



The RVH Yelper

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Riverside- "Serving Pets and their People Since 1988."

Heartworm Prevention: Year Round Protection

Winter in New England means frosty weather, snow, fun, and holiday cheer. But don't be fooled into thinking that when the cold and snow appear, the parasites disappear.

At Riverside Veterinary Hospital, we are fortunate to have smart clients who understand the importance of preventing heartworm disease during the "traditional mosquito season". What may not be as well known is that parasites can be a problem year round.

Unfortunately, mosquitoes are capable of living and breeding indoors- making them a risk of transmission of heartworm disease even

during the "off season".

Another risk that doesn't disappear with the summer warmth is intestinal parasites (worms). Parasite eggs survive climate extremes. Snow actually insulates the ground the eggs are nestled in. These parasites can be contracted from local wildlife, dog parks, even brought in on our own shoes!

These parasites can make our pets sick, but can also be harmful to people (particularly the youngsters). This is known as zoonotic disease. We live too intimately with our pets to risk zoonotic disease. Admit it, the dog spoons with you at night, licks your dishes and your face, and the cats walk



on the counters we prepare dinner on!

Because you love your pets, because you love your kids, and because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, the staff at Riverside Veterinary Hospital recommends you give your pets (cats too!) heartworm prevention all through the year. Doing so will keep you in the habit and keep everyone safe!

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January: Heartworm Prevention Sale

Heartworms are nine to eleven-inch long worms that live in a pet's heart or in the pulmonary arteries, the arteries leading to the lungs. Along with other intestinal parasites, they are a constant risk for your pets, both dogs and cats.

Parasite prevention is important to the people of pets as well. Many parasites

carried by pets can infect humans, especially children.

Heartworm and zoonotic parasites can be prevented with this simple monthly effort!

- Purchase a 12 month supply of heartworm prevention and get 15% off.
- Purchase a 6 month supply of heartworm prevention and get 10% off.

• Manufacturers may offer mail-in rebates along with in hospital promotion.

• Sale starts January 1st, 2010 and will run until February 14th, 2010.

With safe and affordable preventives, no animal should ever have to endure this disease.

Special points of interest:

- Monthly Promotions!
- **Why Heartworm prevention should be given year round.**
- Periodontal Disease: The most common disease in our pets.
- **Pests, Fleas, and Ticks Oh My!**
- Find out what food you should feed your pet with a **FREE Nutrition Consult.**
- **How to stay safe from Leptosriosis.**
- Remembering those we lost.
- **Dr. Taylor shares a story.**



The Perfect Walker

By: Dr. Brad Taylor, DVM

My cross-country skis are following a set of perfect tracks down a snowy, wooded trail. Tracks made by a perfect walker. In perfect snow. We don't get perfect snow very often in New England. We get a lot of snow but we also get a lot of ice, and often we get rain right at the end of a snowstorm or warm days between snowfalls that melt the surface so it can refreeze as an icy crust. It makes for difficult, loud, cross-country ski conditions, but every once in a while we get great conditions and today is one of those days. There is a lot of old snow on the ground. Maybe three feet total, which is enough to cover up and flatten out all the rocks and logs and creeks. On top of the old snow there is new, powdery, cold snow falling and there is already a two or three inch layer of the new stuff covering the trail. I'm the only person out here so the snow is completely untracked. Except for the perfect walker.

Perfect walkers are animals that place their rear foot exactly in the track just made by the front foot. It leaves a single set of tracks instead of left and right trails, and if it's done well the single set of tracks will be in a perfectly straight line. It's a very

efficient way to travel, especially in snow. A few dogs can walk this way but not very many. Foxes do it but they tend to meander around in the woods a lot. Horses do it at a trot but not very well, and the hoof prints usually overlap instead of being right on top of each other. Mostly this is a wolf thing. They cover huge



distances during the normal course of their lives, usually at a fast walk or a lope, and they are the ultimate perfect walkers, leaving a perfectly straight line of single prints that never overlap for mile after mile.

