



SPRING 2016

ANDOVER  
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

# Around the Barn

## Andover Animal Hospital

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[www.andoveranimalhospital.com](http://www.andoveranimalhospital.com)

## Hours

Monday: 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Tuesday: 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Wednesday: 8:00am - 6:00pm  
Thursday: 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Friday: 8:00am - 5:00pm  
Saturday: 8:00am - 12:00pm  
Sunday: Closed

Harvey E. Hummel, VMD  
Shelley L. Parker, DVM  
Wendy Turner, DVM

## FeLV

Feline leukemia virus, or FeLV, is a contagious virus that affects cats, and is considered by some to be one of the deadliest diseases among domestic cats in the United States. The virus is species-specific, and there is no evidence that it can be transmitted to humans or other animals.

FeLV is spread through contact with the secretions of infected cats, especially the saliva and nasal fluids, but also urine, feces and mothers' milk. Bites and mutual grooming are the most common mode of transmission. FeLV can also be spread through contact with urine. Cats that are allowed outdoors, along with cats that live indoors with other infected cats or cats of unknown status, are at the greatest risk of infection. Kittens born to infected mothers are at high risk as well. Kittens have much less resistance to the virus than adult cats, although some kittens infected at birth are able to clear the virus.

*continued on pg. 4*

## Your Canine Running Partner, Part II

About four years after I started long distance running, I thought it would be great to have a furry running companion. Six months later, Miles joined our family at the age of 1-1/2. After another six months of acclimating to our house and life with humans, as well as basic obedience training (see the Winter newsletter), we were ready to hit the roads together. We didn't jump right into it, but instead followed a fitness plan so that Miles, eventually, could run up to 16 miles with me. Now, he loves it, not only because he gets to go outside, but also because burning off his extra energy keeps him mentally healthy and physically fit.

In Part I (Winter issue) I discussed running companion selection and preparation. Now that the days are getting longer and warmer, it's finally time to hit the road! Here are important considerations:

1. Begin by adding short jogs to your walks. Depending on your dog, start with five minutes at a time, and watch for signs of fatigue. This is a good time to reinforce the manners he's learned over the winter, especially walking/running at your heel and "leave it." Begin in an area with relatively few distractions, and make sure you have a supply of small treats to reward good behavior. Gradually increase running time and decrease walking time until you are running consistently. A good rule of thumb for most dogs is to increase by 1/2 mile every week.
2. Watch for signs of fatigue during your run: ears back, excessive panting, slowing down or stopping, lagging behind. If you see these, stop the run for that day. After your run, watch for soreness, extreme tiredness, difficulty getting up or lying down, and especially limping. These are all indicators that you have overdone it, and total miles should be decreased to a level that is comfortable for your dog.
3. Remember that your dog cannot sweat! Run early in the morning or late in the evening, and keep her inside if it's warmer than 70 to 75 degrees, depending on tolerance. Hyperthermia (heat stroke) is life-threatening: do not take the chance!
4. Make sure you have a source of water for your dog. He needs about twice as much water as you do. There are collapsible nylon dog bowls available, and some dogs carry their own water in pouches.
5. Stay alert! The biggest danger to an obedient dog is another, less obedient and less friendly dog. Sometimes owners of such dogs have little awareness or control over the dog. Make a wide circle around these dogs to avoid any conflict.
6. Give your dog a post-run once-over, and check paws, check for ticks, and why not—give her a little post-run massage in the process.
7. HAVE FUN!



This photo show Miles at heel

By Wendy Turner, DVM



## Scent Training

What do police dogs, search and rescue dogs and cancer detection dogs have in common with your dog? A superior sense of smell!

Across the country, more and more people are unleashing their dog's inner hound, and learning about scent detection.

Some scent detection sports have existed for a long time, for example the American Kennel Club (AKC) has long sponsored competitions in tracking, earth dogs and field events. A relatively new sport, called K9 Nosework, is opening this fun pastime to everyone. As it states on their website: "Inspired by working detection dogs, K9 Nose Work is the fun search and scenting activity for virtually all dogs and people. This easy to learn activity and sport builds confidence and focus in many dogs, and provides a safe way to keep dogs fit and healthy through mental and physical exercise."

Because it provides such unique and interesting mental stimulation for dogs, scent work is an exceptional outlet for dogs who are recovering from surgery or any dog whose mobility must be restricted, because you can practice on a leash or indoors. Even in the comfort of your living room, you can vary the level of difficulty according to your dog's skill level and mobility limitations.

Scent training is fun for all dogs and all handlers. Consider giving it a try. Your dog will be glad you did!



## Spring Fever

Ahhh, spring! Longer days, warmer weather, fresh air and the wondrous feeling of stretching our legs outdoors inspired someone to coin the term "spring fever." Humans aren't the only ones who feel it; animals do, too. Spring fever can get pets in trouble, so wise pet owners will use caution this season.

