

# VALLEY Animal Hospital

Pet Talk

Winter 2020/2021

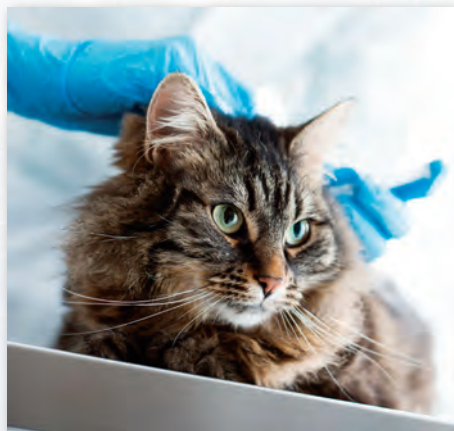


## Protecting Your Cat

### *What is the FVRCP Vaccine?*

The name may be a mouthful but the **FVRCP** (Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus and Panleukopenia) vaccine is one of the core vaccines your kitty needs, whether they are an indoor or outdoor cat. This vaccine is a combination that provides immunity against three highly contagious diseases: rhinotracheitis (feline herpes virus), calicivirus, and panleukopenia (feline distemper virus).

**FVR** - Feline viral rhinotracheitis is an upper respiratory infection caused by a herpes virus. Symptoms include lethargy, sneezing and conjunctivitis. Corneal ulcers and pneumonia can occur in severe cases.



**C** – Feline calicivirus (FCV) is also an upper respiratory infection. It frequently causes ulcers in the mouth, especially on the tongue. Cats may also develop temporary lameness.

**P** – Feline panleukopenia (FPV) is caused by the feline parvovirus. It affects the bone marrow, creating a low white blood cell count and makes cats vulnerable to severe infections. It also attacks the intestinal tract, causing severe diarrhea. This condition is difficult to treat and can be fatal.

In fact, there are no specific cures for any of these viruses; we can only treat the symptoms. Fortunately, the FVRCP vaccine is highly successful in preventing these diseases. Kittens will receive the vaccine at eight weeks and then every four weeks until they reach 16 weeks old. Adult cats receive boosters throughout their lives. If you are unsure whether your cat is current on vaccines, please give us a call!

## Blackie's Blog

### *February is National Pet Dental Health Month!*

Why is the month of February dedicated to pet dental health each year? I just learned that 80% of dogs and 70% of cats have some form of oral disease by age three! Not only does this cause us needless pain and discomfort, our doctors say dental disease can lead to potentially fatal infections affecting other organs. I'm sure glad the staff here takes good care of my teeth!

Periodontal disease in cats and dogs is similar to that in you humans. Bacteria stick to the surface of the tooth and begin to form plaque. Over time, plaque hardens to become tartar and begins to spread beneath the gumline. This creates inflammation and can damage the affected tooth. The teeth involved can become loose or crack, causing pain and difficulty eating. The bacteria can also be released into the bloodstream causing heart or kidney damage. Yikes!

When we have dental disease, our humans might notice bad breath, tartar buildup, difficulty chewing, chewing on one side of our mouths, loose or broken teeth, drooling, bleeding, red or swollen gums, lumps, or wounds. The good news is that regular cleanings combined with oral health care at home can help keep our mouths healthy and pain-free. Be sure to call the nice folks here at Valley Animal Hospital to schedule your pet's dental exam today!

Happy Holidays!

*Blackie*



## Pet Years vs. People Years

### *How Dogs and Cats Age*

Comparing your dog's or cat's age to human age can give you a reference point for understanding behavior and health issues throughout their lives, especially since they are susceptible to many of the same age-related illnesses we are. These include osteoarthritis, periodontal disease, diabetes and even dementia.

Scientists are using new formulas based on breed and other factors to look at the canine aging process. The relationship between human and dog years changes over time, and different breeds age at different rates as well. In general, the larger the breed, the faster they age and the shorter the lifespan.

Puppies age much faster than human infants, and then the process slows. At 8 weeks, a puppy has developed to approximately the same age as a 9-month-old human. They reach the equivalent of age 30 at around 3 ½ years, and the equivalent of age 40 at around age 5. Dogs are considered seniors by age 8.