It doesn't take an expert woodsman to figure out who is making the tracks I'm following. He is only about twenty feet in front of me, and if I stop to look at something by the trail he will

come back and look with me. If I stop to rest he will flop down in the light, powdery snow and roll around on his back. Tucker isn't a wolf. His mother was a chocolate Labrador retriever. His father certainly looked like a wolf though, and may have been only a generation or two removed from a pure wolf ancestor. Tucker is a tall

lean dog with the long legs, big feet and narrow set eyes of his wolf ancestors, but the pure, jet-black coat comes from the Labrador side of things. Tucker is the perfect cross-country ski companion. He stays close by, he never tires and he loves snow more than anything else in the world. He likes to walk in it. He likes to run in it. He loves to roll in it. He delights in burrowing into it if it's deep enough, and if nothing else is going on he loves to just lie

outside on a snow bank and watch the world.

Today Tucker and I are out in nearly ideal conditions. We are on a snowmobile trail far from any road. It's a weekday so no one is out snowmobiling. The temperature is in the low twenties so none of the new snow is melting but it's not too cold to be comfortable. There is no wind and the falling snow creates nearly complete silence in the forest. As we pass through leafless groves of hardwood trees there are about four inches of new snow on the ground. When we move through low areas where most of the trees are Hemlocks there is only a bare inch of new snow on the ground. The rest is caught by the Hemlock needles and covers the trees almost solid white and drooping toward the ground. Beneath

the Hemlocks, the thick snowy branches block out almost all the light, leaving the trail in twilight even though it's mid-afternoon and out in the open everything is bright and white. As it continues to snow and as long as there is no wind, the Hemlocks will hold the first six inches of powder that falls. After that, any more snow that falls will roll down the outside of the trees creating little avalanches that let the



suddenly lighter branches spring back up and knock more snow loose.

It's snowing hard enough to keep all the forest creatures out of sight. The chickadees, n u t h a t c h e s a n d woodpeckers that usually flit through the trees are all hiding somewhere trying to stay dry. The squirrels and snowshoe hares are all holed up in their nests waiting for the snow to stop, and the porcupines wont come out and leave their strange weaving tracks until it is both done snowing and nighttime. The deer are huddled up and hidden under the drooping branches of the Hemlocks. There are no tracks on this blanket of new snow except for Tucker's and mine. The mice are probably going about their business under the snow where they live in the leaf litter between

the snow and the ground, but I can't see them or hear them. Tucker shoves his whole head down into the snow every so often to check on what they are up to but he doesn't dig after them. He just gives them a sniff and moves on. Not once in his eight years has Tucker ever chased a wild animal. He sees everything in the woods and he will point things out to me by stopping in front of me and looking at a deer or a porcupine that I haven't noticed but he won't chase anybody. He is a watcher, not a hunter. Tucker knows everything that happens in these woods. He sees, hears, smells and feels things that I can only imagine and guess at. Days like today, when he is completely at ease and relaxed, that comfort affects me as well. The trail is safe, the weather is pleasant, there are no snowmobiles,

everything is as it should be in the forest and he knows it.

These snow conditions make cross-country skiing feel almost like effortless gliding. There is no noise from the skis sliding over the fresh powder. On the flats each kick sends me fifteen or twenty feet further down the trail. Even on the up hills the skis hold the snow effortlessly and it is far easier than walking. The down hills require nothing but leaning to steer and the powder is just deep enough and the hills mild enough to keep me from going too fast. Tucker adjusts his speed to stay about fifteen feet in front of me. Without ever looking back he will break into a lope on the down hills when I start to get close to him. If he finds something that he needs to check out carefully he will stop directly in front of me so that I have to stop and

check it with him. When we are breaking trail like this he insists on always being in the lead. It's cold enough that his frozen breath frosts his whiskers and snow builds up on his back and then slides off. He leads and I follow his easy, rolling, effortless gait that seems to float over and through the snow. At times his shiny black coat is more like a blank space in the white snow than an actual animal.

This path we are on makes a long loop so we won't return over our own tracks. We will cover a lot of miles on perfect snow and not see another animal or even another track. Pushing on into the gradually darkening afternoon my skis are cutting silent grooves in the snow for mile after mile. Sliding over the perfect tracks laid down in front of me by my silent,

Leptospirosis– Pets Can Infect Their People

What You Need to Know to Stay Safe

Ah nature! Hiking, camping, observing wildlife. These are some of the best reasons to live in New Hampshire. Alas, every rose does have its thorns. While communing with nature is good for our souls, and good for our pets, there are some potential hazards.

