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Pine Meadow Newsletter

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Wellness Bloodwork, Why Is It Important?

Why would you do bloodwork on a healthy pet? During a physical, a pet is examined from head to toe and is an easy way to determine if there is an issue externally. However, the only way to know what is going on internally with a pet is by testing bloodwork. Routine wellness bloodwork enables us to detect early or hidden disease in a pet that appears normal. If a disease can be detected early enough, steps can be taken to manage or correct the problem before permanent damage may be caused. It may also allow for better treatment options or possibly slow the progression of a disease. Bloodwork can be used as a baseline for what is normal in a specific pet. A pet's baseline can be then compared with future bloodwork if the pet becomes sick. Bloodwork is recommended in pet over 2 years of age and consists of two major components, a CBC, or complete blood count, and a chemistry profile. A CBC provides information on various types of blood cells. Red blood cells carry oxygen to tissue, white blood cells fight infection and respond to inflammation, and platelets help the blood to clot. The chemistry profile provides information about the organs and tissues of the body. It also helps detect various diseases such as diabetes. Bloodwork is also an essential tool used to monitor a senior pet for changing or ongoing health problems. A pet is considered senior or geriatric once they reach 7 years of age or older. A senior pet is also more likely to be on long term medications. Bloodwork is used to determine how a pet's body is reacting to these meds and if they can be safely given. A more comprehensive bloodwork is performed on senior pets which includes a urinalysis. A urinalysis detects infection and provides information on how well the kidneys are functioning. It can also help detect or confirm suspected thyroid disease.



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Upcoming Events

February- February is Dental Month!
10% Off all Dentals all month long!

March- March is Cat Health Month.
\$25 Feline Leukemia/FIV testing,
\$10 off Feline Wellness Visits,
20% off Feline Health Screens!

May- Military appreciation month: 10% off
services and products

August - Dental month! 10% off dental
cleanings all month long

October - Paws for Veterans 5k



New Addition To The Family

Did you get a new addition to the family over the holidays? Here are a few tips to make the transition easier. The key to helping your new pet to adjust to their new home is being prepared and being patient. It can take anywhere from a few days to a couple of months for a new pet to settle into a new routine. For a new puppy, make sure you already have a leash, collar, bowls, food, chew toys, and most importantly a crate, which will become that pet's own personal space. Place the crate in a low traffic area where the pet can retreat to if it becomes overwhelmed. A crate will also help with housetraining. Set up a housetraining schedule and maintain a consistent routine. Consistency is key! Immediately take a puppy outside right after naps or after being fed. Provide appropriate chew toys for the pet to discourage chewing of other items, like your shoes. As far as cats go, the first thing you need to know, is most of them hate to travel. Make sure you have a pet carrier. A loose cat in a car can lead to an accident. A scared cat carried by hand can take off quickly and without warning. Even if it is a short distance from the car to the house you could easily lose them. Once home, provide them with a quiet room, litter box, food and water, and a scratching post. The rule of thumb for litter boxes is, have one more than you have cats. Scratching posts are essential to having a happy cat. They love to sharpen their claws and if not given a place to do so, they will often sharpen them on your furniture. Whether your new addition was a kitten or a puppy, the most important thing you can do for them is make sure they are healthy. A quick trip to the vet will ensure that your new family member will be around for many years to come.



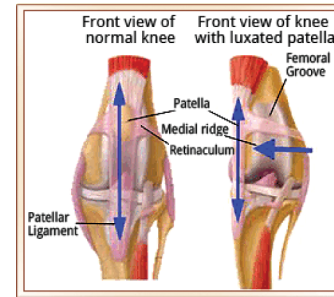
Indoor Only Cats

Indoor cats need vet care too. It is true that indoor cats are rarely exposed to contagious diseases, like feline leukemia or FIV, unless they escape. However, there are still plenty of medical issues that can affect them. Conditions like heart disease, diabetes, overactive thyroid, arthritis, and periodontal disease are just a few things that indoor cats can hide from their owners. Hiding an illness is a survival mechanism pre-programmed into a cat from many thousands of years of evolution. The biggest misconception among many pet owners is that my cat is acting fine so it must be healthy. Most cats act perfectly normal until the day comes when they are so sick they can no longer hide it. At that point treatment is often complicated, expensive, and sometimes ineffective. If we don't look for illness, we won't find it. And even the best veterinarians cannot fix what they do not know is broken. So, if your cat is not going to tell you, their trusted human caretaker, the only way to discover if a pet is ill would be to schedule an annual wellness visit. A wellness exam will be performed to check a pet from head to toe for any abnormalities while, wellness bloodwork will determine if a pet is healthy on the inside. If a problem is identified, you and your veterinarian can develop a plan to address the issue and get your beloved family member back on the road to recovery.



