

Did You Know?

Again this year PFA is the beneficiary of an offer to match up to \$5,000 in contributions to PFA. For every \$ you contribute, up to \$5000, the donor will match it. What a wonderful opportunity, about 100 more dogs and cats will be spayed and neutered with each \$5,000!!!

Ongoing research continues to support concern about over-vaccination of pets. In an effort to reduce the side effects associated with frequent vaccination, the American Animal Hospital Association's Canine Vaccine research recommends people discuss with their veterinarians the option of titers rather than *assuming* an adult dog or cat needs annual vaccines. A simple blood test, titers will show the level of immunity the pet currently has to certain diseases. Another vaccine *may not be necessary* for your pet. Your pet's health makes it well worth a talk with your veterinarian!

Pets, like humans, can have cancer and the key to successful treatment is early detection. Pay attention to these signs.

- Sores that do not heal
- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Offensive odor
- Abnormal swellings that persist or continue to grow
- Bleeding or discharge from body openings
- Difficulty eating or swallowing
- Hesitation to exercise or loss of stamina
- Persistent lameness or stiffness
- Difficulty breathing, urinating or defecating

If your pet exhibits any of these symptoms, it's time to visit your vet. Go to <http://trupanion.com> for more information

The best way to fight a flea infestation is to make sure it never occurs. Fleas are more than just a nuisance; they can cause serious medical problems. Ask your vet's advice about new flea preventives and protocols. They work!

"We don't realize how determined our pets are to eat the things they shouldn't," says Dr. Tina Wismer, DVM, medical director for the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center. Of the 165,900 calls handled by the Center in 2011, most of



them involved pets who'd ingested human prescriptions. Dr. Wismer says, "Even nonprescription medications can be a problem because many brands have a sweet coating - it's like candy for dogs." Some of the most common toxins are acetaminophen, batteries, chocolate, ethylene glycol (antifreeze), gasoline, grapes, kerosene, lilies, mothballs, non-prescription & prescription meds, sago palms, windshield wiper fluid, xylitol (artificial sweetener in gum/breath mints/ toothpaste) and zinc (in pennies). For more information visit the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center website to learn about other potential poisons. It's also a good idea to post the organization's phone number — 888-426-4435 — on your refrigerator for easy reference in the event of an emergency. The call center is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Our pets' diets are as important to their well-being as ours is to us. Most of us know we should make any change in our pet's regular diet gradually. Fatty foods cause potentially deadly pancreatitis and cooked bones can splinter and cause internal tears, obstructions or choking. There are specific foods that are toxic, such as raw eggs, chocolate, caffeinated drinks, salty foods, alcohol, macadamia nuts, onions & garlic, and candy & gum. Foods that are safe for pets are cooked lean meats with no extra fat or bones, plain canned

pumpkin, apples, oranges, bananas, watermelon (no seeds, leaves or stems), carrot sticks, cucumber, green beans, zucchini, and white rice /pasta. Rice or pasta with boiled chicken can sometimes help with a gastrointestinal upset. WebMD is a good resource for further details.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST.... Dental problems and obesity are common but serious health issues for our pets. Brush your pet's teeth regularly with pet toothpaste--not human. Dental exams/cleaning by your vet will save your pet bad breath, pain, tooth loss and even more serious systemic problems down the road.

Obesity is most likely the result of too much food—or the wrong food—and not enough exercise. Sound familiar? The consequences for your pet's health and quality of life are profound. Please take your pet's weight seriously: Ask your vet's advice and do some research of healthy eating on your own. We hope we've helped to get you started!