

# OAK FOREST Veterinary Hospital

Pet Talk

Winter 2022/2023

## Can My Dog Catch a Cold?

*What Sniffles and Coughs May Indicate*



What we humans call “catching a cold” can be caused from several viruses, most commonly rhinovirus. Causes of colds in dogs are similar in that there isn’t one specific virus that can trigger cold symptoms. Symptoms may include sneezing, coughing, nasal congestion, sore throat, body aches, runny nose, and general malaise. It’s unlikely that you will catch a cold from your dog, and vice-versa. Most of the specific viruses that affect canines don’t cross species.

Like people, most dogs recover from a viral infection with proper rest. However, many other types of infections present with these symptoms, so it’s best to bring your fur-baby in to see us if symptoms persist. These diseases include kennel cough, canine influenza, heartworms, roundworms, fungal or bacterial infections, allergies, and canine distemper.

If you’ve wondered if your dog can get COVID-19, it’s highly unlikely. The SARS-CoV-2 that caused the pandemic was detected in very few canines and most dogs affected were asymptomatic. Of those with symptoms, all recovered. There is a canine coronavirus (CCoV) that we have seen for decades, but it is not the same virus that causes COVID-19. CCoV creates gastrointestinal issues in dogs rather than respiratory disease.

We have vaccines or other preventatives for most of the serious conditions with cold-like symptoms mentioned above, so make sure your dog is fully protected. If your pup has a mild viral infection, they will need to rest instead of exerting themselves as they might normally do. Also keep them warm and well-hydrated. If symptoms haven’t improved after a week, please give us a call. Always call us immediately if they have trouble breathing or standing.

## Goose Honks

*Pet Dental Health Month*

Howdy there, neighbor! Sorry, I’ll scoot back a little just in case I have some bad breath. I overheard my mom, Dr. Moore, talking the other day about my breath being STINKY. Can you believe that?! I do NOT have stinky breath. I don’t even have the symptoms of this “dental disease” she talks about. My gums aren’t red; I’m not irritable from pain; I’m not pawing at my mouth; and I sure don’t have difficulties eating my meals. This is all because I just got my teeth cleaned at my mom’s work. She said that 85% of dogs and cats over the age of three have dental disease—that’s crazy!



February is National Pet Dental Health Month, and this is when the veterinary world highlights the importance of dental health. I think every month should be dental month because I don’t want to have to wait to have my teeth cleaned! In the meantime, my mom likes to brush my teeth and give me dental treats to help remove the tartar and keep my breath fresh. I’ll make sure she schedules my brother’s cleaning. He’s the one with stinky breath!

Gotta go! Mom’s chasing me with that toothbrush!

*Goose*

## Why Is My Cat Vomiting?

*Know When to Be Concerned*

It’s natural to be worried when your kitty is vomiting, however this is common behavior for cats. It can be caused by a variety of issues, but we can usually attribute vomiting to stomach upset or hairballs.

Frequently, feline regurgitation is caused from expelling a hairball—a wad of undigested hair swallowed during grooming. Yucky as it is, this is not usually cause for concern. If your cat seems to be expelling hairballs frequently, brush them more often so they have less loose hair to ingest. We can also recommend safe hairball remedies.

Cats also vomit due to stomach upset, usually from eating too quickly or eating something they shouldn’t. A change in diet is one culprit, which is why we suggest changing foods gradually by mixing the old with the new food slowly in increasing ratios. Of greater concern is vomiting caused when your kitty ingests a toxic substance such as a poisonous plant, a human food or medication, or spoiled cat food.

Many serious health problems present with vomiting also. If your cat is vomiting more often than once per week or if vomiting is accompanied with weakness, decreased appetite, changes in urination or drinking, diarrhea, or blood in the vomit, let us know right away. Some severe infections can cause vomiting, including urinary tract or kidney infections. In addition, diabetes, hyperthyroidism, cancer, and parasites can cause vomiting.

