done Hoodoo! Another satisfied customer.

Sometimes, my protective skills are tested with something called a Raccoon. These qualify with a shriek that pierces the night and causes momma to rush knowing it is a higher caliber intruder. Raccoons are infrequent visitors and I have not yet mastered my shriek beyond “intense warning”.

I have not met a coyote yet. You see my crazy momma does not allow me out if she is not sitting by the open French doors. That’s why I love summer nights. Momma and I gaze at the stars after I have secured the grounds. We sit there in silence, and when mom gets sleepy, she picks me up, tucks cat in and slowly carries me to my bed. Starry, Starry Night!



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VCA MCCLAVE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

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**We are open 24
hours with a Doctor
on the premises at
all times.**

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