



# VALLEY Animal Hospital



Pet Talk

Spring 2019



## Your Pet's Exam What Does Your Veterinarian Need to Know?

**W**hat things are important to tell us when your pet comes in for an exam? Many things are worth noting since the more information we have about your pet, the better able we are to find and treat any issues. Following are some of the things our technicians and veterinarians should know since any of these could indicate a problem:

- 🐾 Is this an indoor pet, an outdoor pet or both? Has your pet recently spent time in a lake or wooded area?
- 🐾 Is your pet eating and drinking normally? What has changed?
- 🐾 Are they urinating and defecating normally? Note any change in consistency and amount.
- 🐾 What is your pet eating, including treats? How much, and how often?
- 🐾 What medications are they taking?
- 🐾 Has there been any vomiting or diarrhea?
- 🐾 Has your pet been licking or chewing its paws or other areas frequently?
- 🐾 Has your pet been scratching its ears or shaking its head?
- 🐾 Have you noticed any "scooting"?
- 🐾 Are there any lumps on your pet?
- 🐾 Have you noticed limping, trouble getting up, or reluctance to walk?
- 🐾 Has your pet been lethargic or behaving differently?
- 🐾 Have you noticed sneezing or coughing?



You are your pets' advocate and must be their voice since they can't tell us what's wrong. When an exam is coming up, take notes to discuss during your visit. Of course, if your pet appears to be in distress, don't wait for a scheduled visit and call us right away!

## Staff Spotlight Meet Alejandra Fernandez, Receptionist

**O**riginally from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Alejandra spent time in Puerto Rico and currently lives in Edinburg. Before joining our team, she worked in human medicine as a medical assistant and laboratory technician. She has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Alejandra is an avid painter and when she isn't greeting you and your furry friends, she creates paintings as gifts for friends and family. She says she is obsessed with gift wrapping and the presentation of gifts and has a collection of wrapping paper. She is also currently commissioned to paint urns for pets.



Alejandra is enjoying learning about veterinary medicine. "I get to learn and observe crazy new things everyday like pyometra and other conditions and surgeries," she says. "I also learned that they make jeans for dogs!" Be sure to say hello to Alejandra during your pet's next visit to Valley Animal Hospital.

## Feline Cancer Know the Symptoms

**C**ancer in cats can be difficult to detect because our feline friends tend to hide pain. Unfortunately, feline cancer is often aggressive, and a late diagnosis can be costly. It is a leading cause of death in older cats. While Lymphoma is the most common form of cancer in cats, it can occur in any area of the body. We also see skin, lung, mammary gland and abdominal tumors as well as lymphosarcoma, testicular, ovarian and uterine cancers.



Symptoms include difficulty eating, drinking, urinating or defecating, sores that don't heal, weight loss and lumps anywhere on the body. A change in appetite, coughing, trouble breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, and unexplained discharges or bleeding are also signs, as are lethargy, hiding, stiffness and mouth odor. We can detect cancer through physical exams, x-rays, ultrasound, blood and urine tests, and cytology.

Lymphoma, one of the most common cancers in cats, is associated with FeLV and accounts for about 25 percent of feline cancers. Be sure your cat's vaccines are up to date. Have your kitty spayed or neutered to reduce the chance of mammary, ovarian, uterine or testicular cancer. Most importantly, be sure to bring your cat in for regular checkups and let us know if you observe any symptoms.

## Feeding Fluffy What Diet Is Right for Your Cat?

**W**hen thinking about feline nutrition, remember that your purr-ball is a natural carnivore. They thrive on nutrients found in animal products, which means high protein, some fats and limited carbohydrates. Although they need other nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, fatty acids and amino acids, supplements can harm them, so don't give these without your veterinarian's approval. Providing a balanced diet should be all your cat needs.

When speaking of feline nutritional needs, it's important to consider hydration. Many cats don't drink enough, and dehydration can lead to kidney disease and other common feline ailments. While dry food is most convenient for cat owners, adding canned or semi-moist food can help your kitty stay hydrated. Always provide clean water and change it often as cats can be finicky about stale water.

The good news is, you don't have to become an expert on feline dietary needs. Good commercial cat foods usually provide a complete and balanced diet within standards established by the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO). We are happy to discuss or recommend a diet for your healthy adult cat. If you have a kitten or senior cat, or if your cat has an illness or is obese, we will recommend diets specially formulated for their needs.

Most cats can be fed twice daily with the amounts recommended by manufacturers but watch for weight gain to avoid overfeeding. We don't suggest feeding a diet your cat doesn't find palatable no matter how nutritious it is. Cats can have sensitive digestive tracts, so if you change foods do it gradually by introducing a little more of the new food mixed with a little less of the old over several days. Be sure to discuss your fur-baby's diet with us during your next exam.



**Call (956) 787-2709 today to make an appointment!**

# Potty Plan

## House Training Your New Puppy

New puppies are fun, but potty training can leave both you and your fur baby frustrated. It's also an opportunity to build trust if you approach the task with patience and understanding. On the other hand, if you are harsh or inconsistent your puppy can become confused, frustrated and fearful.

First, expect this to be a long process. Depending on breed, even trained dogs can still have occasional accidents in their first year. The good news is that as soon as your puppy figures out the behavior you want, they will be happy to comply! Getting them to understand exactly what you want, however, will take several repetitions.

Whether you train on puppy pads, outdoors or a combination of both, the most widely accepted method of humane house training is the same. Take your puppy to the proper spot frequently, and provide treats and praise when they get it right. When they choose undesirable spots, simply pick them up as soon as they begin urinating or defecating (yes, mid-stream!) and move them to the correct spot. Holding your pup there for just a few moments will be long enough for them to start making the connection. It's important that you remain calm. Don't scold or raise your voice.

With this simple process, repeated consistently and as often as necessary, your puppy will eventually "get it" that you want them to do their business in a certain spot. If you miss seeing an incident as it happens, accept that the training opportunity was lost and simply clean up the mess without scolding. Never "rub their nose in it." Not only is this cruel, your pup will not make the connection and will only become confused.

Remember that house training is a process. Remain patient and take time to enjoy your new puppy!



## Spring is a great time to focus on your pet's wellness!

### Save \$75 on all Routine Dental Procedures

Includes anesthesia, scaling, polishing, fluoride application, dental x-rays, intravenous fluids, antibiotics if needed, post-surgical care, and complimentary nail trim.

Not valid with any other offer. One coupon per visit. Must be presented at time of service. Limit one per client. Expires 5/31/2019.

### Heartworm Combo Test Savings Save \$12

on a Heartworm Combo Test (Heartworm, Ehrlichia, Anaplasmosis, and Lyme Disease) with your dog's annual vaccines (Da2p1p and Rabies)

Not valid with any other offer. One coupon per visit. Must be presented at time of service. Limit one per client. Expires 5/31/2019.

### Spay/Neuter Savings Save \$20

on your pet's spay or neuter surgery when performed with pre-anesthetic blood testing and IV fluids.

Not valid with any other offer. One coupon per visit. Must be presented at time of service. Limit one per client. Expires 5/31/2019.

### Re-Fur a Friend Savings Refer a friend and you will both receive \$10 off your next invoice.

Not valid with any other offer. One coupon per visit. Must be presented at time of service. Limit one per client. Expires 5/31/2019.



Valley  
Animal Hospital

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today to make an appointment!



## Time for our spring checkups!



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