



Governor's Avenue Animal Hospital Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3

www.gaahde.com

Summer 2010



Picture of Dr. Foor, Sugar, owned by Richard and Jean Ennis and vet tech Chrissy.

Summer Travel With Your Pet

Pet owners who call 1-800-204-4595 and provide the zip code, or city and state, of their current location will receive contact information for local vet clinics offering emergency services. This service is available from August 1 through Labor Day.

Vaccines:

What's new and what's different

Raffle Winners!

Our monthly raffle winners are:

- May - Brenda Robertson.
- June – Elaine Cramer.

Both winners selected purses!

Dr. Jan Sosnowski

Lyme vaccine

Most of you with dogs are already vaccinating against Lyme Disease. Several years ago we switched from a heartworm only test to a heartworm/lyme combination test. Two years after the switch I had the staff review the numbers and found that 19% of our dogs were positive for Lyme on the routine annual heartworm/lyme test. I thought that was a pretty staggering number but very few of you seemed surprised. In fact, most people had a family member, friend or neighbor that had been affected.

Lyme is transmitted by the deer tick, a very small tick which can be easily missed when you check your pet. Signs of Lyme Disease are generally fever, joint pain and swelling, lameness

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Vaccines – What's New?
- 1 Summer Travel With Your Pet
- 1 Raffle Winners
- 3 Xylitol Toxicity

can range from mild to severe. Rarely, the disease can affect the kidneys causing the dog to go into kidney failure or it can go to the brain resulting in seizures. The lameness is generally easy to treat with an antibiotic. The other two forms are usually fatal.

We are finding Lyme in the little house dogs as often as the hunting dogs so the Lyme vaccine has become one of our “core” vaccines, one that we recommend for every dog that walks through the door. In addition we also recommend a tick preventative such as Frontline or the Preventic collar for more complete coverage.

Porphyramonas “Dental” Vaccine

It’s a fact. Dogs are outliving their teeth. The other pertinent fact here is that very few of us are brushing our dogs’ teeth the way we should be. We conveniently forget about brushing until Fido’s annual wellness visit where you KNOW it will come up again or when Fido comes up to greet you and his breath is enough to clear the room! Enter the Dental vaccine! Now there is no vaccine that will give your dog fresh breath and a white smile with no effort on your part but the Dental vaccine is targeted toward the toy dog breeds that tend to lose their teeth much too early due to excessive bone loss in the jaw. The vaccine WILL cut down on the amount of plaque and tartar but the major advantage is that your small dog will be less prone to losing teeth and fracturing its jaw.

The vaccine is marketed for dogs less than 30 pounds but is more appropriate by breed. Chihuahuas, Rat Terriers, Dachshunds, Malteses, Poodles and Miniature Pinchers are especially affected. Most of the smaller terrier breeds seem to have pretty healthy bones and teeth.

The vaccine fights the most common bacteria that cause plaque and tartar. It is initially given as a series of 2 injections. The only down side we have seen so far is some dogs will get pretty sore from the vaccine so to get around that we have been recommending that you have some baby aspirin on hand or we will send home a small amount of an “aspirin-like” pain med to prevent the discomfort.

If you have questions about these or any other vaccines contact one of the doctors or staff at the hospital. We will be happy to answer your questions, provide you with informational handouts and help you to tailor a program that meets your dogs specific health needs.



Xylitol Toxicity in Dogs

*Pam McGinnis
Chrissy Smith*

We have heard of many toxic substances that can harm our pets that we try to avoid. Products like rat poison, insecticides, grapes, and onions are among the well-known items. The newest toxin has been around since the 1960's but we didn't realize the effect that it has on our canine friends.

Xylitol is an artificial sweetener that is found in mints, candy, and more commonly, chewing gum. Dogs like most of their owners, love sweets and if they ingest a product containing xylitol, the consequences can be deadly. After the consumption of the xylitol product, the toxic effects can occur as soon as 30 minutes to 18 hours.

After eating xylitol, the blood sugar of the dog can decrease rapidly which is known as hypoglycemia. If not treated, the artificial sweetener can lead to the death of your pet.

Signs:

- Depression
- Weakness/ staggering
- Seizures
- Decreased potassium
- Vomiting
- Coma
- Liver failure

For a 20 pound dog, only one or two pieces of xylitol sweetened gum can cause a hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) episode. For a 10 pound dog, five pieces of xylitol sweetened gum can cause acute liver failure.

If your dog has ingested a xylitol product, immediate action is critical for your pet's recovery. The owner needs to induce vomiting and contact their Veterinarian immediately. After the initial treatment to cause your dog to vomit, follow-up supportive therapy will need to be continued from your Veterinarian. The therapy consists of monitoring your dog's blood sugar and replacing the deficit with oral or I/V glucose. After supporting the hypoglycemia episode, your Veterinarian will need to monitor liver function because it can cause either dysfunction or failure of this organ.

Prevention is the best medicine for your canine pet. Do not leave mints or gums that contain xylitol in "paw's reach" such as, your purse, coffee table, or nightstand.

