



April Mhire

For those of you who haven't met our groomer yet, we are pleased to introduce you to April.

April has several years of grooming experience. She offers bathing, clipping, styling and other routine grooming services to both dogs and cats.

Grooming in a veterinary clinic has the added advantage of having doctors on staff to address any health concerns that April may notice while grooming. For example, flea problems, ear mites, eye infections, and skin infections are often noticed by April while she is grooming. The doctors can then address these health issues while pets are in the clinic.

Cats are not always pleased to receive a bath and brush-out or shave-down and nail trimming. Fortunately, the doctors can administer mild to moderate sedation so that felines are not unduly stressed by their "day at the spa."

If you would like to have your pet pampered and primped, give April a call.



Toxic Plants

Spring is right around the corner. With it come the wonderful array of plants and flowers that we enjoy having around our home. While plants and flowers add beauty to our environment, they may also pose a health risk to our feline family members.

Day lilies, Easter lilies, tiger lilies and Asian hybrid lilies are toxic to cats. These true lilies cause kidney damage which can be fatal. Easter lilies can also cause pancreatitis, or inflammation of the pancreas, which makes cats really sick. Lily of the valley plants are also toxic to the heart. Peace lilies and calla lilies, however, are not toxic in that they only cause transient stomach and/or intestinal irritation.

In order to protect our household cats, it is best not to have lilies in or around our homes where our curious cats can get into serious trouble.



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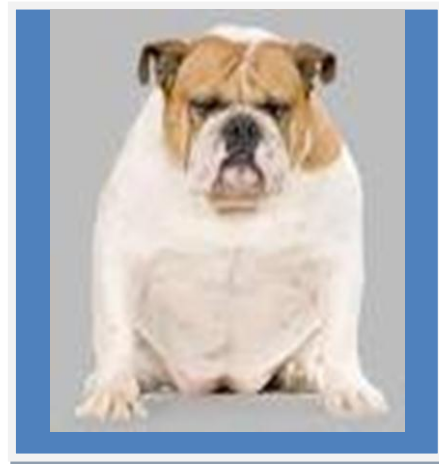
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Health Risks for Overweight Pets

- Diabetes
- Pancreatitis
- Spinal disc herniation
- Shortened life span
- Ruptured cruciate ligaments
- High blood pressure
- Some forms of cancer
- Arthritis
- Heat stroke
- Anesthesia/surgery complications



Pet Obesity

One of the most common New Year's resolutions is personal weight loss. If that sounds familiar, why not consider including your pet in your weight loss efforts? Pet obesity is becoming more and more common. It is estimated that 55 % of dogs and 54 % of cats are either obese or overweight in this country alone.

The health risks to your pet are significant. The good news is that Purina has partnered with Jenny Craig to offer an innovative program to help people and their pets lose those unwanted and unhealthy pounds. The project is called "Project Pet Slim Down". Log on to: ProjectPetSlimDown.com/NewYears. Get motivated by watching their dog and cat reality series on weight loss. Get tips and advice on ways to help your pets lose weight. Get a \$15 discount on your next bag or case of Purina weight loss diets. Get fit along with your pet in 2012.

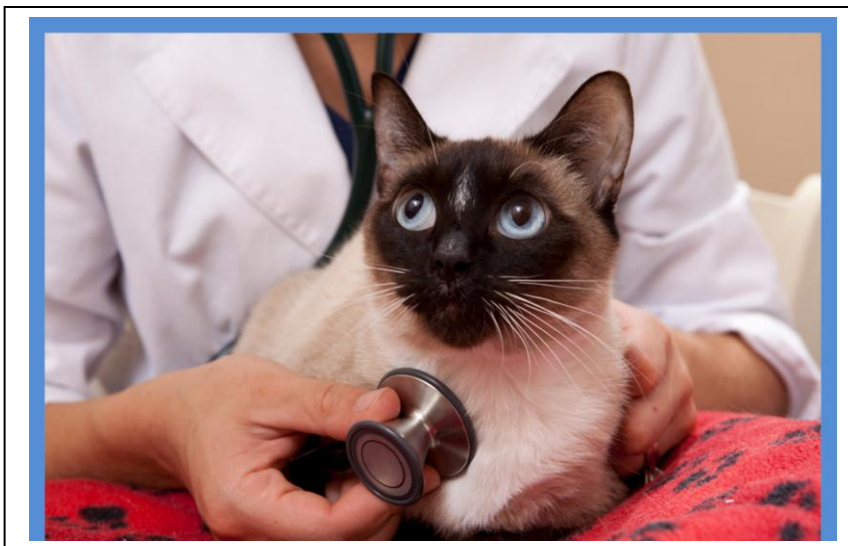
Feline Heartworm Disease

Did you know that your cat is at risk for heartworms? In south Louisiana, we are in a heartworm endemic area. Heartworms are transmitted by mosquitoes. Any cat that goes outdoors is exposed to mosquitoes and is at risk for heartworm infection.

