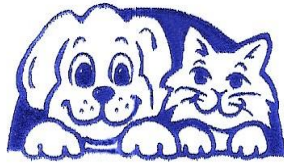


PARKSIDE ANIMAL HOSPITAL e-NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME to the 23rd edition of the PARKSIDE ANIMAL HOSPITAL monthly e-Newsletter

August 2010, Vol. 3, No. 7

Look forward to health care tips and information, including services available for your pet; product rebates/promotions and much more, coordinating with the Parkside Animal Hospital website: www.parksideanimalhospital.com

Seen recently at Parkside Animal Hospital:



Jack



Sam



Annie



Xanas



Fievel



Rascal



Dawnchoo



Joshua



Roxi



Lug Nut



Maggie



Gypsy



Tuti



Ozzie



Bailey



Cinder



LuLu



Allie



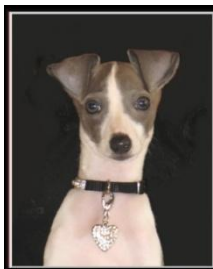
Gabby



Basil



Coco



Honey



Saffron



Chip

Full Service Veterinary Care – Laser Surgery – Dental Care – Radiographs & Dental Xray – Grooming
www.parksideanimalhospital.com

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PARASITES and YOUR PET

How does this affect you.. your family.. your children?

Your pet is exposed to parasites every day including: fleas and ticks; roundworms, whipworms, tapeworms, hookworms, and heartworms, as well as protozoa called coccidia, which can infect dogs and cats. Some of these can cause serious illness, even death in your pet; some of these parasites can affect you and your children.

It is estimated that 30-50% of dogs and cats carry gastrointestinal parasites and that 1 to 3 million people in the U.S. have infections from the same parasites carried by pets. Children, the elderly and immune-compromised people are a particularly high risk; but anyone can be affected. A brief overview of worrisome parasites commonly seen in this area follows:

* **Roundworms** are intestinal parasites that can infect dogs, cats and humans. Adult roundworms can be seen with the naked eye, either in stool samples or when vomited. Worms are round, non-segmented, sometimes growing 3-6" in length, and look like spaghetti. If adult worms are not seen in the feces; the eggs can be identified through microscopic evaluation of stool (fecal examination) by your veterinarian.

Roundworms feed off partially digested food in the intestine, robbing the puppy or kitten of vital nutrients. Infected puppies and kitten often show poor growth, and often have a pot-bellied appearance from the growth of roundworms in the abdomen. Symptoms may include diarrhea and vomiting. A large burden of worms can be life-threatening for puppies, kittens or debilitated pets.

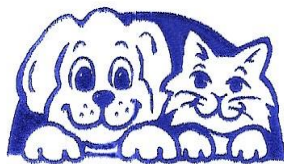
Microscopic eggs from adult roundworms are passed from infected animals in the feces. Infection can occur when animals sniff or lick infected feces or walk where other animals have defecated, getting the eggs on their feet, then ingesting the eggs while grooming/licking; but can also be spread when infected rodents or birds are ingested by your pet. Cockroaches may also be intermediate hosts for roundworms. Roundworms have a rather complicated life cycle involving migration through body tissues and can pass from a pregnant dog or cat to their young across the placenta before birth; or in the mother's milk as the young nurse. If roundworm eggs are ingested by people (more frequently by children), the larvae can invade/migrate through tissues and become encysted in various organs including the liver. The larvae can even migrate into the eye and cause blindness (ocular larval migrans) or the brain (cerebral larval migrans).

Treatment for roundworms involves the administration of de-worming preparations. Several medications are available that kill the adult roundworms in the intestine. Unfortunately none of these treatments kill the immature forms of the worm or the migrating larvae, so two to three treatments are needed at two to three week intervals to kill the maturing worms as they become vulnerable.

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Partial treatment is ineffective and often results in repeated episodes of infection, to the detriment of your pet's health and to the endangerment of other pets, and your family. Eggs in the environment can be the source of infection for dogs and cats as they develop to infective larvae. Infective larvae can remain viable for a considerable time and are particularly resistant to changes in temperature and humidity. Dogs and cats are susceptible to re-infection with roundworms throughout their lives. Routine de-worming and prevention are important to protect your pet, your family and to reduce contamination to your yard and the greater environment. Most heartworm preventatives, including **Sentinel, Interceptor, Heartgard and Revolution** for cats also are preventatives for roundworms. As you give these preventatives, your pet is de-wormed monthly.

***Hookworms** are parasites that can infect dogs and cats and while the adult hookworms do not infect humans, the larvae can burrow into human skin. In rare instances, the canine hookworm can penetrate into the deeper tissues of humans and partially mature in the human intestine.

