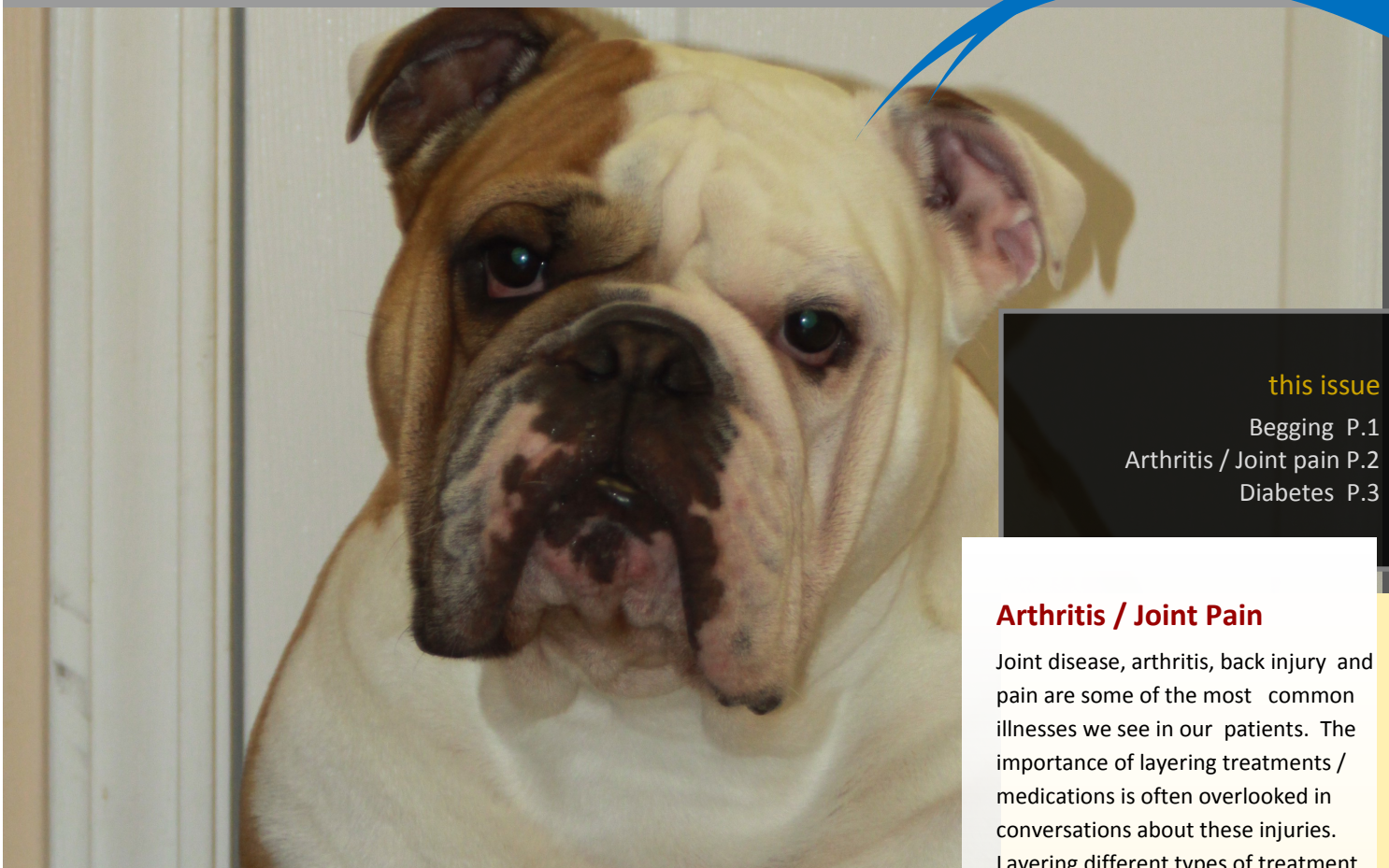


Paws for News

Adair County Animal Hospital
May 2011



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How do I stop my pet from begging?

I am often asked this question in our practice and my usual response is ... how badly do you want to stop this behavior? Stopping a particular behavior takes commitment from the entire family and focus on the goal. Animals perform behaviors for specific reasons and they do not repeat behaviors for specific reasons. Usually the reason is reward or lack of reward. A pet will continue to beg at the table even when not fed every time, because of intermittent reinforcement. They occasionally win the daily lottery and get a reward for their begging efforts. This causes a behavior to become firmly established. When the owner tries to stop feeding the begging pet at the table the behavior becomes temporarily worse or increased. This is called the extinction burst. Most owners never make it through this stage. The desired outcome (stopping the begging) relies on the owner being more persistent than their pet (usually dogs).

So, what are you to do? Separate, Separate, Separate. If the pet is crate trained, place them in their crate at meal time. Feeding them at that time is perfectly fine. You can also give them treats at that time, just remember to stay within their daily caloric need. The behavior must be stopped then NEVER reinforced. For this reason everyone in the household needs to be on the same page and small children need to be separated from the pet at meal time or closely observed. I hope this helps you if this is a goal of yours.