Some wildlife, including rodents, can carry the bacterium that causes Leptospirosis. Leptospirosis is a potentially debilitating disease that can severely damage a dog's liver and/or kidneys (cats do not become

ill with Leptospirosis). Sources of standing water (i.e.-lakes, ponds, swamps, etc.) often become contaminated with urine from the wild animals. This is the most common source of infection for domestic animals.

Another frightening fact about Leptospirosis is that people are susceptible to it too! We can be infected by the same source as our pets or even from contact with urine from a pet that is infected. Leptospirosis has been diagnosed in all 50 states.

Signs of a dog infected with Lepto can greatly vary from fever, lethargy, and inappetance to muscle pain, vomiting, and dehydration. With early and accurate diagnosis Leptospirosis can be treated, but still, it can be a devastating disease.

The good news is that vaccination is now available to help protect dogs from this disease! As with all vaccines, side effects are possible, although infrequent. If you are concerned about your pet's risk of exposure to Leptospirosis, contact the

staff at Riverside Veterinary Hospital to determine if the vaccine is right for your pet.. Once again, prevention is our best medicine!



February: National Dental Month



Been putting off your pet's teeth cleaning? Well Riverside, in the month of February, is offering with every routine scheduled cleaning, a professionally applied sealer on your pet's teeth and a home kit- Free!!!

Let our staff educate you on home care and avoid return visits for periodontal disease.

See our staff for more details.

"70% of our pets over the age of five have some degree of periodontal disease."

TEETH: The Unseen Pet Health Need

Brush and floss twice a day, stay away from sweets, and see your dentist twice a year. As I write these pearls of wisdom, I'm eating M&M's and wondering if I flossed this morning (probably not!).

While what we do and what we aspire to do don't always measure up, it is important to try and keep ourselves healthy and the same is true for our pets. The most common disease of dogs and cats is periodontal disease. 70 percent of our pets over the age of 5 have some degree of periodontal disease.

Dogs are sweet to a fault

and DO NOT complain about pain. When I met my own dog he had just been hit by a car. His eye was deflated and he had cuts and bruises all over...he was wagging his tail and giving kisses. Dogs just don't complain. But studies show pets can feel the pain of a tooth ache just as bad as we can. Head clutching, throbbing, migraine level pain is how I describe an abscessed tooth (I've had two!).

The good news is that we now have the ability to properly diagnose and treat these problems in our pets. Not only will proper dental care keep your pets pain

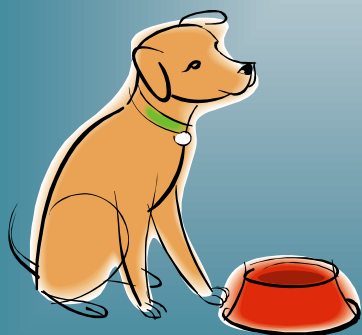
free, but it can potentially add up to two years to your pet's life! The mouth is the window to the body and if it is infected the heart, kidneys, and other organs will become infected.

So, if you think your pet may have dental disease come talk to the staff at Riverside Veterinary Hospital to learn how to fix it! And if you think your pet has healthy teeth and you want to keep them that way, talk to the staff at Riverside Veterinary Hospital and learn the tricks of good home care! As always, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.



Tarter and plaque harbor bacteria, which is released into the blood and travels to organs, leading to damage over extended periods of time.

Nutrition Consults: Free To All Pets



Riverside Veterinary Hospital is committed to providing educational insight to help you achieve the best health for your pet. When it comes to the health of your pet, diet plays one of the most important roles.

If you have nutritional

questions or concerns regarding your pet, Riverside offers free Nutrition Consults. We will schedule an appointment for you to meet with one of our nutritional consultants who will work with you to determine what food would be best for your pets individual needs and

how to manage these needs daily.

Proper nutrition can help your pet achieve and maintain optimal nutritional health at any age or stage of your pets life. Call or come in to schedule this free appointment today!



