

Lakeland Veterinary Hospital

www.lakelandvet.net



7372 Wolda Road · Baxter, MN 56425 · (218) 829-1709

Spring 2006

Tick Diseases Common in Lakes Area

The deer tick (also called the black legged tick) continues to be the most common tick we find in the Brainerd Lakes Area. We anticipate a very heavy season this year due to the mild winter. The problem is that these ticks carry several bacteria that can infect your pet. The most common are Lyme disease and anaplasmosis (formerly called ehrlichiosis). The most common signs of these infections are painful joints, high fever, depression, and lack of appetite. We can also see vomiting, diarrhea, bleeding from the nose, and even seizures. New research shows that dogs can carry both of these infections, often for years, without showing obvious clinical signs!

Fortunately, our annual heartworm test includes a test that will detect Lyme infection. Using the 3DX SNAP test, we can tell if your pet has been infected with

Lyme within 8 minutes. Using this test to screen dogs each year allows us to find the infected dogs and treat them before they can develop Lyme disease. If your dog tests positive, we will go over all of your options. By aggressive screening and treatment, we have seen a drop in the number of dogs with Lyme dis-



ease over the past 3 years.

Anaplasmosis is a bacteria that continues to become more common. Last year we saw a major increase in the number of dogs getting sick from this infection. Diagnosing this infection can be more difficult and requires more tests. Fortunately, we have helped with the devel-

opment of a new test that will make finding these infections easier. We hope this test will be available before the end of the year. Dogs can be infected with both Lyme and anaplasmosis at the same time, which causes more problems than a single infection.

If we think your pet may be infected, we will recommend running tests that will identify the infections and make sure they have not damaged the internal organs. In the majority of cases, early treatment with antibiotics will eliminate the problem. These problems can be prevented with good tick control. We recommend using Frontline monthly. In some cases we will recommend combing Frontline with a Preventic collar, which will provide maximum protection. A vaccine is available for Lyme disease that will provide protection against infection.

Visit Our Website!

We all know the internet is a strong source of information. However, we don't always know what sites are giving correct information.

Over the past year, we have strived to provide you a place you can learn more about the health and safety of your pet, as well as more about us! Our website offers articles that are updated monthly in topics that we feel are important, as well as a virtual tour of our facilities and more! You can also view our "Links" page for recommended websites that we have reviewed and are confident the information they provide is both true and accurate.

Visit us today at:
www.lakelandvet.net



DON'T FORGET!!



Heartworm & tick season is here!

All dogs should given Heartgard® June 1st - November 1st

Plan to have your pet tested for heartworm & Lyme disease and to pick up Heartgard® & Frontline®!



Call to schedule an appointment today! (218) 829-1709

Grooming Q&A's

Many of our clients have questions about grooming their pets. Regardless of size or length of hair, a professional grooming has many benefits. Below are some common questions that we are asked.

My dog always starts shedding all over my house at this time of year. When should I bring him in for a grooming?

Dogs like yours that shed at certain times of the year (or even year-around) benefit most from a professional grooming when they are "blowing" their coat. This is when the coat is falling out easily, in large amounts, sometimes hanging on the dog in tufts. At this time, we can get most of that shedding hair out for you. If you bring your dog in too early, we can get him clean, but we can't remove hair that isn't ready to "blow". Timely professional grooms combined with brushing at home can help keep your home hair free.

I just got a new puppy. When should she get her first grooming?

Your puppy's first groomings are the most important. Between the ages of 8 and 12 weeks is the best time to get your puppy acclimated to the sights and sounds of grooming for the first time. It's especially important for puppies who will need haircuts as they get older.



At a young age, your pup will be more accepting of the sometimes scary sound and feel of a clipper by her face. Don't worry that your dog will lose her "puppy" look, as we don't have to take much hair off to let her get used to grooming. Your puppy will need to be groomed her whole life, so we want it to be something she enjoys.

Even breeds that usually only need to be brushed and bathed should learn early about nail trims and blow dryers.

How often should my dog be groomed?

This depends on how much work you are willing to put in at home. If you'd rather let the groomer do most of the work involved in your dog's coat care, frequent groomings are in order. Usually every 4 to 6 weeks depending on your dog's hair length and thickness of the coat. If you brush your dog at home (a minimum of once or twice a week) you can go longer between groomings.

What kind of brush should I use?

We recommend a stiff wire slicker brush, the kind in which the brush is a curved shape as well as the bristles. This will help brush out tangles as well as remove the shedding undercoat. Stay away from pin brushes and soft bristle brushes, they will not work well. When brushing your pet, be sure to brush all the way to the skin, not just over the top of the coat. Tangles and mats form near the skin. Also, invest in a metal comb with both fine and wide teeth in order to catch any tangles the brush may have missed.

