



The McClave Tailwagger

Volume 26, Issue 1
Spring 2018

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VCA Care Club Members Lunch Is on Us!

Who does not love Taco Trucks! Come celebrate spring with the team by joining us for a taco lunch on

Tuesday April 10
From
11 AM to 2 PM

Not a VCA Care Club member?
Ask us how you can join today. Otherwise, buy 2 tacos for \$1 with all proceeds going to VCA Charities.



Hello Spring!

All the paperwork is put away, the tax returns are submitted and the tortoise is awakening from his winter slumber. Despite the recent rain, there is no mistake that spring is here!

For many people, spring is the time for cleaning and tidying up. Despite Southern California's mellow winters, most of us, at least mentally, snuggle home in winter and are reborn in spring. It is amazing to see nature's rebirth: the deep green grass, the flowering bushes, the hummingbirds hovering above and the early morning bird calls among others. My 17-year old cat curled up on a patio chair this morning despite the crisp air and Walnut, the desert tortoise, slowly moved to the brightest spot of sun over the grass. Even Hoodoo's fight with a squirrel, loud as it was, did not dare to disrupt my quiet spring morning. Two quick loads of laundry, light yard work and a small harvest of swiss chard from my vegetable garden was all what the doctor had ordered!

Spring at McClave however is a different story. With the milder temperatures and the extended daylight, people and pets are drawn to the outdoors. It is kitten season; flea and ticks come back, allergies get triggered and more trauma cases rear their ugly heads. Nice way to ruin my idyllic scene above.

Spring however should not automatically result in a trip to the veterinarian. Think prevention: hike with your dog on a leash, watch out for rattlesnakes, keep your cats indoors at night, increase your compliance with flea and tick medications, exercise tight mosquito control and do not feed wildlife. You are now set for a nice spring and you could start planning an exciting summer escape!



*"Came the Spring with all its Splendor. All its Birds and all its Blossoms. All its Flowers and Leaves and Grasses."
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

Updates and Tidbits

- Since December 2017, many cases of Canine Influenza, strain H3N2, have been diagnosed in California. The recent outbreak began in the San Francisco Bay Area with further outbreaks in Fresno and Reno, Nevada. At least 413 cases have been reported since the end of December. The H3N2 flu strain in dogs originated in South Korea in 2016. It caused three outbreaks and three sporadic cases in the greater Los Angeles area in 2017. A vaccine for the canine flu is available. Dogs who are at greater risk are social dogs who board, go to parks or doggy day care. If your dog is at risk, vaccinate him or her today and call us for an appointment.
- Check out this great website and meet the Cat Community at www.catfriendly.com. The website has credible and trustworthy information for all things feline.
- Several raw pet foods have been recalled in recent weeks for potential bacterial contamination, the most recent being Salmonella. A study published this month from the University of Utrecht in The Netherlands found that 80% of tested, frozen raw, pet food contained E. Coli. Listeria was present in 54% of products. Feeding raw food to pets carries many risks including zoonotic infections.

Otitis Externa in Dogs

Otitis externa is an inflammation of the external ear canal. Unlike the painful otitis media that afflict children and involves the middle ear, uncomplicated ear infections in dogs typically affect the external ear canal. Symptoms are easy to recognize and include head shaking and scratching the affected ear; a malodorous ear discharge is often present. While ear infections in children are associated with respiratory illnesses, ear infections in dogs often go hand in hand with skin disorders.

So What Causes Ear Infections in Dogs?

Unlike cats, mites are a rare cause of ear infections in dogs. Generally, dog ear infections occur secondary to many risk factors such as genetic predisposition, allergies, excessive moisture, wax formation and ear anatomy (narrow ear canals or excessive hair). Moisture gets trapped in the ear and infection follows. Ear infections can also be secondary to foreign bodies such as foxtails.



Head Shaking and Ear Scratching Are Common Signs of Otitis.

Are Ear Infections Serious?

Well it depends. All ear infections are uncomfortable for dogs and some are downright painful. As a result, any sign of head shaking or ear scratching should warrant a visit to your veterinarian. An infrequent and mild ear infection is easily treated with medication, often broad spectrum. Unfortunately, many dogs have chronic, recurrent ear infections that are extremely frustrating, painful and costly! These chronic infections are best treated with added diagnostics such as ear cytology when a veterinarian examines the ear discharge for the presence of yeast, bacteria or both and tailors the choice of medication based on the offending organism. At times, concurrent allergies may need to be addressed before the symptoms can abate.

