

East-West

Animal Hospital

January - February 2011

Happy New Year and Happy Valentines Day!!!

February!

February is such a special month; February is all about spreading love. Along with Valentine's Day, February is also the month designated for Pet Dental Health Awareness. Now is the time to educate yourself on some simple ways to show love for your pet by protecting their oral health.

One of the most common diseases that animals contract is periodontal disease, an infection of the gums. These infections can lead to more serious conditions which can include kidney failure and heart disease. The key to prevention is simple, inexpensive and may improve your human-animal bond:

Brush your pet's teeth regularly!

Please Note: DO NOT use human toothpaste for brushing your pet's teeth! It is too harsh for pets and will wear away tooth enamel. It has also been known to cause severe stomach upset and diarrhea when swallowed. Please use made-for-pets toothbrushes and toothpaste.

In addition to brushing teeth, pet parents can use special dental treats and toys for pets to keep their smiles healthy. Greenies, Nylabone and C.E.T. brands offer a wide variety of shapes, flavors, and sizes of tartar control chews. Other options for maintaining dental health are water and food additives, mouth rinse and specially formulated dental diets. Please schedule an appointment for an Oral Health Evaluation and protect your pet's future health!

Pet Safe Bouquets:

Many pet owners are unaware that all species of Lily are potentially fatal to cats. When sending a floral arrangement to a recipient with a cat, specify that it is to contain no lilies. When receiving an arrangement, sift through and remove all dangerous flowers, stems or plants (see list below). If your pet is suffering from symptoms such as upset/painful stomach, vomiting or diarrhea, he may have ingested an offending flower or plant.

Toxic Plants:

- Azalea
- Bird of Paradise
- Daffodil
- English Ivy
- Foxglove
- Hyacinth
- Hydrangea
- Jimson Weed
- Lantana
- Mandrake
- Mistletoe
- Morning Glory
- Nightshade
- Tulip
- Umbrella Plant



Every Rose Has its Thorn:

Don't let pets near roses or other thorny stemmed flowers. Biting, stepping on or swallowing their sharp, woody spines can cause serious infection if a puncture occurs. It is all too easy for a pet to swallow or step on thorns that fall to the ground as a flower arrangement is being created. De-thorn your roses far away from pets and be sure to pick up any pieces you see on the floor.



Forbidden Chocolate:

Seasoned pet owners know the potentially life-threatening dangers of chocolate including Baker's, semi-sweet, dark and milk chocolates. In darker chocolates, methylxanthines (caffeine-like stimulants that affect gastro-intestinal, neurologic and cardiac function) can cause vomiting/diarrhea, hyperactivity, seizures and an abnormally elevated heart rate. The high-fat content in lighter chocolates can potentially lead to a life-threatening inflammation of the pancreas. Go ahead and indulge, but don't leave chocolate out for your chowhound to find!

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Careful with those cocktails:

Spilled wine, half a glass of champagne and some leftover liquor are nothing to cry about until a curious pet laps them up. Since animals are smaller than humans, a little bit of alcohol can do a lot of harm to them. Vomiting, diarrhea, lack of coordination, central nervous system depression, tremors, difficulty breathing, metabolic disturbances and coma are possible outcomes of alcohol consumption. Potentially fatal respiratory failure can also occur if a large enough amount is consumed.

Life Is Sweet:

Don't let pets near treats sweetened with Xylitol. When ingested, Xylitol- found in sugar-free gum, candies and many treats- is quickly absorbed into the blood stream, which acts as a strong promoter of insulin release and causes a sudden drop of blood pressure. This condition is known as hypoglycemia and can cause your pet to suffer depression, liver failure, loss of coordination, seizures and possibly death.



Playing With Fire and Presents:

On Valentine's Day Eve, it is always nice to set your evening a-glow with candle light. Pawing kittens and nosy puppies can burn themselves or cause a fire by knocking over any unattended candles. Please be sure to always put out candles when leaving a room for more than just a few seconds.

