

"Healing in Our Hands"



## GLADSTONE VETERINARY CLINIC



# PET TRACKS



Newsletter — Late Summer 2008

### GVC Launches New Website!

**W**e have been working hard on a new website to help provide you with more information and resources on veterinary care for your pet. You can even print out client information forms, boarding forms, and anesthesia release

forms and bring them to your appointment already completed to save you time.

Visit us on-line at  
[www.gladstonevets.com](http://www.gladstonevets.com)

### Risks of Over-the-Counter Medications to Your Pets

**W**hen we aren't feeling so well, we reach for something like aspirin, acetaminophen (Tylenol), or ibuprofen (Advil), so why not give your pooch or kitty a bit to help him out? Many well-meaning pet owners do just that, and end up poisoning their pets!

**Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil)** toxicity in dogs and cats is due to a byproduct made by the liver when it processes the drug. In people, after the pills are taken, the ingredients are broken down in the body by enzymes in the liver, and these medications are generally safe and useful. But these medications can cause liver damage in dogs, due to a higher sensitivity. Cats, however, have much less of the enzyme required to process the drug following ingestion. As a result, there are many dangerous metabolites, or break-down products of acetaminophen that bind to red blood cells and other tissue cells, resulting in the destruction of these cells.

*One Children's Tylenol tablet contains almost twice the toxic level for a normal-sized cat per body weight, and the adult size Tylenol has more than six times the toxic level!*

The problem is more acute and life threatening in cats than in dogs (but Tylenol is also not safe in your dog!). The signs in cats occur within a few hours after ingestion and include drooling, vomiting, bluish

gums, severe depression, dark-colored urine and swollen face and paws. Death can occur in 2 to 24 hours.

Some **ibuprofen** tablets are coated with sugar and appeal to dogs. Symptoms of ibuprofen toxicity include digestive upset, bloody stool, depression, staggering, increased thirst, increased frequency of urination, liver disease, kidney disease, and seizures.

*Cats are more sensitive to the effects of ibuprofen than dogs and one tablet can cause rapid kidney failure and death.*

**Buffered or enteric coated aspirin** (salicylic acid) may be given to dogs, but the dosage **MUST** be carefully calculated by your vet. Two regular aspirin can poison a small dog. Also, be careful with medications such as Pepto Bismol, which contains a component of aspirin, so read your labels!

*If your pet ingests any of these medications, get him to a veterinarian right away for emergency treatment.*

**Please consult your veterinarian before administering ANY other over-the-counter medications to your pets.**

**ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center  
1-888-426-4435**



## Warm Weather Precautions for Pets

**T**he “dog days of summer” are the perfect time for both you and your pet to soak up the last rays of sunshine and enjoy the outdoors.

Along with the fun, the season also offers up situations that can endanger your pet. By taking precautions, you can decrease the chance that disaster will happen. Here are some tips for pet owners to keep their furry friends safe this summer.

**Parked Cars**—In warm weather animals left in parked cars suffer brain damage and die from heatstroke. On a warm day, even with the windows cracked, the temperature in a car can reach 120 degrees in a matter of minutes.

**Pick-up Trucks**—It is very dangerous, and in some states illegal, to drive with a dog in the back of a pick-up truck. Not only can flying debris cause serious injury, but a dog may be unintentionally thrown into traffic if the driver suddenly hits the brakes, swerves, or is hit by another car. Dogs should ride either in the cab (in a crate or wearing a seat belt harness designed for dogs) or in a secured crate in the bed of the truck.

**Collars / IDs**—Make sure your pet is always wearing a collar and identification tag, and include your cell phone number if you are traveling. If you are separated from your pet, an ID tag may very well be his or her ticket home. A microchip is the safest way to trace your pet back to you—even in cases of lost collars or tags!

**Swimming**—Pets and deep water can equal disaster. Always supervise your pets while swimming and be cautious of riptides at the beach. Exposure to appropriately treated pool water should typically not pose much of a problem for healthy dogs. (Ingestion of pool water or saltwater can cause stomach upset, though.) Wash or rinse pool or salt water off of your dogs to help avoid the potential for skin irritation. Always provide plenty of fresh drinking water and clean your dog’s ears after swimming to prevent ear infections.

**Travel**—If you plan on traveling with your pet during the summer, take the time to prepare in advance. Many airlines have warm weather pet embargoes, and most trains and ships do not allow pets other than service animals. Get information on airline pet travel policies at [www.pettravel.com/airline\\_rules.cfm](http://www.pettravel.com/airline_rules.cfm).