Hookworms get their name from the hook-like mouthparts they use to attach to the intestinal wall of your pet. They are only about 1/8" long and very difficult to see with the naked eye, so are usually diagnosed via microscopic examination of a stool sample by your veterinarian. One adult hookworm female may produce as many as 20,000 eggs a day, so your pet's environment can rapidly be contaminated. Since so many eggs are produced by adult worms, they are easily detected by microscopic evaluation; however it is more difficult with puppies, as large numbers of adult worms may be present before eggs are shed into the stool. Despite their small size hookworms can ingest large amounts of blood from your pet. Large numbers of hookworms can cause anemia in an adult dog or cat; and can be deadly to puppies and kittens.

Symptoms can include intestinal distress and anemia, diarrhea, sometimes bloody; failure to grow properly, and death. Skin irritation and itching result if the larvae burrow into the skin.

How hookworms infect your pet:

- Orally when hookworm larvae or eggs are swallowed by your pet from infected feces (direct contact with the feces or ground contaminated by infected feces);
- Through the skin, oftentimes the paws: when the larvae penetrate the skin and migrate to the intestine where they mature and reproduce.
- Through the mother's placenta before birth in dogs, where the puppies are infected. Pre-natal infection has not been demonstrated to occur in kittens.
- Through the mother's milk, as the puppies or kittens nurse.

There are several effective medications to eliminate hookworms, however these drugs only kill the adult hookworms. Therefore, it is necessary to treat again in about 2-4 weeks to kill any newly matured adult worms that were larvae at the time of the initial treatment. Follow-up treatment and testing is crucial to eradicate hookworms.

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***Whipworms** are intestinal parasites exclusive to the dog. They do not infect cats nor humans. They cause severe irritation to the lining of the bowel resulting in watery, bloody diarrhea, weight loss and general decline and debilitation to your pet. They are one of the most pathogenic worms found in dogs. Whipworms are tiny, about ¼" long and pass microscopic eggs in the stool. These eggs can contaminate soil and are very resistant to drying and heat and can remain viable in the dog's environment for years. They mature and are able to re-infect the dog in 10-60 days.

Diagnosis is made by finding eggs with a microscopic examination of the stool; but is made more difficult as these parasites pass small numbers of eggs and on an irregular basis. Often multiple stool samples are required; but any dog with chronic diarrhea can be reasonably suspected to have whipworms, regardless of several negative stool examinations. It is an accepted practice to treat chronic diarrhea by administering a whipworm dewormer. Response to treatment is an indication that whipworms were present but could not be detected on fecal examination.

Several drugs are very effective against whipworms; however two treatments are needed at 3-4 week interval. Because re-infection is such a problem, it is advisable to treat again every 3-4 months. Dogs may also be placed on the heartworm preventatives Sentinel or Interceptor, as they contain an ingredient that deworms monthly for whipworms. Note: Dogs can become positive for whipworms while on Sentinel or Interceptor, the medications do not prevent re-infection if your pet is exposed, but Sentinel and Interceptor will deworm monthly.

***Tapeworms** are pale, segmented, somewhat flattened worms seen in the stool of your dog or cat. Segments may appear as grains of rice around the anus. The common tapeworm of the dog (*Dipylidium caninum*) requires an intermediate host; so your dog or cat may acquire tapeworms by ingesting fleas or small rodents who have fleas. Large numbers of tapeworms can cause intestinal blockage, especially in puppie and kittens. The common tapeworm does not infect humans unless we ingest fleas. Tapeworms may cause digestive upsets and stunting of growth in puppies and kittens, not to mention general disgust when seen in the stool of your pet.

Prevent fleas on your dog and you pretty much eliminate tapeworms in your pet... unless you pet finally catches that flea-infested squirrel he has been stalking for weeks.

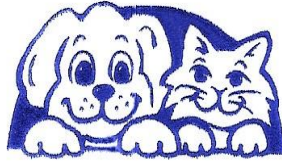
***Heartworms** cause heartworm disease, a growing, major life-threatening problem in this area and one of the most serious conditions seen in small animal practice. Affecting both dogs and cats, heartworm disease is transmitted by mosquitoes. Heartworms are not found in the digestive tract and so will not be found on fecal examination. Microscopic heartworms migrate from the mosquito bite site, through your pet's tissues to blood vessels where they travel to pulmonary veins and to your pet's heart; where they live and reproduce. Heartworms are large, growing to 6" or more and if untreated, will result in death. Heartworms are detected by a blood test. An annual heartworm test should be done for all your pets. Your pet an inside pet only; never goes outside? Still **NOT SAFE**.. mosquitoes come inside, too.

