

PawPrint

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Apple Valley Animal Hospital

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A Safer Surgery Option for Your Pet Cryosurgery at Apple Valley Animal Hospital

AVAH has added cryosurgery to its list of treatment options. The cryosurgery unit uses a precise, super-cold jet of liquid nitrogen to quickly freeze selected tissue. This eliminates the need for incisions and stitches. The intense cold, while freezing the targeted tissue, has a numbing effect on the surrounding nerves. The treated tissue dies and falls away over the course of one to two weeks. During this healing period, most pets do not bother the procedure site (another advantage of this method). Cryosurgery is ideal for smaller

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Better for your pet!



growths, skin tumors, oral tumors, eyelid procedures and masses where closing a traditional surgery would be difficult (like lower legs and toes).

Most cryosurgery procedures require only local anesthesia, making cryosurgery a safer alternative for older or "high risk" patients.

Cryosurgery is less invasive, less stressful, produces less post-procedure discomfort, carries less anesthesia risk and is less expensive.

To see if cryosurgery is an option for your pet, call us today!

Its that Time! Think Snake Bite Safety & Prevention

With the weather getting hotter, snakes are more active and more likely to be aggressive. If you enjoy the great outdoors with your pet or live in an area prone to snakes (rocky terrain, creek banks or vegetation) take care to prevent life-threatening encounters. Bites occur most often in between March and October when snakes are most active. According to the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (APCC), a snake bite is always considered an emergency. A venomous snake bite can be fatal if not treated immediately. Even a bite from a nonvenomous snake can be dangerous for your pets.

The APCC recommends: Keep your yard tidy by clearing away undergrowth, toys and tools that make great hiding places for snakes. Keep walkways clear of brush- (continued page 3)



Spring in Apple Country

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Drop-off Appointments: Making Your Life Easier

If your pet needs to be seen but your schedule is full, ask about a drop-off appointment. Rest assured, your pet will be treated like royalty while its here. Likewise, if our schedule is full and your pet needs to be seen, we may suggest you drop your pet off. The doctor will work with your pet throughout the day. In either case, we will keep you informed and the doctor will call to discuss results and treatment options if any are needed.

Meet Our Staff: Jane Strange

Jane is the smiling face and voice on the phone you will find here several days a week. After retiring as a supervisor with the Department of Social Services, Jane wasn't ready to completely give up working with the public. Her skills, love of animals and enjoyment of helping people has made this a great fit for everyone.



Jane and her husband Joe have three children and three "adorable" grandchildren. Their four legged family members include two dogs, Murphy a chocolate cocker, and Masie, a rescued King Charles Cavalier mix.

Join us in welcoming Jane to AVAH

Warm Winter = Happy Fleas and Ticks

While fleas and ticks can be a problem year round, spring is when they really kick it up a notch. As of mid March, we are already seeing flea cases increase and have even found ticks on patients.



The female flea begins its reproductive cycle 20-24 hours after her first blood meal. After that, it can lay as many as 2,000 eggs in its life. Laid in a host's hair, flea eggs fall out as the pet moves around its home and yard. In fact, studies show 90% of the fleas in an infested area will be in the environment and not on the pet. With fleas reproducing at this staggering rate, it's no wonder an infestation seems to develop over night. Adding to the mix are wild animals and untreated dogs and cats that frequent our neighborhoods, dropping eggs from their own flea loads.

Since the life cycle from egg to adult can vary from two weeks to eight months (depending on temperature, humidity, food, and species), using a parasite preventive year-round is the key to breaking the cycle and getting rid of fleas. And since a typical flea population consists of 50% eggs, 35% larvae, 10% pupae and 5% adults, it takes at least three months to control an infestation; even during winter.

The tick life cycle, from egg to larvae to adult, also varies in length depending on environmental conditions. In general, after several blood meals and molts, the female tick is ready to lay eggs. And, although it only lays eggs once, ticks produce 2,000 to 18,000 eggs which hatch in about a week to start the lifecycle over.

