



ANDOVER  
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

# Around the Barn



## Andover Animal Hospital

243 Newton Sparta Road  
Newton, NJ 07860  
Phone: (973) 940-BARN (2276)  
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[www.andoveranimalhospital.com](http://www.andoveranimalhospital.com)

## Hours

Monday: 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Tuesday: 8:00am - 6:00pm  
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

**“The smallest  
feline is a  
masterpiece”**

– Leonardo da Vinci

## The Calm Cat Experience

Do you get stressed just thinking about bringing your cat to the vet? Many cat owners dread the experience. The fact is, it may be even more important for cats than for dogs to have an exam at least once a year, because cats are masters at hiding illness. As part of the cat-friendly initiative promoted by the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP), Andover Animal Hospital has made it a goal to recognize the special attributes and needs of cats. To that end we have worked to make our reception area more inviting to cats and their owners, we reserve one exam room for cats only, we've been educating our staff on feline behavior and handling, and have put into action new protocols based on all we have learned. Here are some tips you can use to make your cat more comfortable:

- Eliminate the “dreaded carrier” phenomenon. Consider leaving the carrier out all the time, or at least a couple of weeks before your cat's visit. Put a soft towel inside, and regular treats. Your cat will get used to it, and you may even find him/her sleeping in it.
- The day before your visit, start spraying the bedding every eight hours with Feliway® Spray, a synthetic version of a natural relaxing pheromone that cats themselves produce. Or come by the clinic and ask for a free Feliway® wipe – wipe the entire inside of the carrier 30 minutes prior to leaving.

- Consider purchasing a carrier with a top that can be easily lifted off. This allows us to examine your cat without removing him/her from the carrier.
- Place a towel over the carrier for the car ride to help your cat feel more secure.

In our reception area, you'll be taken directly to the cat-only exam room if it is available. Otherwise, you'll be guided to the cat waiting area. We recommend placing the carrier on the table (cats prefer an elevated position) facing you. If you haven't brought a towel to cover the carrier, we can provide one for you, to help block scary sights and noises.

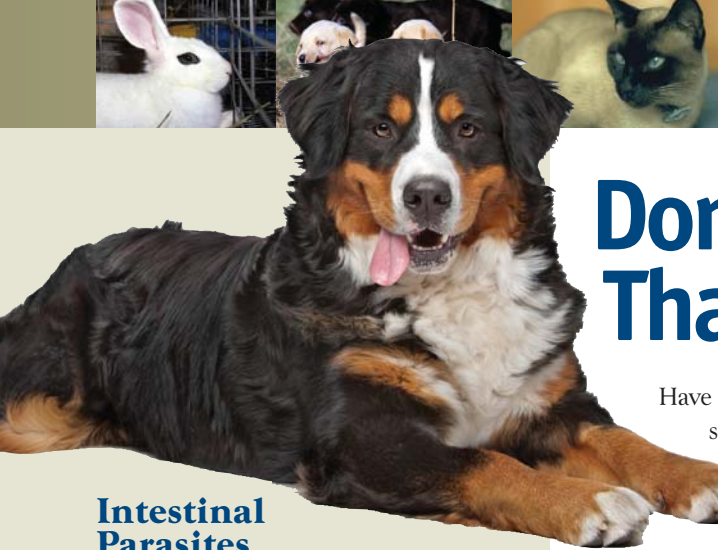
Once in the exam room (diffused with Feliway®), we'll open the carrier door, then ask all of our questions first, allowing your cat to acclimate. He/she can walk out if relaxed enough, or remain in the carrier.

The doctor will examine your cat however he/she is most comfortable — in the open carrier, on the scale, sometimes with a towel over him/her for security. We do any stressful procedures last (for example, a blood draw or temperature check).

We encourage you to ask all of your questions and share all your concerns. Remember, we are in a partnership with you in your cat's health, and cats are very subtle creatures!

When you arrive home, your cat may smell disturbing to other cats in the house. It may help to leave him/her in the carrier (or even in a closed room) for 15-20 minutes before allowing them to mingle. To keep everyone calm during periods of change, consider purchasing a can of Feliway® spray, or a Feliway® diffuser plugin for your home.





# Don't Forget That Sample!

## Intestinal Parasites

The catch-all term we've all heard is "worms," but pets can become infected with a variety of intestinal parasites. Here is a summary of the most common culprits:

**Roundworms** – Roundworms are the most common parasitic worm. Most pets show no sign of infection, but severe infections can cause vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, dull coat and/or a "pot-bellied" appearance.

