

## “About Your Pets”

### Did You Know?

**A current rabies tag.** In addition to microchips and identification tags, can be his ticket home if all other efforts to keep him safe fail and he is lost. Usually a call to your local animal control shelter is a good starting point.

**Five fresh foods** you can give your pet in moderation as treats that may help maintain healthy weight: apples (without seeds), carrots, boiled or scrambled eggs (yolk & white), pumpkin (can help with chronic digestive issues), and sugar-free yogurt. Three foods NOT to give your pet: chocolate & caffeine, onions and even small amounts of grapes & raisins. Always consult your vet if your pet has any health issues. Diet may be a cause. Source: vetstreet.com

**Vaccination Protocols** — Pet vaccination is a medical decision that should be made based on the age, health, and lifestyle of each animal. The conclusion of leaders in veterinary medicine is that annual vaccinations often are unnecessary—except in the case of a one-year rabies vaccine. The recommendation remains that the full puppy or kitten series be given followed by a booster at one year and after that re-vaccination of adult dogs and cats can occur only at three-year intervals (except in cases of animals at high risk of exposure) and generally will not be needed after 10-yrs. old. Do your own research and talk with your veterinarian.

**Dental Health** -- Dental care is critical to our pet's health, but is often overlooked. According to the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), 85% of all dogs over one year have some degree of periodontal disease, but only 3% get treated. That makes it the most commonly diagnosed infection. Symptoms of dental disease are bad breath (an early sign), yellowish-brown crust of tartar on teeth near the gum line, red & swollen gums (gingivitis), pain or bleeding in the mouth, decreased appetite or trouble eating, and loose or missing teeth. When the disease reaches that latter stage, the heart and kidneys are particularly susceptible to infection. As usual, the best treatment is prevention. Regular dental check-ups and teeth cleaning (anesthesia required) about every six to twenty-four months are advisable depending on your own pet's mouth and age. The AAHA also recommends brushing your pet's teeth on a regular basis with pet flavored toothpaste and toothbrush—NO human toothpaste. If begun when teeth are clean, regular brushing could prevent or delay the need for future cleaning.

**Exercise** —Appropriate exercise is good for all of us...including our pets. Exercise and a good quality diet are essential in maintaining or achieving a healthy weight for our pets. Exercise can also help with your pet's behavior issues if they stem from bore-dom, anxiety, or too much energy and no acceptable way to get rid of it or. Physical exercise provides your pet an outlet for his body and his mind. If it involves you—like a walk or playing ball—it also helps to create a bond between you. If you can't offer that, go to a shelter and adopt an energetic playmate and your 2 pets can exercise each other!

**Itching** — Itching and scratching are common reasons to see the vet. It is not only mis-erable for your pet but if it continues can cause irritated skin, open sores, even infec-tions. Causes include fleas, “hot spots”, food allergies, thyroid disorders and poor nutrition. It is important to break the cycle of itching so that skin damage is mini-mized. Let your veterinarian advise you.