Tape, ribbons, bows, wrapping paper, cellophane and balloons are potentially fatal to all animals, not just cats as many people believe. If swallowed, these long, stringy and "fun-to-chew" items can get lodged in your pet's throat or digestive tract and cause them to choke or vomit. Thin strings and ribbons can cause severe intestinal discomfort if these articles become wrapped around the intestines. This can be a potential emergency and may require surgery. Sometimes these materials can pass on their own, but better to be safe than sorry!



Signs Your Pet Needs Attention Immediately:

- Any blue, purple, or pale hue to the tongue or gums
- Any difficult or labored breathing
- Panting in a cat
- Excessive drooling
- Any loss of consciousness
- Change in normal activity level:
 - Lethargy
 - Hyperactivity
 - Restlessness
- Sudden inability to move back legs or collapse
- Clumsy/disoriented behavior
- Seizures
- Crying when touched
- Bloated abdomen
- Uncontrolled bleeding from any orifice
- Bruising anywhere
- Limping
- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Straining in the litter box without producing urine
- Change in urination:
 - Location
 - Frequency
 - Amount
 - Color
 - Smell
- Any unusual odor or hair loss
- Change in appetite-decreased or increased
- Unintended weight-loss/gain
- Coughing (especially at night)
- Runny nose, eyes or squinting
- Sneezing excessively

Announcements:

Referrals: We are currently offering referral bonuses for our clients who spread the word about us! Reward Cards will also receive a bonus when referrals receive their cards.

Weather in the New Year:

Over the past few years, Florida has seen a significant drop in temperatures during the winter months. Not only do we need an extra layer of blankets at night to keep warm, but our pets need some extra protection to keep the cold out too!

For dogs with a thin layer of fur and for the hairless cat breeds, sweaters really do help. However, if your pet doesn't tolerate wearing the sweater, try to limit their outside time and make sure they have a warm place to sleep. If your cat's litter box is kept outside on a patio, try to keep that area warm or move the box inside for those really cold nights.

Heat lamps can be used on the outside of reptile cages to keep the critters warm. Blankets and hide-outs in their habitats are also great.

As we look forward to the warmth and beauty the spring months bring, let's do our best to stay warm during this cold winter season!



"Toys" to Avoid:

Most animals will play with anything shiny and anything that makes any kind of noise. Things that crinkle and pop are especially attractive to dogs and cats. Different things to look out for and to keep out of your pet's reach are:

- Party favors
- Paper poppers
- Silly string
- Tinsel
- Bows
- Tape
- Paper or plastic shopping bags
- Gift bags
- Part signs made of plastic

If you see any of the items on the floor, it would be highly advised that they be picked up and disposed of, kept on a high shelf, or kept in a drawer or other storage area.

New Year's Resolutions:

Here are the Animal League's Top 10 resolutions for pet owners:

1. I will take my pets to the vet for a routine check-up and make sure all my pet's vaccination and treatments, such as flea, tick and heartworms, are up-to-date.
2. I will make certain that my pet is spayed or neutered, so that they are not contributing to the pet overpopulation that leads to millions of innocent animals euthanized each year.
3. I will pay more attention to my pet's oral health care and begin a teeth-brushing regimen, as oral care is integral to my pet's whole well-being and dental problems have been known to lead to other illnesses in pets.
4. I will keep my pet groomed, including brushing their teeth, cleaning their ears and trimming their nails, for good health.
5. I will keep my pet on a proper nutritional plan that's balanced, age-appropriate and suited to any existing medical conditions.
6. I will make sure my pet gets sufficient exercise to keep them healthy and fit.
7. I will stimulate my pet's mind. Teaching them a new trick, devoting time to interactive playtime and introducing a new toy can help keep them vibrant.
8. I will hug my pet every day, assuring them that they are a valuable part of my life.
9. I will not buy a pet from a pet store or through irresponsible breeders.
10. When adding a pet to my family, I will adopt from a shelter to help reduce pet overpopulation and euthanasia, and most importantly to save a precious life.



Office Hours:

Monday and Friday- 7:30AM to 6:00PM

Tues, Wed and Thurs- 7:30AM to 8:00PM

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