Any other questions? Our professional groomers have over 50 years of combined experience and are happy to answer any of your questions! Contact Dianna, Julie or Karen today at 218-829-6542 for all of your grooming needs!

Congratulations Kim!

Congratulations are in order for Kim Erickson, our hospital manager. Kim just received her Practice Administrator Certificate from the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) for successfully completing the Veterinary Management Institute (VMI) program. VMI is a comprehensive graduate-level management program for veterinary professionals. This course was developed jointly by AAHA and Purdue University's prestigious Krannert Graduate School of Management. The course is taught at Purdue University's Krannert Center in four modules over a period of 18 months. It is a non-degree "mini-MBA" program designed to teach cutting edge business skills to the veterinary profession. We are very proud of Kim's accomplishment.



Attention All Pets in Need of a Vacation!

If you need a place to stay for a night or even a week or more, make sure you family calls Lakeland Boarding and Grooming! While you stay with us, you'll be walked outside in our yard (or have a private condo if you you're a kitty), get lots of love and attention, have toys and blankets and lots of friends to visit with. If you need any special medications or food, the staff is great at handling special needs. Many families also take advantage of our professional groomers during the visit!

If you need to stay with us, it's very important for your family to call in advance. Oftentimes, our space becomes booked many weeks ahead of time. Holidays, weekends, and school breaks are popular times for pets to board. We recommend making reservations as soon as your family is aware of their plans. During those busy times, it's a good idea to call two months in advance since space is limited. There is no cancellation penalty and check-in and check-out dates can always be altered as needed.

We also offer Doggie Daycare - a fun way for you to get out of the house for the day while your family is at work or running errands.

So, encourage your family to plan ahead so you'll be sure to have a spot at Lakeland Boarding and Grooming!



***Tours are always welcome!
If you are interested in seeing our award-winning facilities, please give us a call!
Individual or group tours available.***

Heartworm Testing & Preventatives Vital to Protecting Your Pet

By the time you receive this newsletter, spring will be getting underway. With warm weather and rain come the mosquitoes, and for our pets, the possibility of becoming infected with heartworm. Recent statistics tell us that the number of heartworm cases increased very slightly, but its range remained relatively stable. What this may mean is that there have been a decreased number of pets receiving preventive medications. Surveys seem to bear this out.

A decline in the number of cases seen in previous years may have given pet owners a false sense of security and caused them to become lax about heartworm testing and the administration of heartworm preventative. Do not allow yourself to become complacent—your pet's life may depend on it. **Have your dog tested for heartworm every spring, even if it tested negative for heartworm the previous year. This is critically important!**

Unfortunately, there are a growing number of dog owners who believe that if they have been conscientious about giving their dog the preventative, their dog will remain heartworm-free year after year. Why, they ask, should their dog be tested every spring? There are hundreds of scenarios they should consider, such as the dog that receives his preventative right on schedule, then eats some grass half an hour later and, unbeknown to the owner, vomits the pill. That dog will go without heartworm preventative for 60 days—ample time to contract the disease. Also, heartworm medication is not infallible. No medication is. For whatever



reason, we have seen some cases of heartworm infestation in dogs that were on preventative, so heartworm testing is not an option; it is a necessity. An additional benefit to heartworm testing is that you will be screening your dog for Lyme infection at the same time. Lyme disease is highly endemic to this area.

The diagnosis of canine heartworm disease is accomplished by laboratory blood tests. If the test proves negative, the preventative medication program should be initiated. If the test proves positive, the disease can usually be treated. Treatment is expensive and not without certain risks.

Monthly preventative medication is not expensive, costing \$4.00 to \$7.50 per month for all but the largest breeds. Adding to the value, Heartgard Plus also controls roundworm and hookworm. It's very important to begin medicating on June 1st, and to give all six monthly doses. Unfortunately, ProHeart 6, the once a year injectable preventative, has not returned to the market in this country. It continues to be used safely in several other countries.

At Lakeland Veterinary Hospital, we had about the same number of cases in 2005 as the previous year. Our goal is to keep all of our patients free of this deadly parasite.

Once again, you should have your dog tested each year before using any heartworm medication.

GOODBYE WINTER, HELLO SUMMER!

At last, the days are getting longer, the temperatures more mild: it seems as though summer may arrive after all. As summer approaches, many of us begin to unpack the bicycles, roller blades, and hiking boots. Of course, what fun would these warm weather activities be without our four-legged companions? Summer brings with it wonderful opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors with our pets. Unfortunately, summer also brings opportunities for heat exhaustion and dehydration for both humans and animals. Spring is a great time to get ready for the more intense conditions summer can bring.

