



Le Sueur Office



Le Sueur Belle Plaine



Belle Plaine Office

VETERINARY CLINIC NEWS

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Be a Cool Owner:

Don't let your dog overheat; the dangers of heat stroke

Working up a good sweat in the hot summer months may be good for you, but it can lead to a heat stroke in your dog and kill him in a matter of minutes. Heat stroke is a dangerous condition that takes the lives of many animals every year. Your dog's normal body temperature is 100.5 to 102.5 degrees Fahrenheit. If it rises to 105 or 106 degrees, the dog is at risk for developing heat exhaustion. If the body temperature rises to 107 degrees, your dog has entered the dangerous zone of heat stroke. With heat stroke, irreversible damage and death can occur.

Here are some cool summer facts: the temperature in a parked car can reach 160 degrees in a matter of minutes, even with partially opened windows. Also, any dog exercising on a hot, humid day, even with plenty of water, can become overheated. Some hunting dogs have an inherited problem that makes them overheat in temperatures that are alright for other dogs. Overheating often leads to heat stroke. As a pet owner, you should know the dangers of overheating and what to do to prevent it. You should also know the signs of heat stroke and what to do if your dog exhibits those signs.

When humans overheat, we are able to sweat in order to cool down. However, your dog cannot sweat as easily; he must rely on panting to cool himself. Dogs breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth, directing the air over the mucous membranes of the tongue, throat, and trachea to facilitate cooling by evaporation of fluid. Your dog also dissipates heat by dilation of the blood vessels in the surface of the skin in the

face, ears, and feet. When these mechanisms are overwhelmed, hyperthermia and heat stroke usually develop.

Dogs who have a thick coat, heart and lung problems, or a short muzzle are at greater risk for heat stroke. Others at risk include: puppies up to six months of age, large dogs over seven years of age, small dogs over 14 years, overweight dogs, dogs who are overexerted (such as hunting on a warm day), Brachycephalic dogs with short, wide heads like Pugs, English Bulldogs and Boston Terriers, and dogs with cardiovascular disease and/or poor circulation.

What to Watch For

If your dog is overheating, he will appear sluggish and unresponsive. He may appear disorientated. The gums, tongue and conjunctiva of the eyes may be bright red and he will probably be panting hard. He may even start vomiting. Eventually, he will collapse, seizure and may go into a coma.



If your dog exhibits any of these signs, treat it as an emergency and call your veterinarian immediately. On the way to your veterinary hospital, you can cool your pet with wet towels, spray with cool (not cold) water or by providing ice chips for your dog to chew (providing he is conscious).

See 'Heat Stroke' page 2

Employee Update . . .

Congratulations!!



Congratulations to Maryann and Chris Nelson on the adoption of Benjamin and Andrew. Maryann and Chris brought the 3 1/2-year old twins home in May.



Welcome . . .



Clarissa Gatchell is working at Le Sueur Veterinary Services as a part-time receptionist. Clarissa is originally from Le Sueur. She came back to Le Sueur from Deerwood, MN, where she was working as a medical secretary. Clarissa likes to spend her spare time walking, fishing, and spending time with her husband, Paul.

Farewells . . .

Farewell to Laurie Heldberg. Laurie had worked for Le Sueur Veterinary Services for almost seven years starting as receptionist and working her way up to personnel manager. We'll miss you Laurie, and good luck to you in your future plans.

Farewell also to Annette Brooks, who is the receptionist at the Belle Plaine Animal Hospital. Annette has accepted a position from her former employer. Good luck, Annette, with your new job.

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Veterinary Care

Heat related illness is typically diagnosed based on physical exam findings and a recent history that could result in overheating. Your veterinarian may perform various blood tests to assess the extent of vital organ dysfunction caused by overheating.

Intensity of treatment depends upon the cause and severity of the heat illness.

Mildly increased temperature (less than 105°F) may only require rest, a fan to increase air circulation, fresh water to drink and careful observation. Markedly increased temperature (greater than 106°F) must be treated more aggressively. Cooling can be promoted externally by immersion in cool water or internally by administering a cool water enema.

Underlying aggravating conditions, such as upper airway obstructive diseases, heart disease, lung

disease and dehydration may be treated with appropriate medications, supplemental oxygen or fluid therapy.

Home Care

Heat stroke is a life-threatening emergency. Check your dog's temperature rectally if you suspect heat stroke. If it is over 105°F, remove your dog from the heat source immediately and call your veterinarian.

Meanwhile, place a cool, wet towel over your dog or place him in a cool (not ice cold) bath. Do not use ice because it may cause skin injury. Spraying with water from a garden hose also works well.

Be a cool dog owner and keep your dog cool, too!

"Hot Spots"

Hot spots, mainly found in dogs, are caused by self-trauma to the skin due to an underlying infection, which causes itching and pain. The animal begins to lick or scratch in these areas causing a condition called acute moist dermatitis, or 'hot spots'. These spots are seen more commonly in breeds with a very dense undercoat, such as Golden Retrievers, Collies, German Shepherds, and St. Bernards. This condition is also much more common in hot and humid weather. It is also seen more commonly in animals with underlying allergies.

A typical hot spot is circular, red, and has a moist appearance. Hair is often absent from these areas. Hot spots can spread rapidly if not treated quickly.

Treatment consists of gently clipping and thoroughly cleansing the area with an antiseptic shampoo. They may also be treated with oral corticosteroids and antibiotics. Then a topical spray is applied until the area is healed. Because these areas are often painful, sometimes the animal may need to be sedated.

So, if you see your pet licking at that certain spot, take a closer look. There may be a hot spot lurking there.



Fly Strike

With the arrival of warmer weather comes a variety of pesky flies that can cause disease in your pet. Fly strike is a disease that occurs when flies bite and feed from blood on the ears. Primarily occurring in dogs, these painful bites cause red and bleeding sores along the edge of the ear. Your veterinarian can diagnose fly strike with an ear exam or skin scraping. Treatment involves reducing inflammation and infection with topical ointments. You can help prevent fly strike with fly repellants and insecticides.



Another problem for outdoor pets

Featured dog breed . . .

Shih Tzu



The Shih Tzu originated from China in the 1600's and was developed by crossing miniature Chinese breeds with miniature Tibetan breeds. Often confused with the Tibetan Lhasa Apso, the Chinese Shih Tzu has a denser, slightly wavy coat and a face that has been described as similar to a chrysanthemum. This impression is given by the tendency of the hair on the bridge of the dog's nose to grow upward.

Generally, this facial hair is tied up on the top of its head. A Shih Tzu has well-spaced eyes, long facial hair, and a long, dense outercoat with a good undercoat. The color of the Shih Tzu can be from white to black and everything in between. The tail is held high and is heavily plumed. The Shih Tzu's show height is 10 1/2" and its weight is between 10 and 16 pounds. A Shih Tzu has a gentle temperament and tends to be loyal to its owner.

is maggots, or fly larvae. Maggots feed on inflamed or infected tissue. Maggots from blowflies hatch within 24 hours and immediately begin to feed on dying tissue. Some maggots even move on to surrounding healthy tissue. If caught early, the skin can be shaved and the maggots removed, however, owners are often unaware of an infestation because the hair coat covers the area. Cleaning and treating wounds on your pet promptly, as well as keeping your pet's coat clean from urine and feces, will aid in the prevention of maggots.





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COMPANION ANIMALS AND PETS, BOARDING AND GROOMING

507-665-2377 or 1-800-439-2376

Hours: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Friday 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; Tues. 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Drop Off/Pick Up Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

BELLE PLAINE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

304 S. Ash St., Belle Plaine, MN 56011

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