As with humans, pets can have seasonal allergies. If your pet displays frequent scratching, licking (especially the face and paws) or inflamed ears, allergies may be the culprit. Some pets will develop "hot spots," or "acute moist dermatitis," in response to an allergy. Left untreated, these symptoms may get progressively worse and lead to more complicated problems. Seek veterinary care if you notice these signs, because medications can help alleviate your pet's discomfort.

As your yard bursts into bloom and you're enjoying the view, your pets may be drawn to take a nibble or two. Lilies and azaleas are toxic to pets, along with many other plants. Pesticides, fertilizers, cocoa mulch and other products used to beautify your yard can sicken and even kill pets.

While fleas and mosquitoes can live in your home and be a problem year round, the warming spring soil makes outdoor parasites more active. Parasites can all carry dangerous pathogens. Be sure to keep your pet current on flea, tick and heartworm preventives.

"Love is in the air" in springtime. Unspayed female cats are likely to cycle (see the article on Kitten Season), causing them to yowl and complain, and potentially go in search of a mate. Unneutered males will be attracted to their scent and calls. While dogs tend to have more regular heat cycles, studies have shown that canine reproductive cycles are also most active between February and May.

Spring fever affects wildlife, too, which means more critters may be roaming the trails where you may walk your dog, and also nearer to your home. Porcupine and skunk encounters increase in the spring and fall. Dogs should see a veterinarian within 24 hours of a porcupine encounter, as quills can migrate inwards, and complications may occur.

Kudos to you if you've decided spring is the time to get your dog back in shape. To avoid injury, be sure to gradually build up your dog's level of fitness.

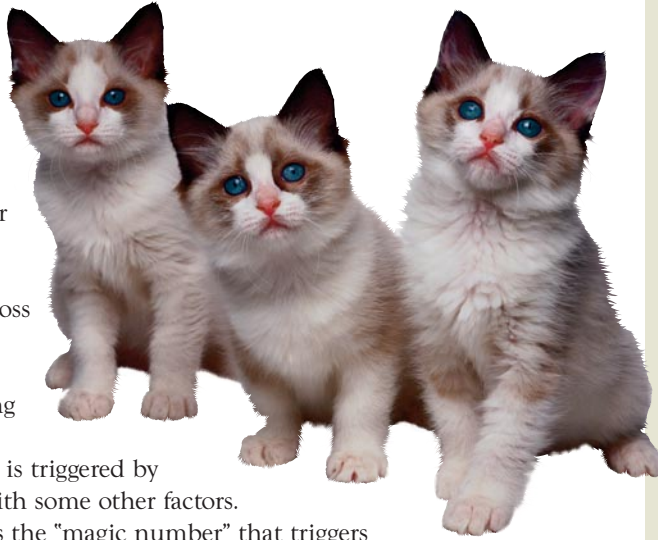
Finally, be sure your pet is restrained or contained! The urge to get out and explore brings a sad ending to many pets in this country. Be sure your pet has identification, including a collar, tags and a microchip, in case it does manage to escape.



**"I think it's time to have our cat neutered. I found his picture on Yahoo Personals, MySpace, Match.com, E-Harmony and Great Expectations!"**



# Kitten Season



Spring is a favorite season for many. We glory in the flowers blooming and feeling of new beginnings. Shelter workers across the country often have mixed feelings about spring, though, because it heralds the beginning of "kitten season."

The breeding season for cats is triggered by the length of daylight, along with some other factors. Ten hours per day of daylight is the "magic number" that triggers the hormones that induce the heat cycle, or estrus, so March through September is the peak mating season for cats here in the Northern Hemisphere.

Cats are "induced ovulators," which means that their bodies naturally release eggs if copulation occurs. If they are not bred, cats can go in and out of heat multiple times, and may even exhibit continuous heat cycles. For these reasons, cats are known as "seasonally polyestrous," which means they can have multiple heat cycles which are induced by seasonal changes.

Female cats (or queens) in heat will become quite vocal, and their yowling is intended to attract toms (unneutered males) from near and far. The female will also urinate more frequently and show other behavior changes. Cat owners often find this quite troubling, as the queen can sound like she is in quite a bit of distress.

If you have an unneutered male cat, the dangers of the season are perhaps even greater for him. Mother Nature has made it close to impossible for toms to resist the lure of females in heat, and if there is one nearby, you can expect your cat to do everything possible to escape the safety of your home to find her. In his quest for the female, he's at risk of getting hit by a car, taken by predators, and for fights with other males who are potential suitors for the female.

