

## Mountainview Animal Hospital

### SPRING NEWSLETTER

### The bottom Line

It may be easier to get the pill ready before you get your cat; holding your cat & opening a pill vial at the same time may be too much of a challenge.

Always read the instructions on the pill vial carefully and give all the medication as directed by your veterinarian.

Sometimes even the most experienced animal handler cannot get oral medications into a cat without being bit. For more aggressive cats, a pet pilling device may be used to place the pill into the cat's mouth instead of your fingers. A pet piller is a plastic tube, similar to a syringe, with a rubber tip. It can be purchased from a veterinarian.

Some medications like prednisone and thyroid tablets are odorless and tasteless. These pills can be crushed and mixed in with some canned food.

### HOW TO PILL A CAT

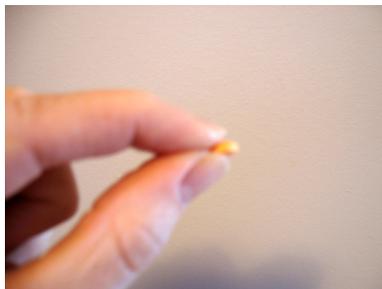
Just like you, at some point in your pet's lifetime, he or she will get sick and will require some form of medication. So far this does not sound too ominous, unless of course you have a cat and you have to give that cat a pill. Not to suggest that medicating a dog is always so easy, but pilling a cat can be a very special kind of hell. It can be so difficult that jokes have been written about it; to read the joke, go to [www.jokesaboutcats.net/cats\\_joke\\_738.html](http://www.jokesaboutcats.net/cats_joke_738.html). We hope these instructions will be helpful.



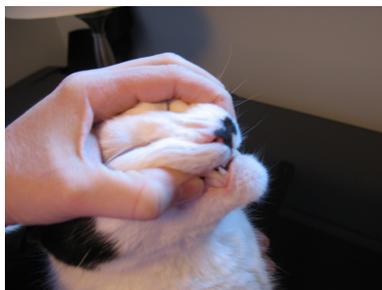
**Step 1:** Get your cat. If you have help, one person should place your cat on a table or counter and stand behind the cat while holding the shoulders; this prevents the cat from reaching up and scratching the person doing the pilling.



**Tip:** If you are alone, place your cat in the corner of the sofa to stop him or her from backing away from you, or wrap him or her in a towel. The towel will also wrap up those claws.



**Step 2:** Hold the pill between the thumb and index finger of one hand.



**Step 3:** With the other hand reach from behind and gently grasp your cat's head. Your thumb and index finger should be on either side of the face holding the top of the upper canine teeth.

## The bottom Line

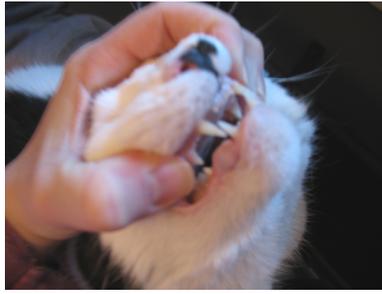
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If you don't get the pill down the first time, your cat may get a taste of the medication. Many medications like antibiotics are very bitter in taste and will cause your cat to drool. Don't worry; the drooling will stop as soon as the bad taste goes away.

If you are splitting pills, putting a bit of butter at the cut end reduces the likelihood of your cat tasting the medication and may even make the pill go down a little easier.

We can also have certain medications compounded into flavoured liquids to make it easier to give to some cats. Compounding medications costs a little more, but it is well worth the trouble it saves.

For those cats that won't even take flavoured medicines, we can have some drugs compounded into gels that are absorbed through the skin. This completely avoids the need to give oral medications at all.



**Step 4:** Gently tilt the head up until your cat is looking straight up. Once your cat's head is facing upward the mouth will open a just little bit.



**Step 5:** Bring your other hand to your cat's mouth. Place your pinky or middle finger on the lower incisors and gently push downward on the lower jaw to open your cat's mouth. Drop the pill to the back of the throat.

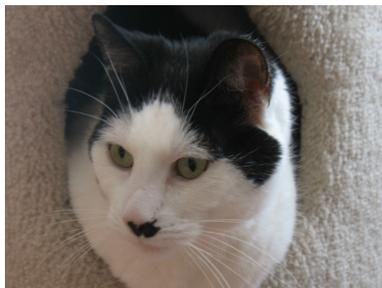


**Tip:** Notice the "U" shape created by your cat's tongue at the back of the mouth. Drop the pill into that "U" shape.



**Step 6:** Close your cat's mouth. Gently stroke your cat's throat, or blow on or rub the nose to encourage swallowing.

**The biggest tip ever:** Do it fast, cats are not big on patience.



**Step 7:** Reward your cat for good behaviour with gentle attention or a favourite treat.

Over the next few months, we will be adding a 'How to give your pet medications' section to our website, [www.mountainviewanimalhospital.ca](http://www.mountainviewanimalhospital.ca). We hope our pictorial instructions will be helpful.