**Exercise**—Pets need exercise even when it is hot, but extra care needs to be taken with older dogs, short-nosed dogs, and those with thick coats. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours. Keep in mind that asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet’s paws.

**Fleas & Ticks**—Fleas and ticks are another summer-time threat. Use only flea and tick treatments recommended by your veterinarian (Advantage, Frontline Plus, and Revolution). Some over-the-counter flea and tick products can be toxic, even when used according to instructions.

**Sunburn**—Pets can get sunburned too, and your pet may require sunscreen on his or her nose and ear tips. Pets with light-colored noses or light-colored fur on their ears are particularly vulnerable to sunburn and skin cancer. Pets that have been shaved for the summer may need sun protection if their skin is exposed. Use only sunscreen that is approved for use in pets.

**Lawn Fertilizer/Pesticides**—Summer is often a time when people fertilize their lawns and work in their gardens. But beware: plant food, fertilizer, slug bait, rodent poisoning, and insecticides can be fatal if your pet ingests them, even in very small amounts.

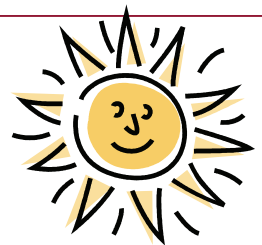
**Cocoa Mulch**—This new product contains a lethal ingredient called “theo bromine,” which is the ingredient in chocolate that is toxic to dogs. The mulch smells like chocolate and dogs can be attracted to it and may ingest it, causing severe illness and even death. Be aware of which product you are using in your gardens.

**Keep Cool**—Provide plenty of water and shade for your pets while they’re enjoying the great outdoors so they can stay cool. Brachycephalic or snub-nosed dogs such as bulldogs, pugs, Boston terriers, Lhasa apsos and Shih tzus, as well as pets with diseases, should be kept in air-conditioned rooms as much as possible.

**Noises & Crowds**—Don’t take your pets to crowded events such as concerts or fairs. The loud noises and crowds, combined with the heat, can be stressful and dangerous for pets. For your pet’s well being, leave your pet at home. Be especially aware of these threats during holidays such as July 4th.

### Signs of Heat Stress/Stroke in Your Pet:

- Panting
- Staring or anxious expression
- Refusal to obey commands
- Warm, dry skin
- High fever
- Rapid heartrate
- Vomiting
- Collapse





## The Many Benefits of Spaying and Neutering

**W**hile helping the pet overpopulation crisis is certainly a major reason to spay or neuter, these procedures also help cats and dogs live longer, healthier, happier lives.

### What is spaying and neutering?

Spaying is the surgical removal of the reproductive organs (the uterus and ovaries), and neutering is the surgical removal of the testicles. Both procedures result in permanent sterilization, or inability of the animal to reproduce. These procedures require general anesthesia, and are typically performed at approximately 5-6 months of age. Animals in heat and pregnant animals can be spayed, although the risk of complication is a little higher.

At Gladstone, we recommend pre-surgical bloodwork, to detect any underlying problems, and careful monitoring and care are taken during surgery to minimize any complications. Pain control is an important part of our treatment plan.

### Spaying/neutering is good for your pet...

Sterilization eliminates sexual frustration and risk of problems associated with pregnancy and birth.

**Females**—Spaying also greatly reduces the risk of breast cancer and eliminates the possibility of uterine and ovarian cancer. **Spaying a female before her first heat and not after one litter further reduces these health risks.** Mammary cancer, the third most common form of cancer in cats, occurs 166 times more frequently in intact cats than in sterilized cats.

Spaying female cats and dogs also eliminates the risk of pyometra, a serious medical condition where the uterus becomes infected and pus-filled, causing life-threatening toxic effects. Pyometra may occur a week to 2 months after a heat cycle, and typically requires intensive (and expensive) medical care and emergency surgery.

#### Risk of mammary cancer in dogs:

Spayed before 1st heat cycle—1 in 2000 dogs  
 Spayed after 1st heat cycle—1 in 12 dogs  
 Spayed after 2nd heat cycle—1 in 4 dogs  
 Unspayed—1 in 4 dogs

#### Risk of pyometra in unspayed dogs:

Under age 9—1 in 166 dogs  
 9 yrs and older—2 in 3 dogs

Spaying also eliminates the mood swings and undesirable behavior that female cats and dogs display during their heat cycle, such as messy spotting, pacing, crying and trying to escape.

