

SWVH July Newsletter

Everyone at SWVH hopes that this newsletter finds you and your pets enjoying the summer! We are very thankful for your continued support. As a small token of our appreciation for your referrals, we will send you SWVH bucks for every new client that you refer to our hospital, redeemable only at SWVH! Please call us if you would like to receive more information about SWVH bucks or our other promotions: including Senior Discount Day and Microchip Discount Day!



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Helpful cat health websites:

www.healthypet.com
www.catvets.com/healthtopics/
www.veterinarypartner.com

4 Mouser Myths Debunked

Myth #1

- *Cats are independent and don't need care*

Putting out extra food might satisfy their basic needs for a weekend alone, but if a cat gets sick – say from ingesting a foreign object or suffering a urinary blockage – while home by itself, it can be severely ill by Sunday night when its owner returns.

Myth #2

- *Cats eliminate outside the litter box to be spiteful*

Instead, missing the box often signals an underlying medical condition, such as urinary tract disease or infection, kidney disease, or diabetes mellitus. It can also be a sign of arthritis, which makes getting into the litter box difficult. Or it can be a sign of litter box avoidance resulting from a variety of factors or a sign of territorial marking. When you notice your cat eliminating in the wrong place, contact SWVH immediately.

Myth #3

- *Indoor cats don't need preventative health care*

A cat doesn't have to go outside to get sick, especially if it lives with other pets that do go out. When these outdoor pets come back inside, they can bring along – and pass on – all sorts of infections, from respiratory viruses to internal parasites. Fleas and mosquitoes can make their way into the house, then jump onto or bite an indoor cat.

Myth #4

- *Cats are aloof, unsocial creatures*

Contrary to popular belief, cats are social creatures and need interaction. Dogs wag their tails and bark in delight when you come home, cats show affection by nuzzling your leg. Even though they are not boisterous, they still want – and need – attention. Some cats do shun human affection, but these introverts do not represent the whole feline species. In fact, lack of interaction can be an early sign of illness.

Summertime Phobias

Fear of loud noises, especially *thunder* and *fireworks* is a common phobia in dogs and some cats. It is usually displayed by hiding, whining, barking, pawing or even urination. Trying to help your dog or cat cope with loud noises is important because the anxiety can get worse with age. A dog suffering from a fear of thunderstorms may begin to display anxious behavior before the thunder begins. Rain on the roof, bright flashes of light or even the drop in air pressure before a storm may be enough to trigger anxiety. It is important not to punish your dog or cat for being anxious, but equally important not to cuddle too much.



Tips for helping your pets deal with summertime phobias...

- Punishing your dog or cat will increase fear/anxiety
- Cuddling or comforting your dog when he or she is anxious reinforces that anxious behavior is appropriate.
- Staying calm yourself will help your cat and/or dog feel safe.
- Provide a safe place to seek refuge – under a bed, behind a chair, or in a crate. Once your dog or cat has picked a safe place, putting treats or favorite toys at this place will help decrease anxiety.
- Trying to desensitize your dog or cat to loud noises so the sounds become normal. This is usually done by playing a recorded thunder at a low volume and in short intervals while you monitor your pet's behavior. Try to distract your dog or cat while the noise is present by playing fetch or some sort of other enjoyable activity. If your pet is too frightened to participate, you need to turn down the intensity of your thunder stimulus and try again later. This process is long and requires patience, but in the end your dog or cat will be much more comfortable during a storm or fireworks display.

Helpful websites:

www.healthypet.com/library_view.aspx?id=103

www.calmaudio.com/

www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=1657

As always, we are here to help! Please call (775) 825-SWVH, email (contact@swvhreno.com) or stop by to have your questions answered by our caring staff and veterinarians.

If you have suggestions for future newsletters or topics you would like to hear more about – please let us know!

Sincerely, The doctors and support staff of SWVH