Compliance with your veterinarian's recommendation is the best way to make sure ear infections do not become pesky recurrent headaches.

Your Dog and Baby Talk

Do you talk to your dog in silly voices? If you do, you are not alone. Many people use "baby talk" when addressing their dogs. They use a speech with a higher and more variable pitch and a slower tempo than adult speech. Linguists call that speech "infant-directed speech".

Since there is little data on whether dogs benefit from this form of speech, a recent study was conducted at the University of York, England. The study involved a series of sessions where adult dogs listened to recordings of women using infant directed speech about dog recognizable content such as "you're a good boy" or "let's go for a walk". The same dog group also listened to recordings of adult-directed speech of casual, non dog oriented conversation such as "let's go to the movies". A person sat next to each speaker that carried the recordings. All dogs, regardless of age, were more

likely to approach the stranger sitting next to the speaker that emitted dog related content in baby talk.

The interesting part is that this behavior was not as consistent when the type and content of the speeches were mixed up (for instance baby talk but non-dog related content). The researchers concluded that dogs need to hear relevant content as well as a high pitched emotional tone to be attracted. All studies were done with women voices. Gender differences are currently being studied.



"Who's Momma's Little Boy?"

Top Ten Dog Toxins

The following data was recently compiled by the Pet Poison Helpline www.petpoisonhelpline.com. Below are the top ten dog toxins identified by the help line:

1. Chocolate
2. Mouse and rat poisons
3. Anti-inflammatory medications
4. Xylitol (sugar free gum among other sources)
5. Grapes and raisins
6. Antidepressant medications
7. Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
8. Vitamin D overdose
9. Stimulant medications (e.g. for ADD/ADHD)
10. Fertilizers

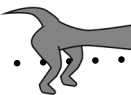
Please be aware that we also see a large number of dogs accidentally ingesting marijuana joints or edibles. Many of these pets are hospitalized and treated presenting a costly and embarrassing incident for their families, not to mention a dangerous one for the dog involved. When recreational marijuana became legal in Colorado, there was a large jump in pet's accidental exposure to marijuana- as high as a 300% jump! Let's hope our state does not join these statistics. Please be responsible!

Top 10 Cat Toxins

Below are the top ten cat toxins identified by the help line as compiled by the Pet poison helpline (above):

1. Lilies (Lilium species)
2. Spot-on flea/tick medication for dogs (applied on cats)
3. Household cleaners
4. Antidepressant medications
5. Essential oils
6. Anti-inflammatory medications
7. Mouse and rat poisons
8. Stimulant medications (e.g. for ADD/ADHD)
9. Onion and garlic ingestion
10. Vitamin D overdose

With Easter approaching, Easter Lilies are widely sold. Please be aware that all parts of the plant are highly toxic to cats and cause renal failure. "NO LILIES FOR KITTIES".



Kitten Growth and Development

Many of you have nursed orphan kittens over the years. It is a highly rewarding job, but also labor intensive and, at times, heartbreaking. So what do you do if you find a litter of kittens that you can not care for? Before you take them to the shelter, please make sure that the shelter you are seeking has a neonatal program. The West Valley Animal Shelter has a nice foster program, but as kitten season matures, they often get overwhelmed with intakes. The shelter itself is not equipped to handle kittens under two pounds. The "Best Friends" shelter in Mission Hills also has a neonatal program, but please call them first before you drop off any newborns.

If you intend to raise the orphan kittens yourselves, our doctors and staff can get you set up with literature, tips and products. Many of our employees have a lot of experience fostering kittens, so please do not hesitate to call.

You will find the guidelines below helpful in knowing what to expect. Please bear in mind though that every kitten is different and some may present with individual needs.

Newborns:

They weigh 2.9-3.9 ounces. They have no teeth and their eyes are closed. Their ears are folded. They can't stand nor keep themselves warm. They can't eat nor eliminate on their own. Their umbilical cord may still be attached.

