



# OAK FOREST Veterinary Hospital



Pet Talk



Summer 2022

## Heartworm Forecast Pet Owners Put on High Alert!

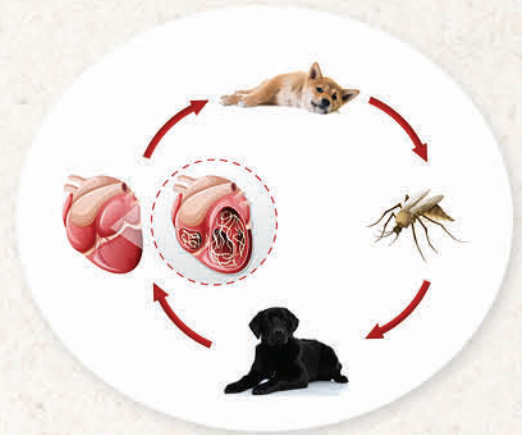
The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) released its annual 2022 Pet Parasite Forecast. Unfortunately, they are predicting a high risk for heartworm infection this year.

Heartworm is a potentially fatal disease transferred to dogs and other animals through mosquitos, so a high mosquito population means a higher risk. When your dog is bitten by a mosquito infected with the larval form of *dirofilaria immitis*—a thread-like roundworm—the larvae can grow as long as 12 inches. These worms can infest the heart, lungs and blood vessels, causing severe lung disease, heart failure, and damage to other organs with a high risk of death.

The first signs of a heartworm infestation may be poor appetite and lethargy. As the disease progresses, your dog may develop a persistent cough. If we suspect heartworm, we will perform a heartworm antigen test that, if positive, indicates a heartworm infection. The treatment for heartworm is severe in itself and usually requires hospitalization.

The good news is that heartworm is preventable. We have several options for heartworm prevention, from heartworm-only products to combination products that also prevent fleas and ticks. These preventives work by killing larval heartworm before it can reach adulthood. We will find the method that works best for you and your pet.

What is crucial is that your pet is protected year-round. The most common reason dogs get heartworm is a missed dose of the preventive. We perform an annual test to ensure that your dog does not have heartworm before we start the preventative, as these medications can cause complications in a dog already infected. Please contact us to make sure your pup is protected!



## Vacation Checklist Traveling with Pets

Planning a family vacation includes the decision whether to travel with our fur-babies or leave them with a caregiver. Your dog may be happier with your family than with any other arrangement, but taking pets along requires extra time and planning. If you've made the decision to bring your fur-baby along, keep these things in mind:



- Know the pet policy and extra fees charged by airlines and hotels before you go to avoid surprises.
- Make a checklist of items your pet will need, including food, extra water, medications, treats, toys, bedding and grooming items. Plan how you will pack and carry these items.

- If your pooch suffers from carsickness, talk to us well in advance about medications.
- Be sure your dog is microchipped and is wearing a tag with your contact info. Pets are more likely to be lost when you travel.
- Search ahead of time for dog-friendly restaurants and parks. Leaving your dog in the car is not an option in the summer!
- Don't expose your dog to other animals that may be aggressive or may carry diseases.

Be sure your pets see us for a checkup to ensure they are healthy enough to travel and their vaccinations are current. Be sure to bring your pet's health records with you on your trip.

## Goose Honks Microchips are Cool!

I am loved! My mom, Dr. Moore, microchipped me when I was neutered. That means if I get distracted chasing a squirrel, look up and don't know where I am, someone can let my mom know they found me.

My mom just told me recently a cool story. Before I was born, my dad had a black lab named Sadie. Well, my dad went on a work trip for several months and left Sadie with his brother in college. When he got off the plane and turned his phone on, he had several phone calls that someone had found his dog but couldn't keep her. They found him through her microchip. He immediately went to Fort Worth and rescued Sadie from the animal shelter. Wow!