March: Time to Think About Fleas

Before the snow melts is the best time to prevent a flea and tick infestation. Our *Frontline 6 pack* prices beat Pet Med's, and unlike internet purchased goods, *our product is guaranteed.*

All through March when you buy any 3 or 6 pack of Frontline or Revolution (our cat product that's a flea / heart worm preventative) you'll receive a Flea & Tick information kit including a flea comb and

tick id chart. You receive a *free* dose on a 6 pack purchase. Buy Frontline Spray when you purchase Frontline and we'll take \$5.00 off the spray and you will receive a *FREE* RVH t-shirt.

Pesky Pets: Prevent Now or Pay Later

The worst house guest my family ever had were always eating, always making a mess, and constantly annoying all of us! We didn't invite them to come, and we had a terrible time getting them to leave. You guessed it, I'm talking about fleas!

Growing up, my family had dogs and cats. What we didn't have were Frontline and Revolution. One time our home was so infested that we were being bitten, the dog had no hair on his tush, and the cat tried to

move in with the neighbors.

With a fix-it yourself attitude, my parents bought every over the counter product out there. The flea collar just moved the fleas from the front of the dog to the back end. The flea shampoo just gave us a marginally better smelling flea infested dog. To make a long story short, it got so bad that my parents had to hire a professional exterminator (not cheap!) and we had to take the dog to the vet for antibiotics, anti-itch medicine, and a

wonderful product called Frontline!

After the terrible experience my parents became firm believers in flea prevention as preferable to flea treatment. Our story sounds extreme, but it is more common than you can imagine.

If you want to spare yourself from our ordeal, ask the staff at RVH which products would be best to keep your pets (and your home) free of fleas and ticks!

"In normal circumstances, the adult female flea can live up to 3 weeks, laying approximately 40 eggs per day!"

Fun Facts About Fleas and Ticks

The flea life cycle involves four stages: egg, larva, pupa, and adult.

Flea larvae are blind, while adult fleas immediately seek a blood meal and then mate within 8-24 hours. The female flea can lay 2000 eggs in her lifetime.

Flea saliva contains 15 different allergens. These allergens can cause mild itch

and irritation to people and pets; or, in many cases, severe allergic reactions which lead to intense scratching, hair loss, excoriations and infection.

Fleas can carry the organism hemobartonella felis which can lead to severe anemia, weight loss and weakness in cats.

Fleas thrive best in 62° - 83°.

There are many different species of ticks. Most tick species also have 4 life stages: egg, larva, nymph, and adult.

Some tick species can lay up to 3000-6000 eggs per batch!

Larva, nymph, and adult stages all require a blood meal. Female ticks can engorge, increasing their weight by more than 100

times their normal body weight.

Most tick bites just cause a mild, focal irritation or infection at the attachment site. Some ticks can transmit disease to pets and people. The most well known of these diseases is Lyme disease. Other tick born diseases include Ehrlichia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Babesia, and tick paralysis.

In Loving Memory

Oscar Anqwin
Trooper Asby
Ned Bean
Konig Bernard
Brandy Boyd
Dahlia Buxton
Jet Carrier
Buddy Carter
Yogi Chase
Isabelle Ciarametaro
Emily Cohan
Gizmo Cote
Brownie Duhaime
Blue Dukette
Molly Dwyer
Sam Enzien
Calvin Erb

Mufasa Fanny
Fluffy Fife
Ashes Fillion
Callie Fries
Alice Gordon
Tippy Green

Hubert Koenig
Lexi Lavin
Tiger Longval
Katie Lord
Gizmo McFadden
Kate McKinney

Buttercup Piroso
Franny Plourde
Abby Prospere
Lady Reid
Wendell Richardson
Peanut Roberts
Inka Silva
Tucker Sterl
Jelici Stimpson
Kornel Tanos
Foxmo Taylor
Tig-ger Tobey
Colby Twombly
Angelique Warren
Buddy Yonemura

Friends never leave us....They live on in our memories and in our hearts.

Moose Greenleaf
Derby Harte
Miles Head
Shiloh Hunt
Princess Hunt
Vlady lozia

Megan Miner
Binky Newcombe
Rosie Niebling
Zoey Noble
Lexus Nugent
Jake Parker