One Week Old:

They weigh 7.4-8.5 ounces. Still no teeth but eyes may start to open and ears unfold. They sleep most of the time.

Two Weeks Old:

They weigh 9.8-10.9 ounces. Incisors starting to show. Eyes are open and blue. They are more mobile, but still wobbly. They start to interact with siblings.

Three Weeks Old:

They weigh 12.8-14.1 ounces. The canine teeth emerge and the ears are now unfolded. They display uncoordinated play.

Four Weeks Old:

They weigh 15.5-16.6 ounces. The tail is now up and they can begin to eat solid food. They are starting to eliminate without mom's help.

Five Weeks Old:

They weigh 18.5-19.5 ounces. Their premolars are coming in. They can now retract their claws and bury their waste. They are more alert and playful.

Six Weeks Old:

They weigh 22.5-23.6 ounces. They can run and play and are starting to be weaned.

Their eyes start to change colors after seven weeks when they are gaining coordination. By eight weeks, they have 26 baby teeth and are exploring away from mom. They are able to jump, are approximately two pounds of weight and can be fully weaned.



Each Kitten Within the Litter May Have Unique Individual Needs

Hoodoo's Diary: Perspectives

Hi, It's me again, Hoodoo, the really good Dachshund. Something strange happened to me this winter. I, Hoodoo, fell sick for the first time in my life! It all started one day back in January when my momma was out of town, which is pretty often if you ask my opinion. But let's start from the beginning with some background information. My momma is a veterinarian, veterinarian, an animal doctor. She works at VCA McClave, a really good hospital. Momma is the medical director and I, her son, get to go to work with her if I wish to do so. McClave is a fun big place and I play with my buddies there. Yes there are some sick dogs and cats, but it is usually a happy place and most of the cats are there for barfing, which is what they do all day anyway when they are not sick!

So Momma went to Florida and I went to Camp Bow Wow. I knew that AM that she was taking me there-she's transparent

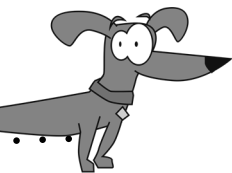
my momma— so I compensated for my future expendable energy by consuming the entire bowl of cat food when no one was looking. But I have done that before, nothing to worry about.

I bid momma good bye at Camp Bow Wow and as usual, I have a blast all day with my friends while momma was getting educated in a veterinary conference-so she says. On Saturday morning, I felt funny, so I skipped breakfast. My humans at Camp were surprised; "not like him", they said. By the afternoon, I was losing it from both ends and I could no longer keep my eyes open. Camp Bow Wow called my momma, who, go figure, did not pick up the call! Her son was experiencing his first illness and she was nowhere to be found! So the camp staff contacted all of momma's emergency numbers and this nice technician named Jessica picked me up and transferred me to McClave. And there, Holy Cow, they poked every inch of my body and stuck an IV in me. Momma explained to me later that I had dehydrated

quickly. I, Hoodoo the mighty, was a sick patient in his own kingdom.

When momma finally paid attention to her phone, she had 12 voice messages and 5 text messages. Serves her right for ignoring her baby! She told me later that McClave was an awesome hospital and that they had treated me real nicely. She is a bit naïve, my momma. What did she think they were going to do to the director's son? You know what though? I did a lot of thinking strapped to that IV. I saw some sad animals there! I will no longer make fun of the kitties behind bars and I promise to comfort each dog I meet and tell them that it will be all OK in the end.

A nice lady named Megan returned me to Camp when I was better. Momma picked me up after a short time and I jumped in her arms. She was about to cry, I know. I told her briefly what happened while she as away and how everyone took care of me. Then I jumped in the car and pouted for the rest of the drive home. Life is good...



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VCA MCCLAVE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

The McClave Tailwagger is a
publication produced by
VCA McClave Animal Hospital

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

THE MCCLAVE TEAM

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- Dr. Kelly Miller
- Dr. Senta Hutchinson
- Dr. Hughes Sanders
- Dr. Meredith Limber
- Dr. Lorie Kiss
- Dr. Galleet Khouban
- Dr. Yelena George
- Dr. Lorenzo Escobar

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Newsletter Editor Dr. Nada Khalaf

Tailwagger Columnist Hoodoo

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- | | |
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