**Hookworms** – Hookworms attach to the intestinal wall and may cause internal bleeding. Symptoms can include diarrhea and weight loss, and puppies and kittens can die from the loss of blood.

**Whipworms** – Whipworms are rare in cats, and difficult to detect in dogs, as they shed fewer eggs into the feces than other intestinal parasites. Serious infections may cause bloody diarrhea and can be fatal.

**Tapeworms** – Tapeworms are long, flat worms that can reach 18 inches in length. Unlike most other intestinal parasites, they do not commonly lay eggs that are excreted in feces, so sometimes the first indication of a tapeworm infection is when owners notice small segments of the worms (that look a bit like a piece of rice) around their pet's rear end, in their feces or where they sleep.

**Coccidia** – Coccidia are single-celled parasites. Infections can cause diarrhea, especially in puppies and kittens.

**Giardia** – Giardia are single-celled parasites that live in soil and water. Pets and people are commonly infected when they drink contaminated water. Acute diarrhea is the most common symptom.

Have you ever wondered whether it's really that important to bring a stool sample to your pet's veterinary appointments? Stool samples are used to detect parasites that live in pets' intestines. The parasites lay eggs, which are then excreted in the pet's feces. By examining the eggs under a microscope, your veterinarian can determine what type of parasites are present, and get a good idea of how many are present as well.

Intestinal parasites can affect cats, dogs and humans. Mild parasite problems may initially go unnoticed, but severe health issues, including death, can result if left untreated. Puppies, kittens, senior pets and pets with compromised health are at highest risk of suffering serious consequences from parasite infections.

Dogs and cats typically become infected with parasites after ingesting the larvae, which come from the feces of an infected animal. This may be a result of normal grooming of their paws after walking through an infested area. Puppies and kittens can acquire some parasite species in utero, or from drinking their mother's milk. Hookworms may actually penetrate the skin to enter pets' or humans' bodies. Tapeworms are acquired through ingestion of fleas (while self-grooming) or rodents.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), roundworm infections in humans are more widespread and common than previously believed. Children are at highest risk because they tend to play in areas such as sandboxes, and may unknowingly be exposed to parasites there. Although most people who are affected have no apparent symptoms, these infections can cause blindness, along with lung, heart and neurological damage to humans. The CDC states that whipworm and hookworm infections in humans "account for a major burden of disease worldwide." Humans are also at risk for tapeworm, giardia and coccidia infections.

Sanitation can help prevent parasites: clean your cat's litter box daily, pick up your dog's droppings in your yard frequently and always clean up after your dog on walks. Eggs from parasites may remain viable for years, so it's important to remove this health risk from the environment.

Parasite control for dogs and cats helps keep them and their humans safer:

- An annual fecal test for each pet. Twice yearly (or more) is recommended for pets at higher risk, such as those who live on farms, go to dog parks or eat feces.
- Year-round use of a heartworm preventive that also controls other parasites.
- Year-round flea and tick control, even for indoor-only cats.

To help prevent human infection, wash your hands after soil contact, avoid walking barefoot in areas where there may be animal feces, keep sandboxes covered and thoroughly wash produce before eating.

The threat of parasites does not go away in winter. For more information, talk to your veterinarian, or visit [www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org).

**"In nine lifetimes, you'll never know as much about your cat as your cat knows about you."**

*– Michel de Montaigne*

# Emotions

When you come home from work, does your dog seem happy? When you leave, does she seem sad? Most pet owners believe their dogs experience emotions. For years, scientists warned us not to "anthropomorphize," or attribute human characteristics to our pets. A recently published study, however, is providing the foundation for solid scientific evidence that dogs, and probably other animals, may experience emotions in a manner very similar to humans. How? By studying brain activity.

We still have a lot to learn about the canine brain, but neuroscientist Gregory Berns, PhD, MD, a professor at Emory University, says that there is a "striking similarity between dogs and humans in both the structure and function of a key brain region: the caudate nucleus." He goes on to state: "In humans, the caudate plays a key role in the anticipation of things we enjoy, like food, love and money...Caudate activation is so consistent that under the right circumstances, it can predict our preferences for food, music and even beauty."

Dr. Berns conducted his study on dogs by training them to enter an MRI scanner, completely unrestrained and unsedated. Using only positive training methods, dogs were taught to accept wearing ear protection, enter the scanner, rest their chin on a chin rest, and remain perfectly still while the MRI was performed. Handlers gave hand signals during the scans, indicating "reward" or "no reward," and the scans were then analyzed for brain activity in response to those signals.

