

The Reston Paw Print

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Annual Exams and New Vaccine Protocols for Cats and Dogs

Reston Animal Hospital has always recommended annual exams for cats and dogs, with or without vaccines. We hope to continue to offer guidance and, when possible, adjust your pet's immunization program as public research dictates. After countless scientific inquiries, researchers believe that most adult dogs and cats over two years of age develop a very high level of immunity through certain "core" vaccines, and these immunity levels can protect your pet for at least three years.

The subject of over-vaccination and its potential risks have caused us to modify our vaccination program to the following:

- Full Distemper vaccines (DHLPPC or DHPPC for dogs and FVRCP for cats), will be given every three years.

- The annual exam will include the following vaccines with known one year duration:

⇒ Dogs will receive Leptospirosis, Corona and, when appropriate, Bordetella (Kennel Cough) and Lyme disease vaccines.

⇒ Cats will receive Rabies, Upper Respiratory and, when appropriate, Feline Leukemia, FIV and FIP vaccines.



Hill's Rebate Program

Hill's Pet Food Co. has provided us with the opportunity to offer you a full rebate coupon for any initial purchase of a small bag or six cans of

Prescription Diet or Science Diet brand dog or cat food. We currently offer a variety of prescription diets which include: **j/d** (Reduces joint pain in arthritic dogs), **r/d and w/d** (Reduces and then maintains weight in overweight pets), and **t/d** (Helps physically break down developing plaque, stain and tartar on pet's teeth).

Merial Introduces Safer Feline Leukemia Vaccine

The pharmaceutical company Merial has developed a safer form of the Feline Leukemia vaccine. It is the only leukemia vaccine that does not contain aluminum, which has been suspected to contribute to cancerous tumors near the injection site. The new vaccine has another improvement as well: **No needles are used to administer the vaccine!** A pressurized device is used to penetrate the skin layer and distribute the vaccine evenly. It is recommended that all cats who go outdoors or who have been exposed to unknown felines be tested for Feline Leukemia and, if negative, be vaccinated annually. Feline Leukemia is a retrovirus that attacks the immune system and is transmitted by infected cats through close contact via saliva, urine or feces.

Strategic Deworming

The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) has suggested that annual fecal testing may no longer be satisfactory in the prevention of animal parasitism and human exposure. Although we are unaware of any specific incidents among our clients or their families, there have been reported cases of human exposure to roundworms, hookworms, tapeworms, fleas, mange and toxoplasmosis. It is estimated that 10,000 children in the U.S are infected with parasites each year. To help solve this problem, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recently introduced the concept of Strategic Deworming. We carry several deworming agents that are safe, effective and easy to administer to your pet. Dog owners who use heartworm prevention, which also contains an intestinal parasite prevention, are already practicing Strategic Deworming. Cat owners are also urged to strategically deworm their pets. In addition to deworming, using flea-prevention products (such as Frontline) and practices can also help prevent tapeworm transmission.

Microchip, Microchip, Microchip!

We can't stress it enough! We hear clients say it all the time. "My pet will never get away." Believe us, it happens! At least once a week, we hear from some client that their pet has gotten away from them. But did you know that there are products to help your pet return to you safely? With \$38.00 for a doctor to place a microchip under your pet's skin and a one time registration fee of \$17.50, shelters and clinics nationwide can scan stray pets for registration information to help your dog or cat get home. One of the biggest lessons we learned from

Hurricane Katrina is that microchipping your pet is the best way to get reunited with him/her in the event of an emergency. Set up an appointment today!



AHS Releases Canine Heartworm Guidelines

Charles Thomas Nelson, DVM, president of the American Heartworm Society, tells DVM magazine that guidelines call for annual testing of canines for heartworm disease, as opposed to every two or three years. Further recommendations are additional testing when switching prevention methods and use of year round prevention, even in northern climates. (From the DVM magazine ACVIM coverage August 2005)



Heartworm Disease and Your Cat

Heartworm disease is a blood parasite that is transmitted to cats and dogs by mosquitoes. Although more common in dogs, a recent study reported that 15% of cats in Virginia tested positive for heartworm disease. We do not routinely test cats for heartworm disease, but there are a variety of products that, when used as directed, are effective at preventing exposure. **Revolution**, for example, is one of our most user-friendly products. It is a topical solution used once a month that, in addition to preventing heartworm disease, prevents and controls flea infestation, hookworms, roundworms, and ear mites. There are also oral forms of feline heartworm prevention such as **Heartgard** and **Interceptor**, which

are flavored chews or tablets given once monthly.

Lyme Disease

Fairfax and Loudon Counties are home to a large number of ticks, many carrying Lyme Disease. Some of these ticks, such as the **Deer Tick**, are so small they almost impossible to see with the naked eye. Lyme disease is injected into the body when an infected tick bites a dog or human. Because of the sometimes slow initial progression of the disease, signs of infection can be easy to miss. The current annual heartworm test we use, called **3DX**, includes a Lyme test as well as a test for Ehrlichiosis, another tick-borne disease. There is a Lyme disease vaccine available for dogs as well as a variety of flea and tick prevention products, such as **Revolution**, **Frontline Plus**, and **Advantix**. Using a prevention product and the vaccine together can almost eliminate the possibility of your pet contracting Lyme disease.

Pain Management

As with people, arthritis can develop in the joints of aging animals. Products such as Advil (Ibuprofen) and Tylenol (Acetaminophen), which are commonly used in humans, should **not** be given to cats and dogs. Fortunately, there are products available for pets to help relieve arthritis pain. We currently stock **Rimadyl**, **Deramaxx**, and **Etogesic** for dogs and **Metacam** for cats. We also carry a variety of nutraceuticals, specifically chondro-supportive substances that induce joint lubrication and protect cartilage. Used in combination, these products may extend the quality of your pet's life.

Evaluating Blood Pressure in Pets

Blood pressure testing is appropriate in patients with cardiac disease, kidney disease, and hyperthyroidism. Our animal hospital currently has Doppler equipment and we hope to acquire new equipment to simplify

taking blood pressure readings in routine exams.

Diabetes Alert: Insulin Product Discontinued

Eli Lilly, a pharmaceutical company, has discontinued Humulin L and U as of December 31, 2005. If your pet currently uses either insulin, please contact us to help you make a change to one of the following insulin products: For Dogs: **Vetsulin**, **Humulin N** or **Glargine** (a new type of synthetic insulin). For Cats: **PZI insulin** and **Glargine**. In addition, there is now a product available called Alphatrak, which allows pet owners to evaluate the blood glucose level of their pets at home. Along with giving insulin, monitoring weight, blood glucose levels, activity, and water intake are important for your diabetic pet. Please arrange an appointment with one of our doctors to evaluate your diabetic pet's needs and ideal insulin options.

Pet Health Insurance

A lot of the technology available in modern human medicine is now available for your pet, including MRI, chemotherapy, and ultrasound, just to name a few. Unfortunately, as medical technology has advanced, the cost of treatment has also risen. Coverage by a pet health insurance policy ensures the best possible care options for "your best friend." Please contact one of the following providers for a quote or more information.

Veterinary Pet Insurance

<http://www.petinsurance.com>

1800-USA-PETS

Pet Healthcare Plan

<http://www.petpartnersinc.com>

919-859-8222

Compare Our Prices with Internet Sources

Surveys indicate that many pet owners prefer the convenience and pricing of internet sources for their pet's prescriptions. To that end, we have teamed up with VetCentric (<http://www.vetcentric.com>), an internet pharmacy, in an effort to provide your pet with convenient and affordable medication.