As with fleas, a year round parasite prevention program the key to success. While there is no single preventative which protects against all parasites, (external and internal) our doctors will recommend one most beneficial to your pet's lifestyle. When considering a parasite preventive, it's important to consider one that also treats the common internal parasites which can infect humans or expose us to parasite borne diseases. This is especially important if you have children. Kids often don't understand how parasites and diseases are spread and don't always take the proper precautions.

So what do our doctors and staff use to protect their families and pets from parasites? It boils down to whether the pet has exposure to ticks from their lifestyle. For indoor pets with minimal tick exposure we use Trifexis. Trifexis is a safe and effective new preventative which works well on fleas, heartworms, hookworms, roundworms and whipworms. Our pets that have a risk of tick exposure get a Frontline/Heartgard combination.



Medication Safety



When a medication is prescribed for your pet, it is important to make sure the drug, dosage and duration are given accurately. Dosage compliance (giving as prescribed) is by far the greatest reason for medicine inefficacy. When calculating a dosage for your pet, the veterinarian considers many factors including safety, species and weight. Medications are designed to be most effective when they reach and maintain certain levels in a patient's body. Fluctuations in the level from missed doses or stopping treatment too soon decreases the medicines efficacy. Often we hear medications are discontinued before the prescription is finished because symptoms have improved.

(continued)

(Medication Safety continued)

At best, this keeps the pet from receiving the full benefit of the prescription. At worst, it allows the infecting agent to survive and build immunity against the drug. Our veterinarian will always explain the reason, medication, and dosage. If the dosing instructions conflict with your schedule (i.e.: administer 4 times daily & you work full time), be sure to let the doctor know, there may be other medications or schedules that will work.

Considerations

- Not all medications are safe for use in all species. Dosages are not the same in all animals. A veterinarian is best qualified to prescribe the safest drug for your pet's needs.
- Each medication must be handled and stored according to the manufacturer's instructions. Many manufacturers will only guarantee a medication dispensed by a veterinarian.
- Misinterpretations of abbreviations common in veterinary medicine, but not in human medicine, can lead to errors.
- Some medications should only be given to patients that do not have active infections (heartworm medication for example) so testing may be required.
- Some medications require routine monitoring by lab testing and adjustments to the dosage.

Our veterinarians know your pet and can give instructions, answer questions and demonstrate different methods to give medications based on your pet's personality.

Our online store offers prescription medications at competitive prices, maintains all manufacturers warranties and conveniently delivers to your home.

For the FDA's specific recommendations for preventing pet medicine mistakes, click or type this link.

[www.http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm325222.htm](http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm325222.htm)

**Snake Bite Safety ~ Continued**

flowers and shrubs. Clean up any spilled food, fruit or bird seed, which can attract rodents and therefore snakes to your yard. When walking your pet, keep him on a leash. Steer your pet clear of long grasses, bushes and rocks. Snakes can strike across a distance equal to about half their body length. If you see a snake, head back the way you came. Familiarize yourself with snakes who are common in your area. In the event of a bite, identifying the type of snake may help with your pet's treatment.



A Vaccine is available: If your pet has a high risk lifestyle (hiking, hunting, swimming, etc.) you may want to consider the Rattlesnake Vaccine from Red Rock Biologic. While developed for the western diamondback rattlesnake, the vaccine also offers some protection against our eastern diamondbacks and copperheads.

Know the symptoms of a snakebite: Local or general swelling, bleeding, intense pain, low blood pressure, dead tissue around the wound, shortness of breath, weakness.

Know what to do: Remember to stay calm, keep your pet calm by limiting his activity, remove his collar if your pet was bitten on the neck, keep the location of the bite below heart level if possible, seek veterinary care for your pet immediately, treatment options such as cold packs, ice, tourniquets, alcohol, bleeding the wound and trying to suck out venom should not be attempted in place of getting your pet to the vet—they may just waste precious time, always keep your personal safety in mind and do not try to catch or kill a snake yourself. Even if you think a snake is dead, never handle him. Some dead snakes are capable of inflicting a bite by muscle contractions.

Did you know:**We offer free dental exams?**

Dental care is important because:

1. Dental disease and injuries hurt.
2. Dental injuries and disease are some of the most common (and fixable) problems we see.
3. Veterinary studies show proper dental care adds an average of two years to a pet's life.