Indoor-only cats are at risk as well because mosquitoes often get inside our homes. A recent study showed that 27 % of heartworm positive cats were strictly indoor cats.

Cats that become infected with heartworms may develop severe respiratory distress or die suddenly with no symptoms at all.

Unfortunately, there is no treatment to eliminate heartworm infection in cats. Therefore, prevention is essential. There are 2 excellent topical products for heartworm prevention in cats: **Revolution** and **Advantage Multi**. Be sure to protect your cat from this potentially deadly disease.





Puppies, Parasites and Parvo

We see lots of cute puppies this time of year. They are often given as Christmas gifts especially to kids. Who can resist an adorable puppy?

This new addition to the family needs medical attention from very early in life. Puppies are commonly infected with intestinal parasites, some of which are transmissible to people, especially children. They are easily identified under the microscope from a small stool sample. A dewormer can be administered to eliminate intestinal infection, and parasite-free status can be maintained with monthly heartworm prevention.

Puppies can also become infected with an intestinal virus call Parvo which can be fatal. A series of puppy vaccinations effectively prevents infection and disease once the puppy has been properly vaccinated. It is important that your puppy receives all of the vaccinations recommended by your vet to become fully protected from this deadly disease. It is also important **not** to take your puppy to dog parks, Petsmart, puppy daycare, and neighborhood dog walking areas until it is fully vaccinated. The puppy vaccine series is typically started at 7 weeks with booster vaccines every 3 weeks until 16 weeks of age.

Fleas are another common parasite seen in puppies. Small puppies are at risk for anemia if infested with fleas. Fleas can also transmit tapeworms and can lead to skin infections from frequent scratching.

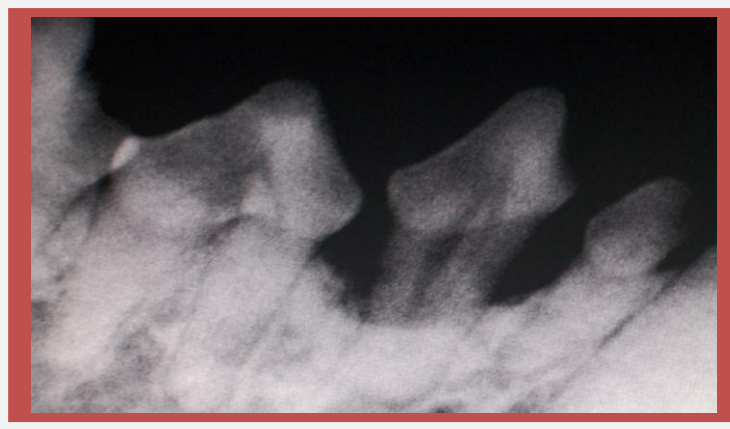
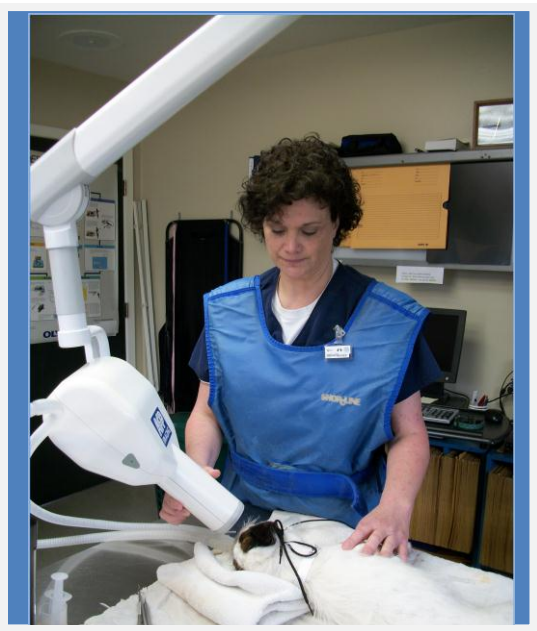
At your puppy's first visit to our office, it receives a thorough physical exam, stool parasite check, first set of puppy vaccinations, and complimentary doses of heartworm prevention and flea control. We will also teach you about puppy nutrition, potty training and general wellness care. We welcome your new family member to our practice.



Dental X-rays

As part of your pet's semi-annual exam, we evaluate the teeth for the presence of tartar, bacteria, gingivitis and any other oral disease. This visual exam is only part of the picture, however. The roots of the teeth are encased in the upper and lower jaw bones and are therefore not visible. The only way to evaluate the health of the teeth roots is with dental x-rays.

Dental x-rays are performed with your pet under anesthesia so there is no discomfort to your pet. We often identify broken roots, root abscesses, and bone loss from bacterial infection. Dental x-rays are therefore an important aspect of evaluating your pet's dental health.



Dental x-ray showing loss of supporting bone. Bacteria have eaten away the bone around the root.