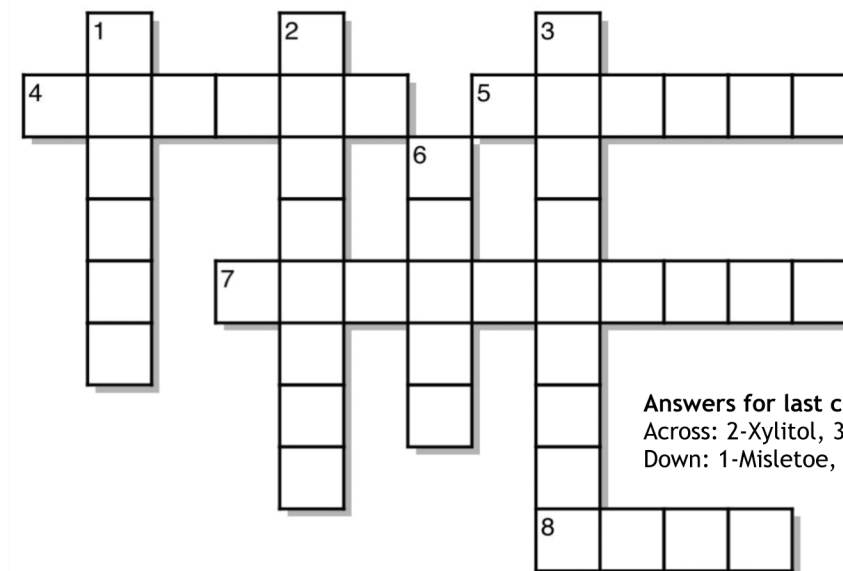
Luxating Patella In Dogs

The term “luxating” means out of place, while “patella” is the term used to describe a dog's kneecap. Therefore, a luxating patella is the condition when a pet's kneecap moves out of place. The kneecap attaches to the large muscles of the upper leg or thigh and is located on the underside of the patella ligament. This ligament attaches to the center point of the tibia, or lower leg. When the thigh muscles contract they pull on the patella ligament sliding the kneecap up a groove which holds the ligament in place. This movement results in the straightening, or extension, of the leg. Dislocation of the kneecap may sometimes be caused by a congenital shallow groove found in many small breed dogs; including Maltese, French Poodles, and Bichon Frises. Dislocation may also occur if the patella ligament is not attached at the midline of the tibia. If attachment occurs too far medially, or towards the inside of the leg, muscle contraction will then pull the kneecap towards the inside of the leg. Luxating patella rarely causes signs of any pain, but will intermittently cause the pet to not put weight on the affected leg. Pets will often kick the affected leg out to the side in attempt to hyperextend the knee, popping the kneecap back into its normal position. Luxating patella predisposes the knee to other injuries and can cause arthritic changes in the knee joint. Long-term anti-joint supplements and inflammatory medications may be prescribed. Surgery to repair a luxating patella may be recommended if persistent lameness occurs or if other injuries occur to the knee secondary to this condition. Surgical repair involves deepening the groove the kneecap sits in, transplanting the ligament to its proper attachment point on the tibia, and tightening the capsule surrounding the kneecap to prevent future luxation.



Test Your Knowledge

How much do you know about “General Health Care” for your pet? Here are a few in a fun crossword puzzle format. Answers will be provided in the next newsletter. Good luck!



ACROSS

- 4 Surgery to fix a male pet
- 5 Vaccination required by law
- 7 Transmitted by mosquitoes
- 8 Surgery to fix a female pet

DOWN

- 1 February promotes what procedure
- 2 Vaccine for outdoor cats
- 3 Transmitted by fleas
- 6 unvaccinated puppy virus

Answers for last crossword puzzle “Holiday Hazards”

Across: 2-Xylitol, 3-Chocolate, 4-Tree, 5-Bones, 6-Fireworks, 7-Holly

Down: 1-Mistletoe, 4-Tinsel