Call us today to schedule your pet's free dental exam!

Microchips Bring Pets Home

Every two seconds a family pet gets lost. Many are never reunited with their families because they cannot be identified. Because of these statistics, we recommend pets have a microchip implanted. Datamars chips are linked to the PetLink network and have a 24/7 hotline to match chip numbers and owner contact information.

**Notable Quotes:**

"A dog is the only thing on earth that will love you more than you love yourself." -- Wesley Bates

"When I play with my cat, who knows whether she is not amusing herself with me more than I with her." -- Montaigne

"A dog has lots of friends because he wags his tail and not his tongue." -- Anonymous

Thunder Storms and Other Scary Things!



Noise phobias are a common problem for pets. Most often it is characterized by extremely fearful behavior during thunderstorms or fireworks. This behavior can range from trembling to a full blown panic. Fortunately, if your pet suffers from noise phobia, there are several options you can try to help calm or even desensitize them.

If possible, stay home with your pet. July 4th and New Year's Eve can be especially stressful times since people often celebrate with fireworks. During any stressful event, remember to stay calm for your pet. Repeating "its ok, its ok" or heavily stroking your pet will only create more stress. Instead, use a low soothing voice combined with hug therapy. If your dog wants to sit in your

lap or is comforted by being hugged, that's ok. A new product, Thunder Shirts, are proving to be very effective in calming pets in many different stress situations. (See www.thundershirt.com)

When possible, reduce the stimuli. Closing curtains and windows can help significantly. Pets are less fearful if they can't see flashes from lightning or fireworks. White noise can also be helpful. Turning on a television, radio or fan helps by masking the stressful noises.

Counter-conditioning or desensitizing is another method which can help. The goal is to get the pet used to the noises by progressive exposure. Believe it or not, CD's of thunderstorms and fireworks are available for use with this method. Begin with the volume at a barely audible level. While playing the recording, give your dog their favorite healthy treat or play one of their favorite games. Once the pet no longer seems bothered by the recording, turn the volume up slightly and continue with treats or games. Don't expect to turn the volume up each session. This method is a long term investment. At the earliest hint of a real storm, use your counter-conditioning strategies, i.e. games and healthy treats.

Some owners find their pet needs a little more help. If this is the case, call us. Our doctors will gladly evaluate your pet to see if anti-anxiety drugs are appropriate for their phobia.

Spring Pet Hazards

Spring is here! Now we can venture outside and enjoy warm breezes, yard and garden work and cook-outs. But be careful; many springtime tasks we take for granted can be hazardous to our pets. Several local spring flowers and plants can be dangerous to dogs and cats. These include: tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, lilies, and Lily of the Valley. Lawn, garden and household chemicals commonly used this time of year can also be very dangerous to our pets. When using fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and insecticides take the same precautions you would if children had access to the area. If you suspect your pet has been exposed to any of these products contact us immediately. If possible, have the information from the product label so we know what compounds are involved. Common signs of exposure vary from mild (drooling, vomiting or diarrhea) to severe (lethargy, neurologic and convulsions). Remember that poisons used for rodents and snails or slugs are very dangerous to your pet. Don't allow access to areas where these products are used or stored.

As days warm up, always provide plenty of fresh water for your pet. If they spend time outdoors, make sure they have access to a cool, shady area. Keep long haired dogs and cats well groomed or trimmed. Never leave a pet unattended in a car.

Even on relatively cool days the inside temperatures can reach 120 degrees or more. Signs of heat stress include heavy panting, excessive drooling and collapse. If you suspect heat stress or heat stroke contact us immediately.



LAST ONE IN...

Many dogs love the water. If you have a pool or spend time around lakes and rivers, keep a close eye on your pets. Dogs tire quickly when swimming and can get into trouble in seconds. Vegetation around lakes and rivers can entangle pets, especially if they are exhausted from a long swim. Pools are especially dangerous because pets may not be able to find the way out if they fall in. And while cats are agile and surefooted, we hear about them falling into pools every season. Enjoy the water with your pets but keep a sharp eye on them.