



# Countryside Animal Hospital



Paw Prints



Summer 2023

## Canine Heartworm

### This Deadly Disease Can Steal Your Dog's Health

**H**earthworm is a painful disease that occurs when your dog is bitten by a mosquito infected with the larval form of *Dirofilaria immitis*—a thread-like roundworm. These parasites infest the heart, lungs and blood vessels of dogs, cats and other mammals, causing severe lung disease, heart failure, and damage to other organs. The disease is most common in areas with heavy mosquito populations.

#### Symptoms, Diagnosis and Treatment

The first signs of a heartworm infestation may simply be poor appetite, fatigue, weight loss or lethargy. As the disease progresses, your dog may develop a persistent cough. If left untreated, the worms can cause congestive heart failure or a sudden blockage of blood flow within the heart, which can be fatal if the blockage is not immediately repaired through surgery.

There's a simple blood test to check for the presence of microfilariae; however, it can be prone to a false negative result. A more accurate test is the heartworm antigen test that looks for a protein the parasite releases, indicating a heartworm infection. The treatment protocol for heartworm can be hard on pets, but survival rates have improved due to advances in veterinary medicine.

#### Prevention

Year-round prevention is critical, so if your pet is not on a preventative or hasn't been tested in the last year, please call us right away. We will test for heartworm disease prior to putting your dog on a preventive as these medications can cause complications if a dog is already infected. We have various options for prevention and will be happy to discuss which one is right for your pet. Be sure to ask us about a Pet Annual Wellness (PAW) Plan for your pup. They include an annual heartworm test and many other important services!



## Playing It Safe

### Dos and Dont's for Feline Fun



**P**laying with your cat offers numerous benefits and should be an everyday activity. It provides much needed exercise for indoor cats, keeps them mentally stimulated, and helps them bond with you. It's important, however, to play safely to avoid injury or mental distress.

- 🐾 Talk to your kitty in a happy voice while you play. Never make a loud noise that could scare them.
- 🐾 Cats love to hide in paper bags and cardboard boxes on the floor. Leave them out and watch the fun! However, don't offer plastic bags or anything that once contained a toxic substance.
- 🐾 Drag a string or any object behind you and let them chase! Make sure they can catch the object intermittently. No one wants to play a game they can't win.
- 🐾 Toys with bells and squeakers are feline favorites!

- 🐾 Be cautious about cat toys that contain small pieces that can be swallowed and cause choking. Also be wary of toys made in countries that don't have the same pet safety standards we do. Avoid laser pointers, which can permanently damage the eyes.
- 🐾 Your kitty may enjoy catnip toys, interactive toys, or motorized toys that allow them to chase and "catch" objects. Motorized toys should only be used with supervision.
- 🐾 Make playtime with your cat part of your daily routine. What they really love is your attention!

Be sure to ask us about our Pet Annual Wellness (PAW) Plans for felines, so we can keep your kitty fit for fun at a savings to you!

## Toxic Foliage

### Outdoor Plants that Can Harm Pets

**A**lthough we love to beautify outdoor spaces with seasonal plants, pet owners should beware that many species of flowers and shrubs are toxic to cats and dogs. For example, all parts of an oleander are highly toxic to pets, as are azaleas and rhododendron! Ingesting the bulbs of plants such as hyacinth or daffodil can also cause illness in dogs and cats.

Other common flora that can cause illness: bleeding heart, lily of the valley, foxglove, larkspur, Easter lily, elephant ear, rhubarb, and yew. The list of toxic flowers, shrubs, bulbs, houseplants and herbs is long. Before you plant in an area accessible to pets, research to see whether plants are poisonous. Don't leave pets unsupervised in areas that contain these plants.

In addition, we see poisonings from fertilizer and pesticides during this season. Please be extra vigilant. Symptoms of poisoning may include vomiting, diarrhea, excessive drooling, lethargy, or labored breathing. Call us immediately if you suspect that your pet has ingested a toxic substance.



