

Newsletter

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April – June 2013

This issue is all about turning good intentions into good planning. The weather is turning warm so this is a perfect time to re-evaluate Fido and Fluffy's health. It's never too late to make important changes!



****Policy Notification:** Frequent Nail Trim or Anal Gland Expression punch cards **must** be present at time of service. We will **not** owe you a punch. So please keep them handy.**

New Products Alert:

Want to practice good dental hygiene for your pets, but don't have time to brush? Pet won't even think about allowing you to brush their teeth? How about a sprinkle and serve product? Morris Hospital is now offering a fantastic, all natural product called Perio Support. Perio Support is a tasty food sprinkle that helps decrease tarter and freshen breath. How easy is that? And it may save you money by decreasing how frequently you have to have professional dental cleanings! Healthy teeth and gums mean less cardiac disease, kidney disease, and over all better immune system. Come in today for a bottle.

If you like Phycox you will love Phycox Max:

- Increased anti-inflammatory activity with greater analgesic effects
- Improved weight loss in aging dogs
- Improved control of blood glucose levels
- Potent antioxidant, immune boosting, and immunomodulating functions
- Improved urinary tract health
- Improved cardiac function

Going into storm season, 4th of July fireworks, moving to a new house, or any type of "traumatic" situation can be stressful and frightening for pets. Composure Pro is the advancement in the very successful Composure line of products. Composure Pro is a natural product that helps pets deal with anxiety and fear and not just mask it.

Tackling Pet Obesity

Michelle

This time of year, many of us are evaluating the success of New Year's Resolutions. Maybe you were going to quit smoking, make a commitment to hit the gym more often, or spend more time with your kids. New Year's Resolutions aren't just for people, though. Your pet may have some life changes to make as well!

Did you know that approximately 54% of the nation's pet population is overweight, with the number getting larger every year? About 20% of these pets have owners who do not recognize that there is a problem. Obese pets are at a higher risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, breathing problems, kidney disease, exacerbation of osteoarthritis, and a shortened life expectancy. Many pet owners are either not aware of these health risks, or they find their pudgy pets cute and don't address the problem.

Here is a different way to think about your pet's weight according to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention:

- A 95 pound Golden Retriever is equivalent to a 5'4" human female weighing 184 pounds or a 5'9" male weighing 214 pounds.
- A 10 pound Chihuahua is equivalent to a 5'4" human female weighing 242 pounds or a 5'9" male weighing 282 pounds.
- A Domestic Shorthair cat that weighs 15 pounds is equivalent to a 5'4" human female weighing 218 pounds or a 5'9" male weighing 254 pounds.
- A pig ear fed to a 40 pound dog is the equivalent of an adult human drinking 72 ounces of Coca-Cola.

- A regular dog biscuit fed to a 20 pound dog is similar to an adult eating 2 Keebler Elf Fudge Double Stuffed cookies, or a king sized snickers bar

Here are some tips to help your pet to slim down in a healthy way.

First Things First. If your dog's got you trained to believe she's hungry all of the time or that you can't eat a meal without offering her just a taste, break your training and stop responding to her cues to overfeed her.

Portion Patrol. The average adult dog requires one 8-oz cup of dry dog food per 20 pounds of body weight per day (not per meal). If you're feeding more than that, cut back.

More than One. Divide her food into two-three meals a day. This way she can eat more often without eating more. You could give her breakfast, lunch and dinner if this works with your schedule or breakfast, early supper and a bedtime snack.

Sack the Snacks. Strictly limit the biscuits and other treats. Many dog treats are loaded with calories and it's easy to lose track of how many your dog is getting a day, especially if you're using them for training or for comfort while you're gone. Set a sane limit on treats (such as two small ones a day) and make sure your children, significant other, children and dog walker are aware of the limit. Try raw baby carrots, a bite of an apple, or a single piece of kibble as a treat instead of a salty, fatty dog snack. Try filling up a small baggie with some treats; one baggie per day. Anyone who wants to give your pet a treat has to take it out of the bag. Once the bag is empty, no more treats. It is a good way to control how many treats your pet receives. If you know you or your family can't refrain from giving treats, cut back a little on your dog's amount of kibble.

Veg Out! Supplement her kibble with low calorie vegetables and fruits. Many dogs enjoy carrots (cooked or raw), green beans, winter squash, and raw apple. Fresh or frozen vegetables are fine, but stay away from canned because they are heavily salted. The vegetables and fruits will add fiber to help your dog feel full. Canned pumpkin (not pumpkin pie filling) is also a great low calorie fiber source.

Move it. Make sure your dog gets plenty of exercise. Walk or play fetch with her for a minimum of an hour every day. She'll be healthier and happier and so will you. Exercise is good for both you and your pet.