Female kittens can experience their first heat cycle, or estrus, as early as four to six months of age. They can become pregnant during that early estrus cycle, although it is roughly the equivalent of a ten-year-old girl getting pregnant. An adult female cat can produce three litters per year, with an average of four to six kittens per litter. In theory, that one female cat and her offspring can produce 420,000 cats in seven years.

According to the ASPCA, approximately 3.4 million cats enter shelters each year, and approximately 1.4 million of them are euthanized. They also estimate that there are 70 million stray cats living in the United States.

You can be part of the solution, which is to spay or neuter your cat. There are many benefits: Female cats spayed before six months of age are 91% less likely to develop mammary tumors – the third most common form of cancer in cats. In addition, neutered pets are less likely to roam, and neutering reduces the tendency of urine spraying or marking.

**"No matter how much the cats fight, there always seem to be plenty of kittens."**

*– Abraham Lincoln*

## Animals and the FBI

"Acts of cruelty against animals are now counted alongside felony crimes like arson, burglary, assault, and homicide in the FBI's expansive criminal database," according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). In January, they began tracking cases of animal cruelty through their National Incident Based Reporting System, or NIBRS.

According to the NY Humane Association, studies have shown that "Animal cruelty is an indicator and predictor of possible human violence and prosecuting it can prevent future crimes and suffering."

Many studies have shown a correlation between animal abuse and crimes towards people, including domestic violence. "If somebody is harming an animal, there is a good chance they also are hurting a human," said John Thompson, deputy executive director of the National Sheriffs' Association.

John Thompson of the National Sheriffs' Association, noted "By paying attention to [these crimes], we are benefiting all of society."

## Tick Alert!



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced the discovery of a new species of bacteria (*Borrelia mayonii*) that causes Lyme disease in people. To date, this species has only been seen in the Midwest, and to our knowledge has not been documented in pets.

This discovery is an important reminder that the incidence of tick-borne diseases in the U.S. is continuing to increase.

Keeping your dog current on tick preventives helps protect your dog and your family, because dogs can carry ticks into your home after exercising outdoors.

For more information, go to [www.cdc.gov/ticks](http://www.cdc.gov/ticks)



**FELV** continued from pg. 1

The disease has a fairly long incubation period, so infected cats may not show symptoms or initially test positive, yet they can shed the virus and transmit it to other cats. If your cat has had a potential exposure or if you have a new cat, your veterinarian may suggest retesting the cat if the initial results are negative.

Feline leukemia virus is the most common cause of cancer in cats, and it also suppresses the immune system, opening the door for many other problems, such as chronic infections.

Initially, cats show no outward signs of the disease; in fact, some cats' immune systems are able to effectively eliminate the virus from their bodies. Over time, signs of infection may include chronic or recurrent illness, anemia, fever, lethargy, loss of appetite leading to weight loss, poor skin and coat condition, diarrhea and neurological disorders.

You can reduce your cat's risk of contracting FeLV by keeping it indoors and away from infected cats, and knowing the infection status of all the cats in your household. A vaccine is available for FeLV, so you should discuss

your cat's risk level with your veterinarian.

There is no cure or effective anti-viral medication for FeLV. Infected cats should be spayed or neutered, and kept indoors, separate from uninfected cats. To help prolong the healthy life of an infected cat, keep her indoors, provide a complete and balanced diet, and visit your veterinarian for check-ups every six months. Note any changes in your infected cat's behavior and health, and promptly visit your veterinarian if you suspect your pet's health has been compromised.



## A N D O V E R ANIMAL HOSPITAL

243 Newton Sparta Road, Newton, NJ 07860

*25 years of excellence*



## TEAM UPDATES

### Marilu, Receptionist

A lifelong resident of Sussex County, Marilu graduated from William Paterson College with a BA degree. After several years as an Assistant Vice President in Bank Operations, she decided to pursue her interests working with animals. From 2000-2003, Marilu had the honor of owning the #1 AKC dog in the U.S., whose prestigious "Best in Show" wins included Crufts (England), Westminster and the Eukanuba Invitational. Marilu is a member of the Newton Kennel Club and the Sussex County Oratorio Society.



Marilu and Lisa

### Lisa, CVT Technician Team Leader

Born and raised in Queens, N.Y., Lisa had the opportunity to work at the Animal Medical Center right after graduating from LaGuardia Community College with her degree in Veterinary Technology in 1996. In 2002, Lisa made the move to Sussex County and continued her career as a technician and as a supervisor. She brings with her experience in Emergency/Referral medicine from hospitals such as Oradell and Animal Emergency & Referral Associates, as well as general practice at Madison Animal Hospital VCA. She has developed an interest in Emergency and Critical Care medicine and has a passion for patient care. Lisa is a Star Wars fan that loves cooking, traveling and spending time with family, friends and her two cats, Sith and Skwrrl.