## Hot Spots and Hot Weather

### Treating and Preventing Moist Dermatitis



**M**oist dermatitis, often called "hot spots" because of heat generated by inflammation, is a skin condition that produces itchy and sometimes painful patches. Licking due to allergies, fleas, ear infections or anal gland conditions can trigger the condition, as can stress, injury, or having a dirty or matted coat. Dogs with thick or long coats are most often affected.

Although hot spots can occur year-round, we see more cases in hot, humid weather. The sores can develop when thick-coated or matted dogs get wet, and their coat doesn't dry completely. Hot spots often appear red and swollen with hair loss in the affected area. Dogs generally scratch or chew the area to find relief, which can worsen the infection.

Since secondary bacterial infections often occur, it's best to bring your dog in for treatment, especially if the area is oozing or producing more heat. We may prescribe antihistamines, anti-inflammatory medications or antibiotics, depending on the specific cause and condition of the sores. We may also recommend an e-collar to prevent licking or chewing.

You can take steps to protect dogs that are prone to hot spots. Flea and tick protection is critical since licking to relieve an itch can trigger the condition. Also, be sure to dry your dog thoroughly after baths or swimming, and keep up on grooming to prevent matting. Bring your dog in to see us as soon as you notice a sore, no matter how small. This will make it easier for us to start the healing process before the sore becomes larger or a secondary infection sets in.

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





# Heat Alert

Keep Them Safe this Summer!



**L**ike you, your pets are excited about all of the fun that summer brings. Unfortunately, the season can also bring special hazards for our four-legged friends. Keep these summer dangers in mind:

**Keep it cool.** If it's too hot outside for your comfort, it's too hot for your pet. Don't leave them outside for more than a few minutes on hot days, and make sure they have shade.

**Avoid dehydration.** Keep water bowls full of fresh, cool water. Carry water when you take your dog for a walk or long car ride.

**Never leave your pet in a hot car!** Even with the windows cracked, the interior can quickly become like a furnace. When it's only 70 degrees outside, temperatures can reach 100 degrees inside your car in 20 minutes! Sadly, many dogs are lost this way every year.

**Water Hazards**  
Don't assume your dog likes or is able to swim. Bring a suitable flotation device and don't force your dog into water. In fact, the chlorine in pools, salt in the ocean, and algae and bacteria in lakes and ponds can all be harmful. Rinse them off well after a swim and be sure they drink only fresh, safe water.

**Asphalt and Pavement**  
If the asphalt or pavement is too hot or rough for your bare feet, it's too hot for your pets. To avoid scorched pads, walk your dog early in the morning or later in the evening when streets and sidewalks are cooler.

Watch for signs of heat stress and dehydration, which include dry gums, excessive lethargy, decreased urination and lack of appetite. Dogs with short noses and pets that are older, overweight, or have thick coats are more prone to heat stress. Be sure to contact us immediately if you suspect your pet is suffering from any heat-related illness.



## Get them fit for summer fun!

**Re-FUR a Friend and save!**  
Refer a new client and you'll each save \$25 on your next visits.

Ask us for details. Not valid with any other offer. . One coupon per client. Expires 8/31/2023.

**Our Pet Annual Wellness Plans** 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.**

### ZOETIS Petcare Rewards

**Earn rewards on top brands such as Simparica Trio, ProHeart, Apoquel and Rimadyl.**

**Ask us how it works!**

**Check out offer details at [zoetispetcare.com/offers](http://zoetispetcare.com/offers).**

### Save \$30 on Heartgard

**Purchase 12 months of Heartgard preventative and save \$15 at checkout**

**PLUS receive a \$15 Rebate in the Mail**

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



**Call (480) 775-9966**

**today to make an appointment!**



**Countryside Animal Hospital**

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## Summer Care for Very Special Pets



**Countryside Animal Hospital**

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