For prolonged bouts of vomiting, we’ll definitely need to see your fur-baby for an exam. Vomiting more than once per day can lead to dehydration and we may need to administer fluids. Vomit that is red, pink, black or brown may indicate bleeding, so it may be helpful to collect a sample to bring in with your kitty. If you aren’t sure whether your cat’s vomiting is normal or indicates a problem, we are always here to answer your questions!



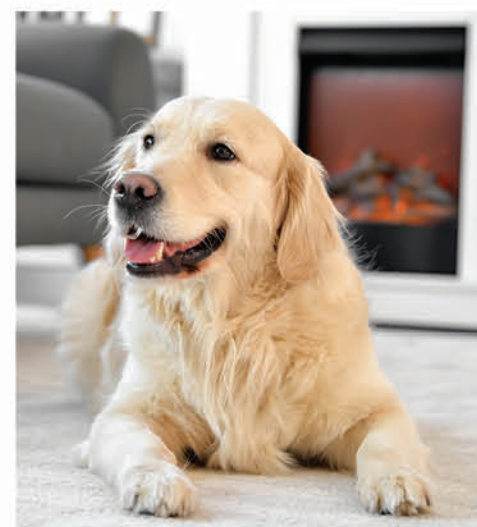
## Do Fleas Die Off in Winter?

*Get the Scoop on these Pesky Parasites*

Do cold temperatures kill off fleas? Not necessarily. Fleas can survive nicely in our cozy, heated houses when it’s too cold to live outdoors. This is because of the flea’s life cycle. A female flea can lay up to 10,000 eggs in 30 days! These eggs can easily survive in your carpet or other areas in your home. Flea larvae will form a cocoon and can survive there—even outdoors—for up to 30 weeks before emerging as an adult flea.

So, what does this mean? It means fleas can hatch in your warm home and infest your pet any time of year. Still, winter is the best time to attack fleas because the lower humidity slows their development. If you had fleas in your home in warmer months, call a pest control specialist to treat your home now.

Keep in mind that it’s a lot easier to prevent fleas than to get rid of an infestation! The best practice is to keep your pets on flea prevention treatments year-round. We can recommend a safe and effective method for your pet.



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



# Have a Pet-Safe Holiday!



## How to Protect Your Fur-Babies

Winter celebrations are fun for humans, but pet owners need to be on high alert for potential dangers to furry family members. Holiday foods and decorations can cause poisoning or injury, and added stress is no fun for pets.

### Harmful Foods

- 🐾 Chocolate is toxic to pets.
- 🐾 Fatty foods can cause acute pancreatitis.
- 🐾 Alcohol in any form can result in coma and seizures.
- 🐾 Human medications left within reach by houseguests can harm pets.
- 🐾 Bones from turkey and other meats can splinter and puncture internal organs.
- 🐾 Sugar-free foods containing xylitol can cause vomiting, lethargy, seizures and liver failure.

### Unsafe Decorations

- 🐾 Candles and fireplaces are fire and burn hazards.
- 🐾 Christmas trees can fall on curious kitties who climb.
- 🐾 Electrical cords can cause burns or electrocution if chewed on.
- 🐾 The batteries used in toys and electronics can cause obstruction and burns to the esophagus.
- 🐾 Plants such as poinsettias, mistletoe and holly can result in vomiting, diarrhea or heart arrhythmia.
- 🐾 Christmas tree lights, ornaments, tinsel and ribbons can become tangled in the intestines.

These potential winter dangers are also responsible for many untimely visits to an emergency clinic: ice melt products, wiper fluids and anti-freeze. Ingestion can lead to kidney failure and death for cats and dogs.

Apart from physical dangers, holidays can be very stressful for pets because of a sudden increase in noise levels and new people. Have an area in your home that is off limits to guests and children where your pets can find refuge. By planning ahead, you can make the holidays safe for your furry family members. If you suspect an accident or illness, be sure to call us right away.



## 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 2/28/2023.

**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 2/28/2023.

**Drop-off Savings**  
**Save 5%**  
on morning drop-offs for "routine" veterinary services.  
Expires 2/28/2023.



When you're here, you're family.

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



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

*Warm Holiday Wishes*  
from **Oak Forest Veterinary Hospital**