As the temperatures rise, we as pet owners must prepare for the health and safety of our furry loved ones. Ample supplies of water are a crucial part of summer safety. Pets who spend their days outdoors need to have a constant source of water. Shade and airflow are also key elements to outdoor safety and comfort for pets. A dog or cat who spent his time in an insulated garage over the winter months will need to be relocated to a well-ventilated environment as the temperatures rise. Along with taking care of household safety, we need to prepare for summer outings with our pets.

When traveling, it is extremely important to include fresh water and drinking bowls for all pets. Of course, pets must never be left alone in a car during the hot summer months. Cracking a window will not allow enough cool fresh air into a vehicle. A pet is never safe in a car without air-conditioning

Common sense and awareness of your surroundings will be your best asset for warm weather care

in the summer. Remember your pet is always welcome to enjoy the climate-controlled comfort at Lakeland Boarding. We offer both daycare and overnight boarding. If you should need a cool place for your pet to stay, don't hesitate to call. Heat exhaustion and dehydration from being left in a hot car can cause serious and even fatal complications. When packing your cooler, be sure to include water for your pets. If your travels and activities take you outside your car, you'll need to pack a special bag for your pets. A variety of portable watering devices, including collapsible bowls, and plastic bottle dispensers are available. Take the time to find

the right product for you and your pet so you can all enjoy a good hike. In addition, it's a good idea to always have a copy of your pet's vaccination information, along with your veterinarian's phone number on hand. This will give you quick access to professional medical help should a problem arise.

Common sense and awareness of your surroundings will be your best asset for warm weather care. Familiarizing yourself with hiking trails and outdoor parks will help you prepare for outings with your pet. Trails and paths that provide convenient resting stops with shade are a safe bet for you and your companion. Remember, if you are hot and uncomfortable, so is your pet.

After the long, dreary months of winter, we all look forward to summer. Our pets also benefit from longer days, more outside activities and all the fun warm weather brings. A bit of prior planning, preparation, and good judgment will ensure every member of your family, four and two-legged, will have a wonderful season!

A Strange Case - Myasthenia Gravis

Henry is a 2 year old German Wirehair Pointer. Normally a very active dog, Henry came into the hospital not feeling like himself and unable to hold food down for about 24 hours. Over the next few days, Henry continued to become weaker, despite normal blood work and x-rays. Despite a variety of different treatments, Henry continued to defy diagnosis. He became weaker until he was unable to stand on his rear legs and had progressive muscle tremors. Further x-rays revealed a condition called mega esophagus. This is a condition where the esophagus becomes enlarged and causes regurgitation of food. Only 4 days had passed since Henry first walked into the hospital, looking almost normal.

The combination of the muscular weakness and mega esophagus led Henry's doctor to test for an extremely rare and often deadly disease called Myasthenia Gravis. Henry tested positive for the disease.

Myasthenia Gravis is a rare and debilitating disease in which the dog's muscle receptors fail to respond normally and weakness progresses to an inability to stand. The mega esophagus causes aspiration of food into the lungs and pneumonia. Many dogs die or are euthanized.

Henry's owners love him dearly and were not ready to say goodbye to him. He was placed on medications to help the muscle receptors and build-up his strength. After almost a week of being unable to walk, Henry ran out of the hospital, 10 days after first coming in and only 2 days before Christmas.

At home, Henry continues to thrive under the love and patience of his owners. He developed one episode of pneumonia, but thanks to the watchful eye of his owners, it was discovered and treated rapidly and Henry recovered well. Although Henry may never be free of the disease, he continues to live a happy and full life with his devoted owners. It has been 3 months since Henry was diagnosed with Myasthenia Gravis, and everyone is hopeful he will live a long life.



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7372 Wolda Road
Baxter, MN 56425

**HEARTWORM SEASON
IS HERE! CALL US TO
SCHEDULE AN
APPOINTMENT TODAY!**

218-829-1709

Lakeland Staff

Hospital Director:

Richard Piepgras, DVM

Doctors:

Deb Piepgras, DVM

Matt Eberts, DVM

Craig Reiman, DVM

Managers:

Joyce Brick, Office Manager

Kim Erickson, Hospital Mgr

Mandi Kostohryz, Kennel Mgr

Technicians:

Kathy Holtti, CVT

Colleen Williams, CVT

Gretchen Patrick, CVT

Roxie Houshe, CVT

Assistants:

Jenni Galligan

Darla Grotzke

Receptionists:

Stacy Fetters

Jenny Waidelich

Groomers:

Dianna Anderson

Julie Knowlen

Karen Schumann

Maintenance:

Glenn Vold

Kennel Staff:

Kirby Glad

Caitlin Barnaby

Tessa Roberts

Amanda Woodwick

Animal Care Attendants:

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