**Males**—Neutering eliminates the chance of testicular cancer and decreases the risk of prostate enlargement and prostatitis by 80% or more. Prostatitis is a bacterial infection of the prostate gland, which can have very serious consequences and require extensive and expensive treatment.

Neutering also will make your pet more affectionate and less likely to roam, get in fights, or become lost. Nationally, 80% of the dogs hit by cars are intact males searching for mates. Neutered cats are less likely to contract deadly diseases such as feline leukemia and feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), which are transmitted through bite wounds. Neutered male cats are also less likely to suffer cat bite abscesses from fighting. Finally neutered male cats are much less likely to develop mammary cancer and "stud tail," caused by overactive glands in the tail.

### Spaying/neutering your pet is good for you...

Spaying and neutering greatly increases the life span of your pet, and owners of sterilized pets have lower vet bills. It also makes pets more affectionate companions and less aggressive, in general. Spaying and neutering can also reduce or eliminate unpleasant behaviors such as wailing, messy heat cycles, and humping. Finally, sterilized pets have lower licensing fees.

### Spaying and neutering helps the pet overpopulation problem...

The uncontrolled breeding of dogs and cats has produced more animals than there are loving homes. It's a sad fact that of the estimated 10 million animals brought to shelters each year, about half will not find new homes and families. In Portland metro area shelters last year, over 4,300 dogs and 13,000 cats were euthanized.

#### Pet population explosion facts:

- ◆ In just six years, one female dog and her offspring can be the source of 67,000 puppies.
- ◆ In just seven years, one cat and her young can produce 420,000 kittens

**When you spay and neuter, everyone wins!**

# The Scratching Post—My Little Secret



By Mickey T. Cat, Chief Feline Officer



So, just so you know, I'M really the one in charge around here. And because I like you, I'm going to let you in on a little secret, but don't tell anyone. I...had...uh-hem, worms. It's true—lots of them, it was so disgusting. It's taken me awhile to be comfortable enough to admit that to anyone, but I started thinking that I could maybe help other cats, and maybe even dogs, too. (Although they don't really deserve it—all they do is stand around and

drool and act foolish: "Oh, boy, what's going to happen, now? Yippee.") Geez...idiots. Anyway, I guess even idiots don't deserve to have worms.

Oh, they were in my stomach and my intestines...all over, I guess. I didn't even really realize it had gotten so out of hand. You know, I don't bother myself with going outside anymore. I've got so much work to do around here, and all. But I had this one little flea (I'm sure it was only one...I'm very clean), and the little buggar bit me, so I ate him. It seemed like a good idea at the time, but that's when the tapeworms started. And I'd guess I proba-

bly got the roundworms from my mom...or it could've been from that grass I ate outside when my stomach wasn't feeling so good one day. I'm just thankful it's over. The doctors set me up with a broad-spectrum dewormer, and now I'm on a monthly dewormer called Revolution. It kills fleas, a bunch of internal parasites, and even those nasty ear mites. It just might be the best thing since sliced sardines. Yummm... I love sardines. In fact, I think I hear the can-opener. Anyway, talk to the good folks at Gladstone about fecal exams and deworming for your 4-legged friends. Just remember...you didn't hear it from me!

## CLINIC HOURS:

MON: 7:30am-8pm  
TUE: 7:30am\*-8pm  
WED: 7:30am-6pm  
THU: 7:30am-6pm  
FRI: 7:30am-6pm  
SAT: 8:30am-5pm  
SUN: closed

*\* We're now seeing early morning appointments on Tuesdays for your convenience.*



## Gladstone Veterinary Clinic's Mission:

*Partnering with pets and their families to provide quality care with compassion.*

*Please visit our website:  
[www.gladstonevets.com](http://www.gladstonevets.com)*

*"My goal in life is to be as good of a person my dog already thinks I am."  
- Author Unknown*

## SECRET CAT DIARY:

*Day 752: My captors continue to taunt me with bizarre little dangling objects. They dine lavishly on fresh meat, while I am forced to eat dry cereal. The only thing that keeps me going is the hope of escape, and the mild satisfaction I get from shredding the occasional piece of furniture. Tomorrow I may eat another houseplant and throw it up on the carpet.*



*Dedicated to  
Veterinary  
Excellence*

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