The average dog lives approximately 12 years, while the average housecat lives to age 15. Cats have roughly the same lifespan as a small breed dog although they age differently. The first two years of a cat's life equal the first 25 years of human life. After this, each additional year adds around four human years. Hence, a 6-year-old cat would be somewhere around 41, and they become seniors at age 11.

The great news is that our four-legged friends are living longer, healthier lives due to advances in veterinary medicine, better nutrition, and better care at home. Responsible care from humans can make a big difference. For example, the average lifespan for an indoor cat is 15 years compared with only 3 to 5 years for an outdoor cat. Spayed or neutered pets live longer, and regular exercise can add years to dogs' lives. We're committed to helping pets live the best life possible at every age!

## Canine Coccidiosis

### *Is Your Dog Carrying this Parasite?*

Coccidiosis is a common infection of the intestinal tract caused by a one-celled parasite called coccidia. Infection is usually mild but can be life threatening to puppies. Coccidia that have not yet matured, called oocysts, are passed in the stool of an infected dog and can mature in the soil. They can mature further in the intestines of an animal that ingests oocysts.

Dogs can be infected by eating something from the contaminated ground, eating an infected mouse, or nursing from an infected mother. Most pets infected with coccidia don't display symptoms but can potentially spread the disease. Studies indicate that coccidia are present in 3% to as many as 38% of dogs in North America.

Puppies and immune-compromised dogs may present with bloody diarrhea, vomiting, weight loss, abdominal pain or dehydration. Newborn puppies can die from the disease within a few hours of showing symptoms. However, with older and healthier dogs, we can treat Coccidiosis with antibiotics and the prognosis is good.

Coccidial infections can be prevented by consistently removing your dog's feces from wherever they relieve themselves and by not allowing them to "investigate" areas where other dogs have eliminated. We also recommend that you don't allow puppies to socialize with strange dogs until 16 weeks of age to prevent this and other infections.



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



# Santa's Naughty List

## Holiday Hazards for Pets

To make the holidays fun for everyone, keep in mind that the food, decorations and activities of the season can pose a risk to dogs and cats. Keep your pet's wellbeing in mind and avoid a holiday disaster by keeping them away from these items on our naughty list for pets:

- Christmas trees should be anchored to prevent falling on top of a pet.
- Candles, fireplaces or any open flame pose a serious risk of burns.
- Turkey and other meat bones can splinter in the esophagus or cause choking.
- Alcoholic beverages are toxic to pets. Be sure guests keep them out of reach.
- Batteries and wires, if chewed on, can cause burns to the esophagus or electric shock.
- Fat or skin from turkey and other fatty foods can cause acute pancreatitis, a potentially fatal condition.
- Sweets such as chocolate and candy sweetened with xylitol are toxic to pets, as are grapes and raisins.
- Decorations such as ornaments, bows, garlands and tinsel can cause choking and intestinal obstruction or damage.
- Poinsettia, mistletoe and holly are all plants that are toxic to pets. Consider faux plants or keep them far out of reach.

Remember that increased noise and activity as well as unfamiliar visitors can be stressful for your pet. It's important to provide a place of sanctuary in your home where they can get away. Keep their routine as normal as possible including feeding times, exercise and play. Be sure guests keep medications secure and don't allow visitors to feed them foods they aren't used to.

If you suspect poisoning or injury, don't hesitate to call us or take them to the nearest emergency clinic after hours.



*Happy Holidays to you  
and your furry family members!*

**Senior Pet Bloodwork Savings**  
**Save \$15**  
on a Geriatric Profile for your senior dog or cat.  
One coupon per client.

**Dental Super Savings**  
**Save \$55**  
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.  
One coupon per client.

**Spay/Neuter Savings**  
**Save \$20**  
on your pet's spay or neuter surgery when performed with pre-anesthetic blood testing and IV fluids.  
One coupon per client.

**Microchip Savings**  
Help bring them back home!  
**Save \$5**  
on microchipping for your pet.  
One coupon per client.

Savings not valid with any other offers. One coupon per visit. Must be presented at time of service. Limit one per client. Savings expire 2/28/2021.

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



**Valley  
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