Arthritis / Joint Pain

Joint disease, arthritis, back injury and pain are some of the most common illnesses we see in our patients. The importance of layering treatments / medications is often overlooked in conversations about these injuries. Layering different types of treatment for joint disease is called Multimodal therapy. This article tackles many of the different options that owners and patients have access to right here in Columbia. See Page 2 for more.

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Arthritis / Joint Pain / Back Pain

20% of dogs and 90% of older canines have joint disease.

On every exam we do we ask our clients about the activity of their pets. Often we hear that he/she has a normal level of activity for him/her... "they are just getting slower with age". We all know that as humans good exercise, appropriate weight and nutrition can affect our wellbeing and activity levels as we age. The same is true for our pets. We now know that excessive weight contributes not only to excessive load on joints, but that fat tissue produces chemicals that can cause inflammation and damage tissues within body. These chemicals not only cause inflammation of the joints, but they can also cause insulin resistance, hypertension, kidney disease and decrease life expectancy. For these reasons weight control is a huge part of helping fight arthritis and joint pain.

Nutrition can play a vital role in not only weight control but also in helping prevent disease or getting nutritional supplements to your pet that will help treat disease. We have diets now that incorporate joint supplements directly into your pets daily meals. DIET is the first of our layers in Multimodal therapy.

When a pet slows in spite of being on the appropriate diet, then additional therapies need to be instituted based on the veterinarians' evaluation and the owners ability to administer these therapies. We have an additional oral joint supplement that works to slow arthritic changes, lubricate the joint and help block pain pathways. Remember not all joint supplements are appropriate for dogs / cats.

The "pain medications" available in Veterinary Medicine today are more than just pills that help with pain. The medications we use today (NSAIDS: Metacam, Previcox to name a couple) actually

block some of the changes in the joint that lead to arthritis. They reduce synovitis, pain and improve return to function. In other words, they delay the onset of those arthritic changes. We use the term pain medication very loosely, our pain medications do much more than just address pain.

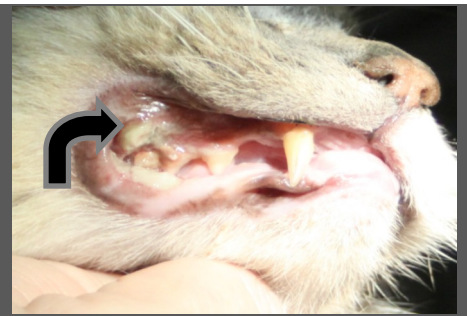
So, in a hypothetical situation we would put an arthritic prone breed patient on Royal Canin Mobility at a young age to help keep the joints healthy. If that patient showed reluctance to jump, slowing, difficulty rising, or had some type of ligamentous injury, we would begin the oral joint supplement that actually blocks some of the impending changes +/- "pain medication". At this point some of the more non-traditional treatments come into play depending on the severity of the case. The choice of laser therapy, polysulfated glycosaminoglycans (Chondroprotac / Adequan), acupuncture and physical rehabilitation become additional options that can dramatically improve the quality of your pets life.

Last but certainly not least, is lifestyle. Physical activity such as low impact walking and weight loss can make a tremendous difference in your pets overall health.

Discuss all of these factors with us on your next visit and we can help you build a plan for your pet that will increase their life expectancy and quality of life.

If you have questions about your individual pet, feel free to call us at the office or schedule an orthopedic exam. Seeing an older dog / cat that had "slowed down" decide he/she feels like playing again is one of the most rewarding things we as your veterinarian and you as owners will get to experience.

Shantila F. Rexroat, DVM



**Professional Teeth cleanings;
Done well... Save lives.**

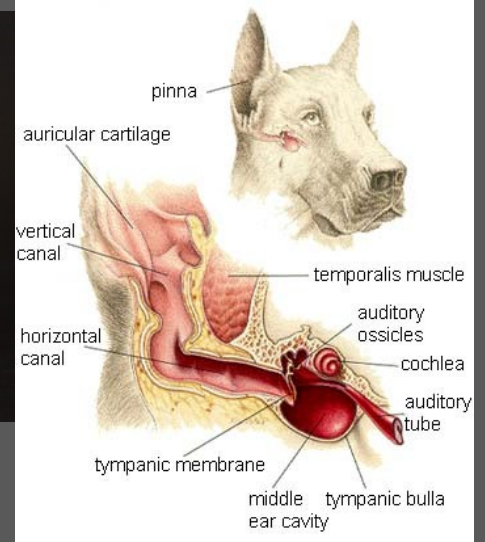
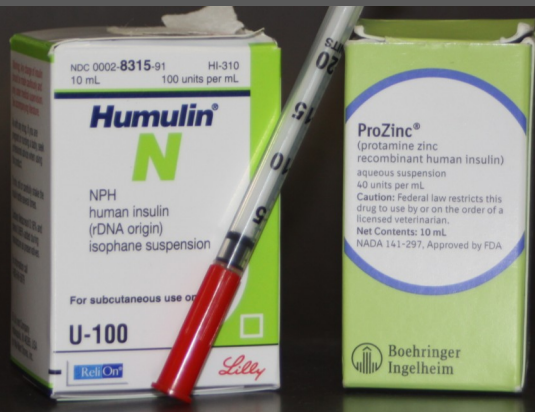
What are my options when trying to minimize the number of professional teeth cleanings my pet will need over his/her life?

