

# OAK FOREST VETERINARY HOSPITAL

PET TALK

WINTER 2025 / 2026

## FELINE HYPERTHYROIDISM

### A Growing Epidemic in Older Cats

Hyperthyroidism, which typically affects cats over age 10, is the most common endocrine disorder affecting felines. It is usually caused by a benign tumor on one of the thyroid glands, which are located in the neck. The thyroid gland produces thyroxine, which regulates your cat's metabolism. Hyperthyroidism is a condition in which too much thyroxine is produced, causing your cat's metabolism to increase. This stresses your cat's organs, especially the heart, kidneys, nervous system, gastrointestinal tract, and liver.

There has been a significant increase in feline hyperthyroidism in the U.S. In addition to age, there are environmental risks that are thought to have a connection to the disease, including exposure to flame-retardant materials, fish-flavored cat food, and high levels of iodine in the diet. We are always happy to discuss an optimal diet for your kitty.

Symptoms of hyperthyroidism may include increased appetite, increased thirst, rapid heart rate, vomiting, hyperactivity, and an unkempt coat. Panting or finding cooler places to rest are also symptoms. In older cats, if increased appetite is combined with weight loss and sudden bursts of energy, this is a tell-tale sign of an overactive thyroid.

Please call us right away if you notice any of these symptoms. Early detection is important to your cat's prognosis. We will run comprehensive tests to measure thyroid levels in the blood. If we suspect hyperthyroidism, we can discuss treatment options, which range from medication to surgical removal of the tumor.



## TUMMY TROUBLES

### Canine Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Dogs may experience the same symptoms as humans when they have irritable bowel syndrome or IBS. For some dogs, emotional distress can lead to digestive problems and in today's hectic households, IBS is increasingly common.

Research indicates that immune system problems can also lead to IBS. Another cause is the disruption of beneficial bacteria in the intestines, which can affect the dog's ability to absorb food properly. Insufficient fiber in the diet may also be a factor.

Symptoms of Canine IBS may include diarrhea and/or constipation, mucous in stool, bloating, gas, gurgling, vomiting, and abdominal discomfort. If we suspect IBS, we will perform a thorough examination of your dog and run tests to eliminate the possibility of intestinal parasites. Colitis and other digestive problems can produce similar symptoms to IBS, so an ultrasound or MRI may be necessary to rule out other intestinal problems.

Treatment options can help manage the symptoms, although there is no single cure. They include:

- Feeding an easily digestible, high-fiber diet
- Probiotics or plain yogurt to add beneficial bacteria to the digestive tract
- Antidepressant, anti-spasmodic, or anti-inflammatory drugs
- A calm environment and a regular household schedule to reduce stress

Canine IBS often requires ongoing management to relieve symptoms. You will want to avoid dietary changes, avoid giving a lot of treats, and find ways to reduce your dog's stress. Finding the right food may require systematically eliminating individual ingredients to ensure that food sensitivity is not contributing to the problem. If your dog has frequent bouts of diarrhea, gas, or other signs of intestinal distress, ask us if IBS could be the problem.

## GOOSE HONKS

### Learn About Lepto!



Hey there, furry friends and favorite humans! It's me, Goose—Dr. Moore's handsome, tail-wagging sidekick. I'm here to sniff out some important news (and maybe a few treats while I'm at it).

Let's talk Leptospirosis or "Lepto" for short, because even I can't pronounce the full word without drooling. It's a sneaky bacteria that hides in puddles, soil, and other places we dogs love to sniff and splash in. The problem? Lepto can make pups really sick—like fever, vomiting, and not-eating-my-treats sick! It can even spread to humans. (Yikes!)

But don't worry, Dr. Moore and the amazing team at Oak Forest Veterinary Hospital have our tails covered. The Leptospirosis vaccine keeps us protected from this nasty bug, which is why it's now a core vaccine required for all pups who come to play, board, or hang out for the day.

So, before you pack your squeaky toy and blankie for your next visit, make sure your vaccines are up to date, especially Lepto! It's quick, safe, and gives you bragging rights at the dog park.

