



Countryside Animal Hospital

PAW Prints



Fall 2020

Down in the Mouth

7 Signs of Dental Disease

Dental disease is the most common health issue affecting dogs and cats. Most common is periodontal disease, which affects as many as 85 percent of dogs and cats over age three. Advanced dental disease can devastate your pets' health as they live with chronic pain and eventually suffer additional health problems linked to the disease.

Unfortunately, most pets show few symptoms of dental disease until it becomes serious. Although periodontal disease is most common, cracked teeth, tooth resorption, stomatitis, and root abscesses can also affect your pet.

The best defense against dental disease is regular cleanings and checkups. You can also help by brushing your pet's teeth regularly, giving treats that help remove tartar, and inspecting your dog's or cat's mouth for tartar buildup, loose teeth or abscesses. Other signs include:

- 🐾 Bad breath. Tooth decay and gum disease cause halitosis.
- 🐾 Drooling, especially with blood. Blood may also appear on toys or in their water bowl.
- 🐾 Difficulty eating. Pets may refuse to eat, chew on one side of their mouths, drop food, tilt their heads to one side while eating, or have difficulty swallowing.
- 🐾 Sensitivity around the mouth. Pain from diseased teeth or gums may cause them to turn their heads to avoid being touched in painful areas.
- 🐾 Pawing at the mouth, or rubbing the side of the mouth on the floor or furniture
- 🐾 Red or inflamed gums
- 🐾 Irritability or depression



The good news is, we can treat most dental disease and bring your pet relief. Did you know that our Comprehensive PAW (Pet Annual Wellness) Plans for dogs and cats include dental screenings and routine cleanings? The earlier problems are discovered the more effective the treatment, so be sure to schedule a dental checkup soon!

Feline Fright

Signs of Stress in Cats

As with humans, stress in cats can lead to acute or chronic illness, including skin, bladder and intestinal disorders. Cats are particularly susceptible because they don't deal well with change, and they can perceive it as danger. Any change in the environment can lead to stress including new pets or humans entering the household, moving or remodeling, severe weather, nearby construction, and any loud noises. Pain, separation anxiety, and dementia in older cats are also common causes. Signs of stress include:

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| 🐾 Eating more or losing appetite | 🐾 New or different vocalizations |
| 🐾 Trembling | 🐾 Withdrawal and hiding |
| 🐾 Becoming less active | 🐾 Trying to escape |
| 🐾 Destructive or aggressive behavior | 🐾 Diarrhea |
| 🐾 Sucking or chewing on fabric | 🐾 Failure to use the litter box |
| 🐾 Sores and lesions resulting from over-grooming | |



Halloween and Thanksgiving activities and noises provide an ideal environment for stressing out kitty. Provide a quiet, peaceful environment as much as possible, and keep your own stress level down as pets tend to pick up on our emotions. If you see symptoms, it's important that we examine your kitty for signs of illness. We may recommend environmental changes, pheromone products that can calm cats, or anti-anxiety medications in extreme cases.

Itch and Irritation

Atopic Dermatitis in Dogs

Dog allergies are often caused by the allergens found in pollen, grass and other plants, insects such as fleas, mold, dust mites, and common bacteria and yeasts. They can also be allergic to food and medication. Atopic dermatitis is an inflammatory, chronic skin disease caused by allergies.

Dogs are most often affected in their feet, ears, muzzle, groin, armpits, belly, and the base of the tail. Irritation in these areas can cause itching, scratching, licking, chewing, and rubbing against furniture or carpet. You may notice crusty or greasy skin, redness, poor coat texture, or a yeasty odor. Gastrointestinal problems or ear infections may be present as well.

Atopic dermatitis tends to worsen over time and does not self-resolve, although allergies may be seasonal. The relentless irritation can even cause personality changes in your fur-baby. Left untreated, "hot spots" or infections can develop, and dogs can injure themselves from aggressive chewing.

During your pet's exam, we will ask you for information to help us determine the cause of the allergy. Often, a dog is reacting to more than one irritant, and finding the exact cause can be difficult. Depending on the source of the allergy, treatment options include medicated baths, hypo-sensitization therapy, immunomodulatory medications, antibiotics, anti-fungal medications, corticosteroids, antihistamines, and hypoallergenic diets. We will likely recommend a combination of therapies.



Diagnosing and treating allergies can be complicated and often takes time. It will be important to follow up at home with treatments and other recommendations. Together, we can work to minimize your dog's distress. Please give us a call if your furry friend has signs of skin irritation.

Call us at (480) 775-9966 today to make an appointment!

The Obesity Epidemic

Don't Let Your Pet Participate!

October 14 is National Pet Obesity Awareness Day. Even as pet obesity continues to rise in the U.S.—over 50 percent of dogs and cats are considered obese—studies say only 17 percent of pet owners believe that their pets are carrying too much weight. This is a sad fact since obesity shortens the lives of pets by two years on average.

Obesity is associated with serious health conditions, including osteoarthritis and joint disorders, diabetes, cranial cruciate ligament injuries, heart and respiratory diseases, kidney disease, and cancer. Not only do overweight pets have shorter lifespans, their quality of life is diminished as well.

As with humans, weight loss results from decreasing calories and increasing activity. Choosing the right food is important because some pet foods marketed as weight loss diets only replace meat with high-carb fillers to provide bulk. The right diet should be high in protein with lower fat and fewer calories, without making your fur-baby feel deprived.

Weight loss should happen gradually. A severe diet that results in rapid weight loss can cause metabolic changes that actually make it harder for your pet to lose weight. Increasing activity and slowly reducing calories by 5% - 10% weekly is the best way to ensure success. It's important to measure daily calorie intake accurately. Table scraps and treats should be included in the count.

Bring your pet in for an evaluation before starting them on a diet because weight gain can indicate an underlying illness. A comprehensive checkup can help us determine if your pet is overweight, recommend an ideal weight, uncover existing health conditions, and recommend a weight-loss plan with the right foods. Exams are included in our PAW (Pet Annual Wellness) Plans for dogs and cats, so if your pet isn't signed up yet, be sure to ask us how you can budget for your pet's healthcare needs and save!



Ask us about healthy treats for your pet!



Countryside
Animal Hospital

8701 S. Rural Road
Tempe, AZ 85284

www.countrysideanimal.com

Our Pet Annual Wellness Plans now include four yearly routine exams!

Spread out your pet's healthcare costs plus take advantage of significant savings with PAW Plans.

Call us today so we can help you find a plan that's just right for you and your pet.

Save \$24 on Heartgard

Purchase 12 months of Heartgard preventative and save \$12 at checkout

PLUS

receive a \$12 Rebate in the Mail

Pets must be tested for heartworm annually before we can prescribe a preventative.

Save with an Annual Wellness Plan!

Spread out your pet's healthcare costs plus take advantage of significant savings with PAW (Pet Annual Wellness) Plans.

Call us today so we can help you find a plan that's just right for you and your pet!



Call (480) 775-9966
today to make your appointment!

Got Treats?



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