

CKVC News

We Are AAHA Accredited

Special points of interest:

- Spaying a female cat before 6 months can reduce her risk of breast cancer by 91%.
- Look inside for tips on medicating your pet.

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Our practice is accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA). This means that we are in accordance with the highest standards available for small animal veterinary practice.

We belong to an elite group of approximately 3,000 AAHA accredited practices nationwide that voluntarily meet or exceed the association's standards for patient care, equipment, and quality procedures. As part of our accreditation, we are regularly evaluated by an AAHA consultant to assure continuing compliance.

There are more than 900 AAHA standards that cover virtually every area of practice including:

- Anesthesiology
- Client Service

Blood Donors Needed

Got Blood? Because of increased demand for blood products, we are asking clients to consider volunteering their pet for our Blood Donor Program. Our donors must be selected and meet the following criteria:

- Between 2 and 8 years of age.
- Dogs must be at least 50lbs.
- Cats must be at least 8lbs., spayed and never have been pregnant.
- Must not be taking medications except for heartworm and flea prevention.
- Annual complete blood count and chemistry profile should be obtained.
- Dogs and cats must be screened for tick and heartworm disease.

- Contagious Disease
- Continuing Education
- Dentistry
- Diagnostic Imaging
- Examination
- Emergency/Urgent Care Facilities
- Housekeeping and Maintenance
- Human Resources
- Laboratory
- Leadership
- Medical Records
- Pain Management
- Patient Care
- Pharmacy
- Safety
- Surgery

AAHA-accredited practices are truly distinctive in providing the highest quality care for pets. AAHA standards are recognized around the world as the benchmark for quality care

- Cats must be indoor only and be screened for Feline Leukemia, FIV and Haemobartonella.
- Must be current on vaccinations, heartworm prevention and flea prevention.

Central Kansas Vet Center will provide blood typing, tick and heartworm disease testing, annual blood work, feline leukemia, FIV and haemobartonella testing, annual fecal evaluation for parasites and an annual exam with vaccinations for blood donors at no cost to owners. Blood donors will also receive a discount on any emergency services they might need. Please call Janessa at CKVC if you have an interest in the blood donor program.



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Preventing Breast Cancer in Cats

Breast (mammary) cancer is the third most common type of cancer in cats, and is highly preventable with early spaying. Mammary cancer is especially common in females, but male cats can rarely also develop it. Mammary cancer is most common in cats over 10 years of age, but can occur as young as 9 months of age. The Siamese breed is frequently affected, but any breed or mixture of breeds of cats can get mammary cancer.

Mammary cancer in cats will often spread. When it does spread, the lungs, the space around the lungs, the liver, the brain, various bones, and the spleen may all be affected. Often the sites of "metastasis" (spread) are a bigger problem than the original tumor location.

Spaying a female cat before she is 6 months old reduces her risk of breast cancer by 91%. There are no benefits that have been found from waiting until after 6 months, either. Spaying a cat before she is a year old still reduces her risk of mammary cancer by 86%. Waiting until she is nearly two years substantially reduces the benefit, but still reduces her risk by 11%. After two years of age, there are still lots of benefits to spaying (prevent stress of pregnancy and kitten-rearing, eliminate ovarian and uterine cancers, and prevent infection of the uterus), but there is no longer a reduction of risk for mammary cancer. At CKVC, we recommend spaying all healthy female kittens before they reach six months of age.

Salmonella in Pet Treats

Would you expect the treat you give Fido could cause a severe diarrhea in you - or Fido? If Fido's treat has not been properly cooked, or stored properly after cooking, this is a possibility. It is most likely to happen to you if you do not follow careful hand washing procedures.

Salmonella is a group of bacteria that can cause a number of different diseases in humans, most commonly severe diarrhea with fever. Illnesses with Salmonella can be quite dangerous and even deadly, especially when the victim is quite young, elderly, pregnant, or immunocompromised from chronic illness or certain medications.

Salmonella is most commonly known to be caused by eating undercooked or uncooked chicken or egg products, but it has a number of other sources also. Organic foods fertilized with manure are one possibility, as is exposure to an animal carrying Salmonella in its feces. Uncooked, or improperly cooked, pet chew toys and treats are another.

Many people argue that pets, especially dogs and cats, are designed by nature to be resistant to these infections and cannot contract a Salmonella infection. However, we have seen pets with severe diarrhea who are very ill, in which dangerous Salmonella strains have been found in the stool. On the flip side, even pets who are not sick can be carrying smaller amounts of Salmonella in their feces, and these could be contracted by their owners.

In 2005 there was an outbreak of Salmonella cases associated with pet treats that were dehydrated but not cooked. In some cases, only the

owner was ill, but in other cases, the pet had symptoms similar to the owner's. The FDA is working on patrolling pet treats to fight this problem, but since it is impossible to test every single treat manufactured every day, it will be hard to prevent entirely.

Any time you give your pet a rawhide or a real bone, or feed a treat or food that has not been cooked, you risk giving your pet and yourself a potentially deadly infection. Most manufactured treats have been heat-processed in such a way that the bacteria would be killed - especially crunchy Milk-Bone type treats, or the highly processed artificial beef jerky or pretend steak types. Freeze-dried treats on the other hand, may have been processed raw, and neither the freezing nor the drying process are likely to kill bacteria. Smoking is another process that may kill bacteria if performed properly, but it is impossible to know how well the process was performed.

