



# OAK FOREST Veterinary Hospital



Pet Talk

Winter 2023/2024

## Grooming and Health

### Unruly Coats Can Lead to Illness

**G**rooming isn't just about your pet looking pretty; failing to groom dogs and cats can result in serious health issues. Matted hair, for example, is a hiding place for parasites, can cause fecal obstruction, and can even result in circulation loss that results in amputation.

Pets with long hair suffer the most when they aren't groomed regularly. They are more susceptible to skin irritations and infections. They can have a harder time regulating body heat if the coat is overgrown, and the mats they develop can be painful. If you are considering adopting a long-haired dog or cat, be realistic about how much time you are willing to spend on grooming. Shaving a long-haired breed in lieu of grooming can lead to other problems.

An important secondary effect of professional grooming is that it helps us discover health threats such as ticks, cysts, masses, lesions, and ear or skin infections. Grooming may also reveal areas of soreness and injuries to the pads of paws.

Failing to trim a dog's nails can have serious consequences. Long nails can cause pain when walking. Overgrown nails can even curl inward and grow into the skin, resulting in infection and pain. If you trim nails at home, be sure you are competent and can avoid cutting the quick, which is painful and can lead to infection.

Brushing your pet and cleaning their ears regularly at home can result in fewer trips to a groomer. These grooming sessions should always include a careful inspection of the skin, ears, feet and nails. It's also important to begin oral hygiene at an early age to avoid health problems later. Remember that grooming is not a luxury; it's essential to maintaining good health!



## Fun Facts

### Your Pet's Super Senses

**A** canine's sense of smell is a marvel. Dogs have approximately 220 million olfactory receptors versus a cat's 65 million. Thus, they can detect cancer and other diseases in humans. Both species have a much keener sense of smell than humans do. We have just 5 million receptors.

- Although dogs are the clear winners in detecting scents, cats rule when it comes to hearing. They can hear five times farther than humans. Still, dogs have us beat on this sense also; we can detect a sound 100 yards away while a dog's range is a quarter of a mile. Be mindful that their acute hearing means that sirens, fireworks, loud voices and loud music can make your pets very uncomfortable.
- A cat sees approximately six times better at night than humans can!
- Cats and dogs don't see colors as well as we do; however, cats' ability to detect UV light allows them to see details invisible to the human eye! Both canine and feline vision relies on detecting motion rather than on focusing. Both species are primarily far-sighted, so showing them something close up may be hard for them to see.
- Dogs can smell, hear and feel weather activity, such as changes in barometric pressure and electromagnetic fields. They have the ability to detect changes in seismic activity and can anticipate earthquakes.

## Goose Honks

### Welcome, 2024!

**H**ey, Everyone!

2023 brought so many changes! I turned 10! Double digits! Six more years and I can drive (but my mom says no). Lots of changes and upgrades happened at Mom's job, too.

For starters, Dr. Stephanie Harmon and Dr. Codi Cass joined Mom's team. This brings the total to six full-time doctors. WOW! And guess what? A 7th exam room was added, too! Luckily, they all still have those tasty liver treats for me.

When my mom and dad go on vacation, I get to hang out at the clinic. Did you know you can drop off your pet to hang out with me when you go out of town? It's called boarding. Oak Forest also renovated the boarding space. The new place is next door to the clinic and has lots more space. It's the same fun yard I get to play in. I think it's pretty nice. I've stayed there plenty of times along with my brother Knox and cat sisters, Keece and Diana (they don't stay close to me and Knox, which is good because they like it more quiet than we do).

Mom's work also got an upgraded toy! It's a nice ultrasound. Ultrasounds look like walking through the house in the dark as far as I can tell, but they see things I can't see when they look at it. Dr. Schaack and Dr. Lane play on it a lot, especially after they took some high-tech training courses to be able to use it.

Well, gotta go help Mom prepare for the OFVH monthly book club meeting. Hopefully, it's a book about dogs. Then, maybe she'll take me for a drive. I need to practice my driving skillz.

Can't wait to see what 2024 brings!

*Goose*



## Feline Acne

### Don't Ignore Black Chin Spots!

**F**eline acne is a medical condition that is more serious than it sounds! Although human acne is relatively harmless, feline acne can become serious if not treated. The bacteria that typically causes black, oily spots on a cat's chin can create an infection that can spread throughout the body and make your cat very sick!

The most common symptom of feline acne is black pimples on the chin or lip area. These can develop into abscesses that break open, forming crusts. Swelling, itching and hair loss may be present in severe cases, and secondary infections can develop.

Although a definitive cause of feline acne is unknown, stress, poor grooming, and a compromised immune system can be factors, as can the presence of other skin conditions such as atopic or contact dermatitis. Bring your cat to see us if you notice symptoms of feline acne. We will rule out other conditions such as ringworm, allergies or yeast infections. We may use skin scrapings, a biopsy, or a culture and sensitivity test to get an accurate diagnosis.

Like human acne, feline acne is difficult to "cure," but we can treat it. We may prescribe antiseborrheic shampoos or benzoyl peroxide gels. If there is a secondary bacterial infection, we may treat with oral or topical antibiotics, or with corticosteroids if there is much inflammation.

At home, you should regularly clean the chins of cats who are prone to feline acne, and switch to glass or stainless-steel food and water dishes. Be mindful of circumstances that cause your kitty stress and minimize these stressful situations.



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

# Holiday Hazards

## Keep Them Safe this Season!



As much as we enjoy the holiday season, it's important to take preventative measures to protect your four-legged family members. Holiday foods and decorations can be dangerous to pets, and you don't want to ruin a celebration with a trip to the emergency clinic!

Human food is a major culprit. Chocolate, for example, can be deadly to dogs. Other harmful foods include turkey bones, which can splinter and puncture internal organs. Fatty foods can cause acute pancreatitis, and sugar-free candy and gum containing xylitol can lead to seizures and liver failure. Grapes and raisins are also toxic to pets, and alcohol in any form can result in coma and seizures.

Holiday decorations are also responsible for many untimely visits to an emergency clinic. These injuries include electrocution from electrical cords and burns from candles and fireplaces. Plants such as poinsettias, mistletoe and holly can result in vomiting, diarrhea or heart arrhythmia. We also see too many cases of pets choking on Christmas tree lights, ornaments, tinsel and ribbon, which can become tangled in the intestines. Also, Christmas trees that are not secured can fall on smaller pets.

Other winter items to keep out of reach are ice melt products, wiper fluids and anti-freeze. Ingestion can lead to kidney failure and death for cats and dogs. The batteries used in toys and electronics can cause obstruction and burns to the esophagus. Also be sure your guests keep human medications out of reach.

Apart from physical dangers, holidays can be stressful for pets because of a sudden increase in guests and noise levels. Provide an area in your home that is off limits to guests and children where your pets can find refuge. Lastly, cold temperatures can result in hypothermia or frostbite, so limit outdoor time to just a few minutes when temperatures get near freezing.

With a little preparation, you can make the holidays safe for your furry friends. If you suspect an accident or illness, however, be sure to call us right away.



## Refer a Friend and Save!

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



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### Microchip Savings

**\$10 Savings**

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(includes registration in the national database)

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Not valid with any other offer.  
Expires 2/29/2024

### 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 2/29/2024

### Drop-off Savings

**Save 5%**

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

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**Call (713) 682-6351**

**today to make an appointment!**

# Happy Holidays



from Oak Forest Veterinary Hospital