My mom also told me recently that the City of Houston just passed a law that all dogs and cats have to be microchipped in an effort to quickly reunite pets with owners.

Gotta go! Squirrel in yard. Must alert family.

*Goose*



## Feline Kidney Disease Know the Common Symptoms

Experts estimate that over 30% of cats over age 12 will eventually be diagnosed with Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) or Chronic Renal Failure (CRF). Unfortunately, these conditions can be silent in earlier stages, and cats can lose as much as 75% of their kidney function before symptoms appear.

Although there is no cure for kidney failure, we can manage the condition with medications that support the existing kidney function and help alleviate some of the work the kidneys do. With medications, proper diet and hydration, cats can live for years with the diagnosis.

The sooner we begin to support renal function, the slower the illness will progress, so it's important to detect it early. Call us if your cat exhibits these symptoms:

- Vomiting
- Sitting hunched over a water or food bowl
- Dehydration
- Weight loss
- Excessive urination
- Isolating, crying, or other signs of pain

These symptoms help identify feline CKD and CRF, but we will run blood tests to be sure. Even without symptoms, we recommend annual blood and urine tests to screen your kitty's kidney function. Be sure to ask your veterinarian about your cat's dietary and hydration needs so you can help protect against kidney disease.



**Call us at (713) 682-6351 today to make an appointment!**



## Fun without Fear Avoiding Hazardous Dog Toys

Having toys to occupy their minds, satisfy their instincts to chase and to chew, and ward off boredom and anxiety is essential for dogs. However, safety standards for play toys and chew toys are lax and the most popular toys range from "needs supervision" to downright toxic. Following is a partial list of potential hazards posed by common pet toys:



1. **Tennis balls** are something most dogs love, but they must be used with caution. Dogs often chew the ball apart and can potentially choke on the rubber that breaks off. Large dogs may even swallow a portion of the ball and choke when it becomes lodged in the throat. In addition, the fuzzy outside material chafes a dog's tooth enamel like sandpaper, which can lead to dental problems.
2. **Rawhide bones** can be extremely dangerous if swallowed. As they absorb water in the stomach, they can swell and become impossible to pass through the intestines. Pressed rawhide chews are a safer option but should be used only with supervision. In addition, some rawhide toys are preserved with formaldehyde, making them toxic.
3. **Squeaker toys** are always dangerous if your dog removes the squeaker. Not only is the removed squeaker a choking hazard, the plastic or PVC can contain toxins. In fact, cheap, plastic or rubber toys of any sort have been known to contain BPA, phthalates, chlorine and other toxins.

4. **Rope toys** also can contain toxic chemicals, but more alarming is that swallowed pieces of rope can cause a life-threatening obstruction in the stomach and intestines.

5. **Fiber-stuffed toys** are soft and fun for dogs to carry but if your pooch likes to open up the toy and remove the stuffing, intestinal blockage is a danger.

## Refer a Friend and Save!

Refer a new client and save \$10 on your next doctor's visit.

Be sure to mention the refer-a-friend savings when you make your appointment.

### Senior Wellness Savings

**\$20 Savings**

#### for Canine and Feline

Senior Wellness Profile - includes bloodwork, urinalysis and thyroid check

Not valid with any other offer. Expires 8/31/2022.

### Drop-off Savings

**Save 5%**

on morning drop-offs for "routine" veterinary services.

Expires 8/31/2022.

### Microchip Savings

**\$10 Savings**

#### on Microchipping

(includes registration in the national database)

Increase the likelihood that your pet will be returned to you!

Not valid with any other offer. Expires 8/31/2022.



*When you're here, you're family.*

2120 W. 34th Street  
Houston, TX 77018

[www.OakForestVet.com](http://www.OakForestVet.com)



**Call (713) 682-6351**  
today to make your appointment!

# Have A Great Summer!

Call  
**(713) 682-6351**  
today to  
make an  
appointment!



*When you're here, you're family.*