Stay healthy, stay waggy,



Goose   
Chief Barketing Officer & Professional Good Boy

## CAT TALK

### What Our Felines Are Trying to Say

Cats make a variety of sounds for different purposes—meowing, purring, growling, hissing—but insistent meowing can be a concern. Crying can be attention-seeking behavior or can signal medical or emotional problems. Cats rarely vocalize to other cats—only to humans. In cat language, these sounds usually indicate:

- Meowing: This may be a greeting or a call to get your attention for food or affection.
- Purring: Though usually associated with contentment, cats may also purr when they are stressed, nervous, or in pain.
- Chirping: This is a friendly sound made with a closed mouth, often a greeting.
- Chattering: You may have heard this odd sound when your cat observes prey outside that they can't get to.
- Growling or hissing: This is a warning, indicating aggression or fear. Be sure to heed the warning and back off!
- Yowling or howling: This loud, drawn-out vocalization signals distress, pain, fear, or aggression.

Persistent meowing is usually not just a cry for attention. It may be a protest of changes in their environment. This could be a change in diet, the absence of a family member, or new people or pets in the home. Reassure your cat during any type of change and offer them a secure hiding place. However, crying can also be a sign of stress or insecurity, and chronic stress can lead to illness. Always contact us if you notice sudden, unexplained changes in your cat's behavior or vocalizations.



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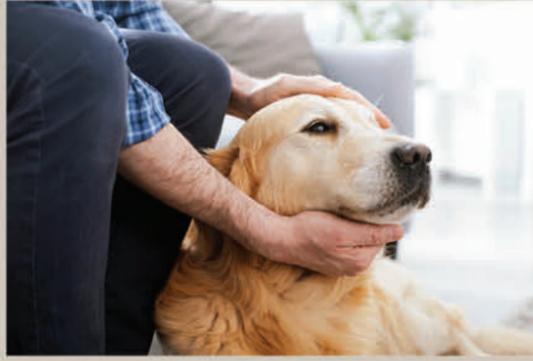
Call (713) 682-6351 today to make an appointment!

# MAKE 2026 THEIR BEST!



## New Year's Resolutions for Pet Parents

We welcome pets into our homes because of all the ways they enrich our lives. In return, we're responsible for giving them the best lives possible. The dogs and cats we make part of our families are completely dependent on us. We control when and what they eat or drink, the exercise they get, their medical care, their living conditions, and even the love and affection they receive. Make these resolutions and let 2026 be your pet's happiest year:



**Resolve to make more time for your pet.** Your time and affection are at the top of their wish list! Commit to several minutes of focused attention each day—whatever kind of attention makes your dog or cat happy. You may have many friends to ward off loneliness, but they may only have you.

**Resolve to provide regular exercise.** Exercise cures many ills—boredom, anxiety and obesity to name a few. Committing to regular exercise times will give your four-legged buddy the best possible life.

**Resolve to adhere to feeding times.** Our pets are stuck eating and drinking only what we provide, and they look forward to mealtime. Make a commitment to keep their feeding schedule, and don't let water run dry. If they don't seem to like the taste of their food, find something they like.

**Commit to their comfort.** Are there recurring circumstances in your pet's life that make them afraid, uncomfortable or unhappy? Change any conditions that are within your control, and provide comfort if you can't change the circumstances.

**Resolve to be kind.** Never let your mood affect how you treat your pet. When you speak harshly, your cat or dog may become confused or sad. Be sure any reprimands are truly deserved and get past their mistakes quickly. Of course, never resort to physical punishment. Short verbal reprimands or time-outs are more effective for training against unwanted behaviors.

**Resolve to provide the best medical care.** Providing routine veterinary care and addressing any medical issues that cause them to suffer is a basic commitment we make when we bring animals into our homes.

## 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 2/28/2026.

**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 2/28/2026.

**DROP-OFF SAVINGS**  
**Save 5%**  
on morning drop-offs for  
"routine" veterinary services.  
Expires 2/28/2026.



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

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

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

*peace  
love  
joy*



**Happy Holidays**  
from  
**Oak Forest  
Veterinary Hospital**