We have provided extensive information on heartworm disease in previous newsletters, all accessible on our website: www.parksideanimalhospital.com.

ALL PETS (dogs and cats) SHOULD BE ON MONTHLY HEARTWORM PPREVENTATIVE.

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***Coccidiosis** is an intestinal tract infection caused by a one-celled organism or protozoa called coccidia. Not parasitic worms, they are microscopic parasites that live within cells of the intestinal lining. Cats, dogs and mice can be infected, but kittens and debilitated adult cats are particularly vulnerable.

There are additional parasites that might affect your pet; but this newsletters provides an overview of those most commonly found. Scary stuff.. yes! Parasites, and their impact on your pet.. and potential impact on you and your children are why your veterinarian **recommends a fecal as part of your pet's annual exam** and another reason **we recommend your pet be placed on a comprehensive parasite preventative, to include heartworms and intestinal parasites.**

Heartgard, Sentinel, Interceptor and **Revolution** for cats do more than protect against heartworm disease.. they monthly deworm your pet for roundworms and hookworms. **Heartgard** is not effective against whipworms; but **Interceptor** and **Sentinel** both deworm for whipworms in addition to roundworms and hookworms; and **Sentinel** and **Revolution** help prevent flea infestations (which help eliminate tapeworms).

Sentinel is the most inclusive dewormer for dogs and **Revolution** is best for cats.

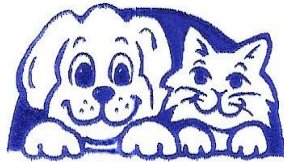
PREVENTION: To control intestinal parasiste infection in your pet and to prevent human infection:

- Restrain your pet from defecating in children's play areas and all public areas. Promptly pick up and dispose of feces, especially in gardens, playgrounds, public parks and beaches.
- Practice strict hygiene particularly with children. Do not allow children to play in potentially contaminated environments. Children should always wear shoes when outside.. even when on beaches. Frequent hand washing and bathing are essential in preventing human infections. Keep sandboxes covered except when children are actively playing in them.
- All pups/kittens should be dewormed with a veterinary-approved product at 2-3 weeks of age.
- Prompt deworming should be given when parasites are detected; periodic deworming may be appropriate for pets at high risk for infection.
- Prompt disposal of feces should occur, especially in yards, playgrounds and public parks and beaches. Clean cat litter boxes daily. Wash hands carefully after any contact with feces.
- Nursing female dogs and cats should be dewormed with their young. Nursing may reactivate hookworm infection in the female.
- A fecal examination of your pet should be a part of every annual exam.
- De-worming products will not kill all life states of the parasites, so pets must be treated if active infection is found. Often multiple treatment episodes at prescribed intervals of time are needed to eradicate parasites. Follow-up is crucial!
- Use heartworm prevention products that also deworm for roundworm, hookworm and whipworm. We recommend **Sentinel** for dogs and **Revolution** for cats.

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Heartworm preventatives and dewormers work by purging your pet's system of susceptible stages of various parasites. Medications are not a protective bubble that prevents all infections.

The north Texas area is a high-risk area for heartworm disease; and roundworm, hookworm and whipworm eggs are found readily throughout the area. Your pet is likely exposed to all these parasites numerous times a year.

****Important note: **** If manufacturer's guidelines are followed for heartworm and intestinal parasite testing and medication administration, you may qualify for re-imbursment of expenses related to parasite infections as outlined by their guarantee.

- We recommend annual heartworm testing for all pets and annual testing for intestinal parasites.
- Should your pet show symptoms of intestinal distress including vomiting or diarrhea; please follow your veterinarian's suggestions which may include fecal testing and treatment for intestinal parasites.
- Please follow your veterinarian's suggestions for follow-up testing and treatment if parasites have been identified.

We recommend **Sentinel** heartworm and parasite prevention for dogs and **Revolution** for cats.

Reception staff



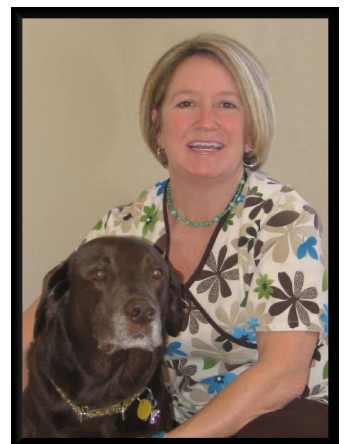
Joanna



Claudia



Christine



Sue

Smiling faces... Caring hearts... PARKSIDE ANIMAL HOSPITAL