



ANDOVER
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

Around the Barn



Andover Animal Hospital

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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

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Pyrethrin Toxicity

The incidence of tick-borne disease is increasing. Fortunately, there's a growing awareness of this threat, and many people are taking measures to keep their pets and their yards tick-free. It's important to realize that some chemicals, especially pyrethrins and permethrins, can be toxic, especially to cats and fish, and to dogs to a lesser degree.

Pyrethrins are a class of chemicals derived from chrysanthemums that are potent insecticides that target the nervous systems of insects. They are naturally-occurring, but also industrial-made as well. Permethrins are a related, synthetically created insecticide. These chemicals are used in a wide variety of products, including spot-on flea and tick preventives, collars, flea shampoos, and aerosols and powders that are used by

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Diabetes in Pets

Diabetes mellitus is the clinical name for a group of conditions in which the body is unable to properly regulate blood glucose (sugar) levels due to a deficiency of insulin or insensitivity to its effects. Nearly 29 million people in the U.S. have diabetes, and the number is growing. Cats and dogs can get diabetes as well, and it is estimated that one in every 200 cats and one in every 500 dogs will develop the disease. While there are many differences in the disease in dogs, cats and humans, there are similarities as well.

Normally, as food is digested, some components are converted to glucose. Glucose is absorbed through the intestines into the bloodstream, and insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas, allows the glucose to enter the body's cells to give them energy. In a diabetic, the glucose levels build up in the bloodstream and the cells "starve." The body then excretes the excess glucose from the bloodstream into the urine.

As the excess glucose is excreted, it takes water with it, causing larger amounts of urine than normal to be produced. This excessive water loss causes thirst and increased water consumption. Because the cells are starved for energy, the body's fat and protein deposits are then broken down, causing weight loss. The

symptoms you might notice in a cat or dog include:

- Increased thirst
- Lethargy and/or weakness
- Increased urination
- Weight loss
- Increased appetite
- Dull haircoat

While any dog or cat can get diabetes, there are a number of risk factors common to both cats and dogs:

- Age (older pets are more susceptible)
- Genetics
- Obesity
- Unspayed females (dogs)
- Neutered males (cats)
- Lack of exercise (cats)
- Certain breeds appear to be at higher risk, including Beagles, Schnauzers, Dachshunds and Cocker Spaniels (dogs) and Burmese cats
- Presence of certain other diseases

Diabetic animals are at greater risk from bacterial and fungal infections, and diabetic dogs are at risk for cataracts. Untreated diabetes can lead to a number of serious complications, including death, in cats and dogs.

Daily insulin injections are usually required for diabetic

pets, and while this sounds frightening to some pet owners at first, it's not a difficult task. Diet plays an important role in regulating diabetes, and a prescription veterinary diet may be the best choice. Your veterinarian will have specific recommendations for your dog or cat. Exercise is beneficial to the diabetic pet, but it

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Powassan Virus

There's a new tick-borne disease making the national news these days: Powassan virus. This virus was first identified in the 1950s, but until recently it has been quite rare. At the time of this writing, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has received 75 reports of Powassan virus.

This virus is transmitted by deer ticks, and can cause severe symptoms in 50%-60% of people who are infected, including fever, headache, weakness, confusion, seizures and death. Most of the cases reported so far have been in the Midwest and the Northeast, with 20 cases appearing in Minnesota through 2015. As with Lyme disease, however, experts are concerned that the incidence of this disease will spread throughout the country.

Concerned pet owners have been asking about the danger to their pets. So far, Powassan virus does not appear to pose a threat to dogs and cats. It has been found in some animals, such as woodchucks and squirrels. Dogs and cats have been experimentally infected, but so far no naturally-occurring cases in dogs or cats have been reported.

Tick prevention is important for pets and pet owners. Remove brush and leaf litter from around your home, and be sure to keep your pets current on tick preventives.

“Animals are such agreeable friends— they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms.”

— George Elliot

A Purr-fect Companion

“Dogs have owners, cats have staff.” There's no shortage of literary quotes depicting cats as aloof, solitary, and even antisocial. Yet somehow cats have worked their way into the hearts and homes of many Americans: it's estimated that there are 85.8 million owned cats compared to 78 million dogs (according to a 2015-2016 survey by the American Pet Products Association). And, of course, cats are superstars on the Internet. Clearly, many cat-lovers think felines are anything but antisocial.

Kristyn Vitale Shreve, a Ph.D. student at Oregon State University, appears to be one of them. She teaches kitten training and socialization classes, and her research interests include cat behavior and cognition, and human-cat interactions. She recently completed a study, published in *Behavioural Processes*, to assess cats' preferences for various types of stimuli.

Using adult cats from two populations, owned cats and shelter cats, the study aimed to determine whether the cats preferred social interaction with a human (petting, talking to or playing with the cat), food (tuna or chicken), toys or scent (a cloth that smelled like catnip or gerbil). In the initial session, researchers observed how much time the cats spent with items in each of the categories. In the final session, the preferred stimulus from each of the categories was pitted head-to-head and presented to the cats. The winner? Most cats chose to interact with people.

The study states, “Although there was clear individual variability in cat preference, social interaction with humans was the most-preferred stimulus category for the majority of cats, followed by food. This was true for cats in both the pet and shelter population.”

Understanding what type of stimulus your cat prefers may help you to enrich your cat's environment and increase the bond you share. It may also help you train your cat, if you so choose.

It turns out the most accurate of literary quotes about cats may be one from Charles Dickens: “What greater gift than the love of a cat?”



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“The woman I live with had business cards printed for me. She says it's a nicer way to say hello to another dog.”



