



Veterinary Hospital

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Newsletter

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Dear friends and clients,

Another three months have flown by and it does not seem like it's already time to write another newsletter! We've had some pretty exciting cases over the past few months. Some terrific saves (dog with unknown medication ingestion that caused seizures and was on our critical care ventilator for 12 hours) and some heartbreaking losses (cancer in an 11-MONTH old dog). We also had "Parvo-paloosa" in May when a local rescue group rescued 27 dogs, of which 23 subsequently broke with clinical Parvovirus disease (see Dr. Jack Hardy's article below). At one time we had 13 "Parvo puppies" here in addition to our other inpatients. Parvovirus puppies require a lot of time to care for because it causes severe vomiting and diarrhea. You can imagine the clean up from 23 of them!

I want to let you all know just how awesome our staff and doctors are at Bright Eyes & Bushy Tails Veterinary Hospital! While I hope your pet never needs to stay with us, you can feel good knowing that if they do, they will have an amazing team of doctors and staff to take care of them. Allan and I couldn't be more proud!

Gratefully yours,
Jenn Berger and everyone at Bright Eyes & Bushy Tails



Stormy – resident blood donor and available for adoption

Parvovirus (by Dr. Jack Hardy)

Canine Parvovirus is a highly infectious virus that causes severe gastroenteritis (infection and inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract). This virus affects young puppies and adolescent dogs almost exclusively. Older adult dogs rarely become infected. Dogs can become infected when there is oral contact with the virus in feces, infected soil, or fomites (such as your shoes!) that carry the virus.

The most common signs of a Parvovirus infection are large amounts of bloody diarrhea and repeated vomiting. This virus can cause severe damage to the tissue in the intestinal tract, leading to more widespread infections secondary to the Parvovirus. Additionally, the fluid lost through the vomiting and diarrhea can cause severe dehydration. This serious disease can be fatal if left untreated. Treatment usually consists of hospitalization with antibiotics, gastroprotectants, and IV fluids.

If you have a dog that was diagnosed with Parvovirus, what do you do? Parvovirus is very tough and can withstand a lot of punishment (including resistance to freezing!). Infected dogs will shed the virus for roughly



two weeks following exposure. Any area that an infected puppy visits should be considered contaminated and can remain infectious for years.

When disinfecting indoor areas, it is important to understand that NO cleaner can remove all of the virus. Disinfection is important, however, to reduce the amount of the virus to an acceptable level. You can create a disinfectant at home by mixing 1 part bleach with 30 parts water. This must be applied for 10 minutes of contact time to anything in the household you wish to disinfect. Be careful, this will ruin the colors of your clothes and garments!

To help prevent the spread of this disease, any new puppy that is adopted or brought into your household should be evaluated by a veterinarian. Any young dog in your household with vomiting or diarrhea (especially if they have been around other dogs recently) should be seen immediately as well. Early detection and vaccination is important for preventing this disease from affecting you and your loved ones.

Dog Parks (by Dr. Wendy Miller)

Dog Parks can be a wonderful and fun place to take your four-legged family member. They provide an opportunity to socialize, exercise, and expose them to some fresh air. Dogs can be very social and friendly animals when properly trained but not every dog we meet is friendly. Some may be friendly to people only, others may have preferences to what types of dog they are comfortable around. Unfortunately, they don't always communicate that to us, the owners, before an altercation with another animal occurs.

Here are our TOP 5 TIPS to help avoid unfortunate altercations.

1. *If your dog is anxious - leave the park.* Watch for subtle signs of anxiety in your dog such as drooling, not wanting anyone to get too close, looking wary of other dogs, tense body with ears standing straight up, or ears held down. Many dogs can be showing these signs even if they are wagging their tail. Wagging the tail is NOT a sure sign that the dog is happy and relaxed.



2. *Slowly introduce a nervous dog.* If your dog is nervous around other dogs we recommend that you slowly introduce him or her into the exciting, and sometimes chaotic, world of dog parks. Take it in steps.

STEP 1: Take your dog to the park, keep him or her on a leash, and walk around the perimeter of the park. Let him or her sit and watch the other dogs and then go home. Do this several times until the signs of nervousness diminish. Then move on to step two.

STEP 2: Take your dog to the park, keep him or her on a leash, and introduce to other dogs while leashed. Allow him or her to get closer and interact while your dog is on his or her leash. Once they can do this without nervousness, then move to step three.

STEP 3: Go to the dog park, make sure that there are other dogs present that your dog gets along with and allow him or her to be off-leash while in the enclosure.

3. *Watch the other dogs - if they are aggressive - leave the park.* You may not necessarily see overt aggression but their personality may be more aggressive than your dog. This mismatch may lead to frustration and altercations.

4. *Remain leashed while outside of the enclosure.* Many of the dog/dog, human/dog and dog/human/dog altercations will happen outside of the park enclosure as dogs and people are getting in to or out of their vehicles. Also watch for dogs that are in the back of pick-up trucks and not well restrained.

5. *Big Dog/Little Dog.* If your dog is the only small dog in a park full of large dogs then it is wise to come back at another time.

Other bits of advice to help make your dog's experience, as well as yours, more enjoyable:

1. *Vaccinate Your Dog.* Make sure YOUR dog is protected from disease. Staying up-to-date on vaccines will be very helpful in protecting your dog. The vaccines we recommend would be: distemper, *Bordetella* (kennel cough), and rabies. If your park has a pond or if you know of other wildlife that can frequent the park, you should consider vaccinating for *Leptospirosis*. If the park is near a wooded area you should consider a Lyme vaccine. We encourage all puppies to avoid going to a dog park until after they are finished with their initial vaccination series at about 16 weeks of age.

2. *Parasite Protection.* We also recommend that your dog be well protected against heartworms, fleas, and ticks before going to the park. Heartgard® and Frontline® are the primary products we sell to aid in this line of protection. They are still proving to be quality products; however, they do need to be purchased from a veterinarian to be guaranteed by the company.

3. *Allergy Dogs.* If your dog suffers from environmental allergies, making sure they are under control will help to prevent possible flare-ups after being at the park. If your dog has an ongoing ear, eye, or skin infection we recommend that these are cleared up before taking him or her to the park. If your dog is on any medications for allergies, make sure that they are working well before taking him or her to the park.

4. *Good Training.* Having your dog well trained to listen to you can save him or her from injury or worse. Making sure he or she comes when called and will do so in a chaotic environment or when they see another dog is essential to having control over any situation.



Pet Adoption

Bright Eyes & Bushy Tails works closely with many of the area animal rescue groups. However, we often find ourselves with a pet or two that need a good home as well. Check out our current list of “adoptables” at the following online link: <http://www.petfinder.com/shelters/IA187.html>