Dr. Berns' study found that a dog's caudate will activate under the same circumstances as those that elicit positive emotions in humans, in response to things such as food or the sight of a familiar person. While this doesn't definitively mean that pets experience emotions, Dr. Berns states that "Neuroscientists call this a functional homology, and it may be an indication of canine emotions."

This study has laid the groundwork for future investigation of the canine brain, and emotions in animals.

To watch a video of the dogs in Dr. Berns' study and listen to his explanation, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVw1zs2X3iA>



**"Your horoscope says it's a great day to start going potty outdoors."**



## Walking Dandruff

You can see white flakes in her coat. Is it dry skin that's been causing your cat to scratch, or something more insidious? Cats are susceptible to a form of dermatitis called cheyletiellosis, caused by Cheyletiella mites. The movement of the mites on the skin sometimes causes the dander to visibly move, giving this condition its common name, Walking Dandruff.

Cheyletiellosis is highly contagious, and cats that are in frequent contact with other cats are at highest risk, including those in shelters and cat shows. Dogs and rabbits are also susceptible to this mite, and while humans are not a natural host, they can become infected.

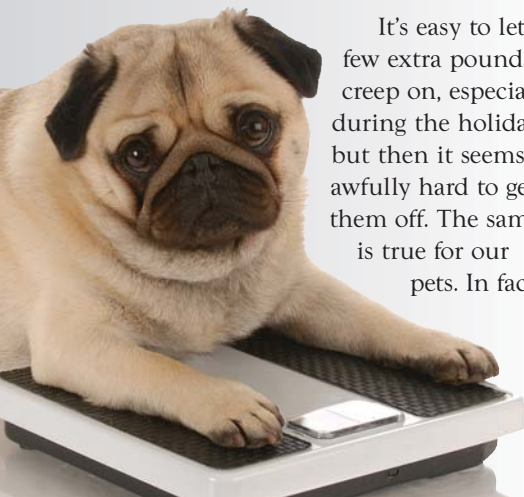
Symptoms vary from no signs at all to intense itching, excessive grooming, white dandruff and scaly skin, hair loss, redness and sores.

Cheyletiella mites can live for short periods in the environment without a host, so bedding and grooming tools may allow them to spread from one cat to another.

Diagnosis is typically done by taking a skin scraping and examining it microscopically. Your veterinarian will recommend the best treatment for your pets.



# Resolve!



It's easy to let a few extra pounds creep on, especially during the holidays, but then it seems awfully hard to get them off. The same is true for our pets. In fact,

according to a 2012 study by the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention, 52 percent of dogs and 58 percent of cats in the United States are overweight or obese, and our own experience at AAH supports this. That's about 80 million overweight or obese dogs and cats!

The implications for pets are the same as for people—excess weight increases the risk of diabetes, heart and respiratory disease, high blood pressure, kidney disease, osteoarthritis, ligament injuries, many forms of cancer, immune system disorders, and surgical and anesthetic complications. Overweight cats are also at increased risk for hepatic lipidosis (fatty

liver syndrome), skin conditions and feline lower urinary tract disease.

How can you tell if your pet is a healthy weight?

- Ribs are easily felt
- The abdomen appears “tucked”—no sagging stomach
- The waist is defined when viewed from above

We can assess your pet's “body condition score” (BCS) and give you recommendations to get your best friend started on a weight loss program. Now is the time to make a resolution to help your pet live a longer, healthier life!



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243 Newton Sparta Road, Newton, NJ 07860

*25 years of excellence*



### SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for our first annual DOG WALK in April.

 Like us on Facebook and stay tuned for details.

# Go For a Walk!

Have you resolved to make 2014 the year you get yourself in shape? Your dog may be able to help you do just that! (If you currently don't own a dog, you might consider volunteering to walk dogs at your local shelter.) Read on...

- A study of 916 participants showed that those who regularly walk their four-legged best friends reported fewer hours of sitting per day, lower body mass index (BMI), lower tobacco use, fewer chronic conditions and fewer depressive symptoms.
- Another study compared seniors who volunteered to walk shelter dogs with a

control group of seniors assigned to walk the same number of days per week with a friend. The seniors who walked the shelter dogs showed significant increases in speed, balance and confidence over those who simply walked with a friend.

- A study published in 2010 showed that shelter dogs participating in a daily dog walking program had better behavior, higher adoption rates and decreased euthanasia rates than dogs in a control group not in the walking program.

So, there you have it! Scientific studies have shown that our health improves when we walk dogs, and dogs' health and behavior improves as well. So, grab a leash, and take a walk!