Lawn Chemicals and Pets

What could be better than playing fetch with your dog on a lush, beautiful green lawn? Many homeowners are motivated to enhance the beauty and value of their home by maintaining verdant lawns and landscaping. Use caution, though, because products designed to improve the appearance of lawns can be dangerous to your pets and your family.

Lawn chemicals and pesticides are used by many people to keep weeds and bugs at bay. Most people know to keep their children off newly treated lawns, but may not be aware of the danger these chemicals pose to pets.

One study performed by the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine found that dogs exposed to lawn chemicals are seven times more likely to develop a certain form of bladder cancer, known as transitional cell carcinoma, or TCC. Another study, done by Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University found that the use of certain specific lawn care products is associated with a significantly higher risk of canine malignant lymphoma.

Given these known risks, a recent study published in *Science of the Total Environment* aimed to characterize the exposure of lawn chemicals to dogs by investigating how long the chemicals continue to come off the grass after application, and whether there is an uptake of the chemicals into dogs' urine.

The scientists realized that different environmental conditions might lead to different results, so they tested the chemicals on green and brown grass in both dry and wet conditions. They covered a wooden block with a cloth and dragged it through the grass. They found that chemicals were still coming off the grass after 48 hours, and in some conditions even longer.

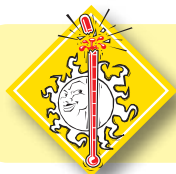


In the separate part of the study that used dogs, they stated that "the detection of lawn chemicals in the urine of dogs was widespread;" in fact, some of the dogs had chemicals in their urine prior to the lawn treatment, indicating that they had already been exposed in other places. Eight dogs in the study were from homes that did not treat their lawns, and four of those dogs had chemicals in their urine.

The authors noted that further

research is indicated to assess the risk of exposure to humans and dogs.

Some recommendations: Read the labels of all the products you use in your yard, and if it says to stay off the grass after applying the product, that caution applies to your pets as well as people. Pay attention to public and private places where you walk your dog, as this study made it clear that many dogs are exposed to chemicals in places other than their own yards. Ask your neighbors to let you know if they use herbicides, as it's possible for airborne particles can make their way to your lawn (known as "chemical drift") even if you're not the one doing the application. Wash your dog's paws after walking on lawns that may have been treated with chemicals.



Never leave your dog unattended in a parked car in the summer! Even in the shade and with the windows down, the inside of a car can reach deadly temperatures within minutes.

Backyard Hazards

Herbicides aren't the only things in your backyard that pose a potential threat to your pet's health.

Other products used to create a beautiful lawn and landscape can be toxic as well. It's wise to assess the environment in your yard, and determine if there are hazards that could unintentionally harm your pets. Some of the dangers include:

- Fertilizers (including bone meal and blood meal, which may smell really good to your dog) and other plant foods can be toxic to pets
- Pesticides
- Fungicides
- Herbicides
- Cocoa mulch, and some dyes used in bark mulch
- Many plants, including lilies, hosta and gladiola, are toxic to pets (for a complete list, visit www.asPCA.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/)
- Barbecues and fire pits (and the food you're cooking)
- Pools can be treacherous for pets

Be familiar with the potential dangers of ingesting certain plants or other items. Symptoms of poisoning could include drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, depression, anorexia, tremors, seizures and lethargy.

In addition to ensuring that your yard is free of hazards, it's wise to monitor your pet while outdoors. If you do leave your pet in a fenced yard, be sure to provide shade and fresh water.



DIABETES IN PETS

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needs to be consistent because activity affects blood glucose levels.

Diabetes mellitus is a very dynamic disease, and even in pets who are well maintained, it should be closely monitored. Diabetes is not curable, but it is manageable, and many pets with diabetes are able to live full, happy and healthy lives.



PYRETHRIN TOXICITY *continued from pg. 1*

homeowners and commercial pest management companies.

Cats are most often exposed by inadvertent use of a product labeled for dogs, or by licking or grooming a dog that has had a product applied. Exposure to these chemicals can be toxic, and even deadly, to cats. Signs may include ear flicking, tremors, salivation, vomiting, lack of coordination and seizures. If you suspect exposure, you should immediately seek veterinary treatment. There is no antidote for this toxicity, but your veterinarian can provide advanced supportive care and decontamination, and if treatment begins quickly enough the prognosis is often good.


Small dogs and dogs with compromised livers are more susceptible to toxicity than large, healthy dogs. Fish are highly susceptible, and a small amount of these chemicals can kill fish. If you have an aquarium, be sure to cover it if you use the products, and don't let your dog go swimming in a pond where fish may live for at least 24 hours after application.



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Water Safety

Swimming is a great way to cool off, and can provide good exercise as well. Water can also be treacherous, so keep the following safety tips in mind:

- Not all dogs are natural swimmers. As with any form of exercise, be extra vigilant with dogs that have health problems, and overweight or older dogs. Consider a canine PFD (personal floatation device), especially if you take your pet on a boat.

- Pools can be dangerous for dogs and cats. Make sure your pool is fenced in, and supervise your pet's access to pools at all times.
- Taking your dog to the beach can be great fun. Be sure not to let him drink too much of the salt water, and

provide a shady spot if you're staying awhile. Remember, the salt water isn't good for his coat and skin, so be sure to rinse him off with fresh water after swimming in the ocean.

- In late summer, the shallow water of ponds and streams that are drying up can become breeding grounds for bacteria and algae that can be dangerous and even toxic for your dog. If the water smells funny or looks cloudy or discolored, particularly with a blue/green tint, find another spot to cool off.