Good: Dental Chews are an excellent way to help prevent tartar build up. However, all dental chews are not created equal. Dental chews with an oral anti-septic in them (DentaHex, Hextra chews) help kill the bacteria in the mouth. This bacteria acts like glue holding the tartar on the teeth. The chewing action on the rawhide helps chip the tartar off. I also like chews because the pet will "ask" for them. Try to stay away from Greenies daily because they contain a lot of calories.

Better: Oral mouth washes and water additives are great and have been shown to work even better than chews. They come in pleasing flavors and can be easily administered. Remembering to do them daily is one of the only draw backs.

Best: Brushing is the very best way to help keep your pet's mouth tartar free and clean for as long as possible. Dogs and cats do require a special toothpaste, since fluoride in human toothpastes is toxic if ingested over a period of time.

Pick one that works best for your schedule and it will make a big difference in your pets overall well being. In next month newsletter we will go through step by step of teaching your pet how to tolerate and even come to love having its teeth brushed.



Diabetes, common & yes, it is manageable.

At the Adair County Animal Hospital we see a lot of diabetic patients. We have a very successful track record with a disease that some find very difficult to manage. There are some very important keys to managing this disease well.

Important aspects of Managing your diabetic pet.

1.Exercise: Too much exercise can affect your pets blood sugar and insulin requirements. Allowing a pet to run loose all weekend when it normally does not do that thru the week is not good for the diabetic patient. Consistent amounts of exercise actually makes diabetes easier to control.

2.Diet: Eating the correct diet and eating it a specific times are half the battle in keeping a diabetic patient under control. Some feline diabetics can actually be controlled with diet alone if it is managed correctly. Two meals (1 small morning meal and a larger meal 6-8 hours later) daily with no treats or food between these times are crucial to diabetes management. At those times the food should be placed down for 1 hour then taken up. For pets who normally have access to food continuously it may take a couple of weeks to adjust to this type of feeding regimen. This tends to be the most difficult obstacle for the client to overcome.

3.Insulin; Administration and care for your insulin is very important. Remember to use the correct unit syringe for the units of insulin you are using. (40 unit vs. 100 unit) Before drawing up your dosage ROLL the bottle of insulin to ensure accurate mixture of the drug and dosing. NEVER shake your bottle of insulin. This will inactivate your drug. Always refrigerate the insulin. Give the insulin injection on the side or underneath the thorax or abdomen below the level of the elbow or knee. Remember that certain areas of the body do not absorb insulin well. Rotate the spot in which you give the injections. Over-using one particular area can cause that area to become insulin resistant.

We set our patients up on regular monitoring schedules based on their needs. This is a huge part of our success. Feel free to call us if you have any questions .

Shantila F. Rexroat D.V.M.

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Ear infections

Ear infections are one of the most common problems we see in dogs and cats. Owners get very frustrated with the chronic nature of this illness. The diagram above shows how the dog has a vertical and horizontal ear canal. (Humans have only the horizontal ear canal.) The L shaped formation of the dog / cats ear canal places them at a real disadvantage when it comes to natural drainage of their ears. Therefore when a dog / cat has excessive ear wax production, allergies, water in their ears or earmite infestations (to name a few causes) it becomes much more likely that the debris trapped in the ear will pre-dispose them to an infection.

Ear health maintenance plays a big role in preventing chronic ear infections. Using a weekly ear cleanser helps enhance your pets' ears natural cleansing process.

When we have diagnosed an ear infection the re-check of the ears is essential. We must look down into the horizontal ear canal to make certain the ear appears normal. In most cases an ear cytology (looking at a swab sample under the microscope for infectious agents) is required to confirm that the infection is resolved. Otherwise the infection is very likely to return...soon.

Shantila F. Rexroat D.V.M.



Boa Constrictor

We would love to know what you would like to hear about.
Please contact Dr. Rexroat at shantiladv@aol.com.
Place NEWSLETTER in the subject.

Upcoming Events

Rabies Clinic

May 2nd – 7th, 2011

Rabies Vaccine \$5.00 each pet

Spay / Neuter Clinic

May 9th—13th, 2011

Dog Spay/Neuter:
\$75.00 / \$60.00

Feline Spay:
\$60.00 / \$35.00

Shannon L. Blair, D.V.M.

Shannon F. Campbell, D.V.M.

Jacob R. Feese, D.V.M. Large Animal

Shantila F. Rexroat, D.V.M.

By appointment, Doug Peterson, D.V.M. (Orthopedic Surgery)

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