Bringing Home Baby

Michelle

A little bit of planning can make a big difference when bringing home your new baby to live with your existing four legged family members. At the very least our pets thrive on routine and a new baby shakes a routine to its core.

Here are some tips to help ease the adjustment for everyone in the family.

Paint the Picture

Begin by acclimating your pets to the baby well in advance to your new arrival. Develop a picture in your mind of your life with your new baby and your pets. Ask yourself:

- Will I allow my pets into the nursery?
- Are there beds, toy boxes, litter boxes, etc in the future nursery that will have to be relocated before the baby arrives?
- Do I let my pets on the couch when I am feeding, changing, or holding my baby?
- If I go for walks with the baby stroller do I want my dogs to walk with us?
- If the dog barks daily at the mailman will this have a potential to ruin a nap?

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- Do I want my pet investigating the dirty diaper bin?
- Don't leave out any details!

Now that you have your picture in your mind (or better yet on paper) start training now! Being a new parent is stressful enough without having to quiet a fussy baby and keep your pets out of the dirty diaper bin all at the same time!

Preparing Your Pet

Some pets can find a wailing baby terrifying. While you cannot control the volume of your baby, you can control the volume of a recording:

- Download an audio recording or purchase a CD (we like Sounds Good CD Babies by Legacy Canine Behavior & Training).
- Begin desensitizing your pets during mealtimes by playing it at a barely audible level in a room other than where your pet eats.
- Gradually increase the volume over time but not so fast that your pet notices.
- Move the food dish closer to the speakers (or speakers closer to the food dish).
- You can also play their favorite game or engage in their favorite activity while the baby recording is playing. Soon the positive association of your pets' favorite activities will transfer to the baby recording.
- Your pets were used to being your only child before the baby arrived.
- The new baby will demand a lot of your time, so gradually accustom your pets to spending less time with you.
- If your pet is particularly attached to mother-to-be, another person in the household should develop a closer relationship with the pet to help mom out.

Dress Rehearsals

- Put on your acting face, it's time for dress rehearsals! Dress up a baby doll just as you would your new baby.
- Have everyone in the family "baby talk" to the doll. If you have already named your baby go ahead and use their name when talking to the doll.
- Do everything with the doll that you will do with your baby; carry it, rock it, swaddle it, and sit with it.
- Use baby oil, powder, etc. on yourself and the doll before engaging in your pets' favorite activity. This will get your pet used to some of the new smells.
- Take the doll in the stroller when you walk your dog.
 - If your mental picture includes having your dog sit or lay down while you take care of the baby in the stroller, teach them on your dress rehearsals. If your dog pulls, take a class now!
- This is a great opportunity to teach pets how to behave around baby without the baby there. This will take a lot of stress off everyone in the family!

The Nursery

- Preparing the nursery is fun and exciting for everyone including our pets! Pets are naturally curious and may wish to investigate the new nursery.
- If you choose to keep your nursery pet free, allowing the pet to see what is going on will decrease feeling of isolation (baby gates and screen doors are good options).
- When relocating your pets' belongings out of the future nursery, do so gradually.
 - When moving litter boxes for your cats move it gradually over time to its new location. Moving it a little bit each day will help prevent cats from returning to the original location of the litter box to do their business.
- Find a pet safe location to throw away dirty diapers!

Home Sweet Home

- Once your baby arrives, have someone bring home a blanket with your baby's smell on it. Let your pets investigate and place the blanket near their food bowls as they eat their meals.
- If your pets get upset at baby fussing, toss some treats into the air. The trick is to make it seem as if the baby is presenting the treats!
- Never force a pet to interact with an infant or toddler. This can increase their stress and fear.
- Don't forget to try and spend a little one-on-one time with your pets.
- Other considerations:
 - Parasite control is always important, but even more so with an infant in the house! Keep your pet on year round heartworm and intestinal parasite preventative
 - Get your pet used to nail trims to avoid unintentional scratches.
- **The Number One Rule To Remember** – No matter how trustworthy the pet seems, a baby (or toddler) should NEVER be left with any pet without adult supervision!

Have You.....

Registered your pet's microchip? It is just as important to register your chip to you (and update the registry if you move or change phone numbers) as it is to chip in the first place. If you don't have your pet's number give Morris Hospital a call or we can scan the pet.

ResQ Chip - [877-738-5465](tel:877-738-5465) or petlink.net

I want to take a moment to address something. There isn't one week that goes by where a client begins a conversation with the phrase "I don't want to bother you....." While we all thank you for your understanding, patience, and consideration for our time, especially when we get really busy, we are here to serve YOU! You are the reason there is a Morris Hospital and a Dr. Morris and we techs, etc. It is not a bother for us to answer your questions, share stories, offer comfort and support where we can. So next time you are worried you will bother us, please, do!!!