



Arbor Animal News

A Quarterly publication from Arbor Animal Clinic

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Spring Topics

As the weather gets warmer, our clients turn their attention to gardening and outdoor activities. As vets, we often turn our attention to the aspects of veterinary medicine which are, at least in part, seasonal. These include the birth of kittens, allergies in pets, fleas, ticks, intestinal parasites, and heartworms.

Kittens are often born in the spring and summer as cats are "seasonally polyestrous" meaning they come into heat (estrus) over and over but generally only in the spring and summer. Kittens acquired in the spring are able to breed as early as five to seven months of age, so scheduling their spay operation is important to do in time to prevent pregnancy. Dogs tend to have two heat cycles a year so they aren't seasonal in their reproduction, but many of us get new puppies in the spring and summer when school is out and we have more time to focus on their needs.

We see a lot of skin problems in our patients in the spring and summer. Many are related to airborne allergies which surge with the new growth of pollinating plants and some are related to the higher incidence of fleas and ticks. We also caution our clients about the increase in pet poisonings due to spring plants. These include: Lilies (Tiger lilies, Asian lilies and others), Tulips, Daffodils, other spring blooming bulbs and many others. Additional precautions are: garden fertilizers, insecticides, snail or slug baits, and even certain types of commonly used mulches including cocoa bean mulch which is attractive to dogs but poisonous if eaten.



Heartworms 101:

April is *Heartworm Month* and each year the American Heartworm Society helps us remind all of our clients of the importance of heartworm prevention in both dogs and cats.

>Heartworms are transmitted by mosquito bites so the incidence varies from state to state. Heartworms are reported all across Texas with the highest incidence nearest to the coast.

>All dogs and cats should be on a monthly heartworm preventative medication all year long. Although heartworm disease is more common in dogs, cats are also susceptible.

>Heartworm infection is often fatal in both dogs and cats. Some dogs can be infected for years before they show signs, so we test dogs annually as it is important to find the disease before it has progressed and is still treatable.

> Cats with heartworms may have asthma-like symptoms or vomiting, but sudden death is also common in cats with heartworm disease.

Thank you to all of you who continue to refer new clients to our practice! We want to show you how much we appreciate it—Please cut out and use the two referral cards on the back and receive a \$10 coupon for your next visit! Thanks!

Did you know?

> *Trichobezoar* is the medical term for a hairball. Although common and usually not dangerous, hairballs can occasionally lead to an intestinal blockage.

> *Zoonosis* is the medical term for diseases which can be transmitted from animals to people. This includes many infectious diseases but also includes some of the most common worms that dogs and cats can get.

> *Vector-borne diseases* are diseases that are transmitted by fleas and ticks or other parasites that infest dogs and cats. They can affect pets and people. This makes flea and tick prevention especially important to our pets and families.

> About 70% of *skin tumors* in dogs are benign (30% prove to be malignant) whereas about 30% of *skin tumors* in cats are benign (70% prove to be malignant).



You are all invited.....

To the Woofstock at Waterloo on May 2nd at Waterloo Park. It is a day of fun and silliness put on by the Texas Veterinary Medical Association to benefit the Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation. It will be a great time for all of us and our dogs. 10am to 5pm. Admission is free. Groovy!

See: www.woofstockatwaterloo.org