Irradiating foods kills surface bacteria really well, and does not leave the food radioactive. It is a way to improve the safety of raw foods.

At CKVC we recommend against feeding raw food to your pet, especially if there are young children, elderly adults, or household members with immunocompromise for any reason. Even if your pet escapes infection, it is possible to pick up an infection from your pet. The most important step that you can take to protect yourself, however, is to wash your hands thoroughly after handling your pet or his food, after handling raw meat, and anytime before you eat, drink, or place your hands or fingers around or in your mouth.

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Survivor of the Month

“Nugget” is our survivor of the month. Nugget is an adult female yellow Labrador who initially came to CKVC for an ultrasound. Nugget had been to different veterinary clinics before being referred to Kansas State University, where she was diagnosed with suppression of her bone marrow, resulting in no red or white blood cells and also very few cells that help clot the blood.



Nugget Huntsman

She required 5 units of blood during 3 separate transfusions in order to stay alive. Nugget had to be placed on immunosuppressive medication which resulted in a fungal infection in one foot and her nose. Because of the fungal infection, Nugget had to be taken off her immunosuppressive drugs and placed on several powerful and expensive medications. During the next couple of months, Nugget suffered two reactions to medications which resulted in fevers over 105, a loss of her ability to stand, and made it necessary to re-start the immunosuppressive drugs. Despite these hardships, her very dedicated owners stuck with her. They made frequent trips to

KSU and for several months came to CKVC daily for bandage changes. As the infections came under control we gradually removed the medications that Nugget was on.

One of the drugs that Nugget required was prednisone, one of the steroids frequently used to treat itchy dogs. Nugget suffered most of the negative side effects of prednisone, including increased appetite, thirst and urination, loss of muscle mass, weakness, calcification of her skin and tendons, very prolonged healing times, thinning of her skin, failure to regrow hair, and severe, hard to treat infections. She is an excellent example of why CKVC tries to use the lowest possible dose of steroids and avoid them wherever possible.

Nugget’s health is slowly returning to normal. She is on six medications, and her white and red blood cell counts are now normal. The foot wound she was initially seen for at CKVC is finally healed and she is starting to recover from the effects of high doses of steroids. Nugget is now one of our most memorable “Miracle Dogs”.

“CKVC tries to use the lowest possible dose of steroids and avoid them whenever possible.”

Medicating Your Pet

Your trip to the veterinarian went well. Just a couple weeks of antibiotics and Fluffy will be feeling better again.

Giving medications to your pet can be challenging. The first time you gave her the pills, everything went fine. Now, it’s hide and seek whenever she sees the medicine bottle come out.

If your pet is not on dietary restrictions, and your veterinarian said the medication can be given with food, the easiest way to give a pill is to hide it in a piece of food. A small amount of butter, cream cheese, baby food, meat gravy, canned food or semi-moist food can also be used. If you are going to put the pill in your pets’ food, it is best to give a small amount of the food without the pill first. This lowers the pets’ suspicion. It is

best not to mix the medication in an entire meal, if the pet does not eat the whole meal, she will not get the appropriate dose of medication.

Some medications come in liquid form or can be made into a paste that can be rubbed on the inside of the ears. Compounding medications and adding flavoring, may also help in medicating your pet. Pill Pockets, a tasty treat with a hidden pocket for the pill, are available at CKVC.

If your pet will not take the pill in food, or cannot have food with the medication, then it’s down the hatch. Seeing a demonstration on how to give medication may help. The friendly staff at CKVC will be happy to show you how.



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Avian Influenza and Cats

Avian Influenza has been around for many years, however, the outbreak in Asia that appeared the winter of 2003 has been described as unprecedented and unpredictable. Nearly 200 million birds have died due to the outbreak. This strain has also been uncharacteristically lethal to humans with 75% of the people infected (approximately 200) with Avian Influenza dying.

Domestic cats were thought to be resistant to this strain of influenza prior to this outbreak. In 2003, 4 captive wild cats died from the strain and in 2004, 147 of 441 captive tigers died as a result of infection with the strain. Earlier this year, a domestic cat as far west as Germany became infected and died from the bird flu. Infections of the bird flu have also been seen in pigs, martens, and ferrets.

Cats can become infected by eating uncooked infected poultry or wild birds or from contact with infected cats. Infected cats

can show severe flu like symptoms, such as fever, nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing, and/or labored breathing. Neurologic signs, vomiting and diarrhea can also occur. Most of the cats identified as infected have died.

All infections in people have been traced back to direct contact with sick birds. There have been no recorded cases of cat-to-human bird flu infection anywhere in the world. Human-to-human spread has not been recorded either.



Nearly 200 million birds have died due to the Avian Influenza outbreak.

The infection of cats with bird flu illustrates the virus' continuing adaptation and unpredictable behavior. The bird flu, so far, has not been reported in the United States. It is anticipated that migratory birds will eventually introduce the virus here. The World Health Organization is emphasizing continued vigilance and intensive surveillance.