



Arbor Animal News

A Quarterly publication from Arbor Animal Clinic

July 15, 2009

Doctor's Corner:



Cardiac and Pulmonary Diseases

Many of our patients are presented for problems that may relate to heart disease or lung disease, and sometimes both. These can be simple problems or very challenging. We start with the "history" which is the background information, and a physical exam. Sometimes this is all that is needed to know what to do such as a kitten coming from the shelter with symptoms of Upper Respiratory Infection or a dog with Kennel Cough. We might want to check blood counts or even Xray if there is suspicion that pneumonia has developed. Sometimes we hear a heart murmur and must use an echocardiogram (ultrasound) to look for a congenital problem in a young animal or a degenerative problem in an older patient. Although knowing the age, breed, and history can point to what is most likely, some problems are harder to detect and we see a wide variety of heart/lung issues ranging from parasites (heartworm disease, lungworms) to infectious (virus, bacteria, fungal) to asthma to injury related and even cancer. Xrays are important to look at the lungs and give some information about the heart – or the effect of a heart problem on the lungs, but all heart problems really need ultrasound imaging and an ECG to know what we need to know. Occasionally it can be difficult to distinguish between heart and lung diseases and there is a new test called proBNP that we have available now to help. It is a simple blood test that tests for the presence of the same cardiac marker that indicates heart disease in humans.

This is a welcomed addition to our arsenal as heart disease can be present in our young patients and more than half of our aged dog patients have heart disease. It is especially helpful in cats as heart problems in cats are common and can be very difficult to detect with 30% having normal physical exams. We will also use it to help stage and follow the heart disease.

Weight Management



Arbor Animal Clinic is focusing on Weight Management and obesity awareness this month. We want each of you with a pet that is overweight to participate. Starting now, until the end of August take the: [Arbor Six Month Weight Loss Challenge.](#)

Here is how it works: Make an appointment in July or August for the challenge and come in and we will weigh your pet and recommend an ideal weight and target weight as a goal. We will make the recommended diet changes and send you a monthly reminder to come in for a weight check. We will keep a report card as well as before and after photos and in February we will post results and celebrate.

Purina Corporation just finished a 14 year study showing that fit dogs live almost 2 years longer than their overweight counterparts—so let's get started!!

Did you know?

- That heartworms were first found in a dog's heart in 1697
- The first drug to treat dogs with heartworms was developed in 1945
- In 1987, the first once-a-month heartworm preventive (Heartgard) was marketed in the U.S.
- Heartworm disease was originally reported in cats in Brazil in 1921
- Dr. Hartwell's Great great Grandfather, Dr. Reuben DeMussey was a surgeon credited with the first ligation of the jugular vein in humans in the late 1800's.
- A heart murmur is a sound heard with a stethoscope that usually indicates a leaking heart valve.
- An arrhythmia is the term for abnormal electrical activity in the heart.
- Cardiomyopathy is a heart disease of the heart muscle as opposed to a disease of the valves.

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!