## The bottom Line

There are now biodegradable bags on the market designed for dog waste. Animal Management Services produces two types of 100% degradable dog waste bags that break down when subjected to light, heat or moisture.

Did you know that the Lily plant is very toxic to cats? The Easter lily, Tiger lily, Stargazer lily, Japanese show lily, Asian lily, some species of Day lily, and certain other members of the Liliaceae family can be fatal if ingested, even in small amounts. Within only a few hours of ingestion, the cat may vomit, become lethargic and anorexic. Complete kidney failure can occur in 36 to 72 hours if not treated. So this Easter season be wary of the types of flowers in your spring bouquets and keep them away from your cats.

**Caution!** Some flea products marketed in the pet stores to dogs are extremely toxic to cats. Always read the label carefully; better yet, ask us about choosing the safest products for your pets.

## SOMETIMES GOING GREEN GOES BAD

Last fall, in an effort to reduce our imprint on the environment we tried a new cardstock for our vaccination reminder cards. As some of you may have noticed, it did not work out so well. The environmentally friendly paper did not absorb the ink very well and smudged. We apologize for the 'ugly' reminder cards but we had to try them. Lesson learned; we have switched back to the original paper.

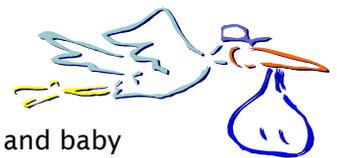
On that note, we would like to remind everyone that we would love to start emailing our newsletter. If you would

prefer to receive our newsletters via email please let us know. You can contact us at 905-702-8822 or send us your email address to [mvaahpetcentre@mountainviewanimalhospital.ca](mailto:mvaahpetcentre@mountainviewanimalhospital.ca). Although we only plan to use your web address to send the newsletter three times per year (and the spring heartworm reminder with the newsletter), it would save on a lot of paper.

Please do not email us any medical questions; we are happy to receive your telephone calls instead.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO MICHELLE

Michelle and her husband Donny just welcomed their new little girl Bryanna to their family. Bryanna is beautiful, healthy and baby perfect. Michelle will spend the next year on maternity leave; we will miss her. Congratulations Michelle and Donny.



## LIFE ACCORDING TO NIKE



*A picture is worth a thousand words.*

For those of you who may not have believed just how bad Nike's obsession with food was - look!!!! Nike actually snuck into this Rottweiler's kennel while she was out for a walk to steal the dog food and did not run from this dog when she came back to her kennel. Good thing this Rottweiler wasn't hungry or our greedy little cat might have become Nike stew.

Honestly, we did not stage this picture.

## \*\*\* IMPORTANT SUMMERTIME REMINDERS \*\*\*

### FLEAS

Last years rainy summer was a paradise for fleas. If we have another damp summer, the number of fleas will be horrible again this year.

Fleas are extremely irritating to your pet. Flea bites can cause itchy skin rashes and even serious allergic reactions. Left untreated, just 10 adult fleas can multiply to over 250,000 fleas in only 30 days! Your pet can come into contact with fleas on walks, at the park, or even in your backyard. Those of you who have had fleas in the past know how difficult it is to get rid of them; prevention of flea infestations is much easier, cost effective and safe. Call us to start your pet on the safest and most effective flea prevention this spring.



## The bottom Line

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An infected dog can have over 200 heartworms in the heart and adjoining blood vessels.

The drug companies that produce the various heartworm preventative medications will guarantee your dog's protection only if you use the medication correctly and have your dog's blood tested every year.

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Although your older pet may still be very active and healthy, his or her body has become more susceptible to disease. For this reason we strongly encourage everyone with cats 10 years of age or older, and dogs 8 years and older to have a wellness test done annually.

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Most boarding facilities will require your dog to have had a Kennel Cough vaccine at least five days before admission.

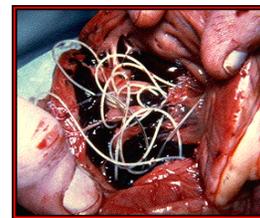
Many puppy training facilities are also strongly recommending the Kennel Cough vaccine to their clients.

Leptospirosis is a Zoonotic disease; meaning people can become infected too.

## HEARTWORM DISEASE

It is time to think about Heartworm disease again. Heartworm preventative medication should begin June 1st.

Blood testing your dog prior to starting the medication is an important part of prevention and is strongly recommended. The American Heartworm Association recommends an annual blood test to look for heartworm infection in your dog. Early detection of a heartworm infection before your dog gets sick will not only increase the success of the treatment and ensure a complete recovery, but will also help reduce the spread of the disease.



We have included your heartworm reminder card with the newsletter. We have designed it to be easily posted on your refrigerator or bulletin board as a reminder. Once you have called to make your appointment you can record the date and time of your appointment on the card. We hope this will make your busy lives a bit easier.

## WELLNESS TESTING

Over the next few months we will be taking many blood samples from dogs who are having their heartworm test done. This would be a great time to consider a wellness blood test; it would cause them no extra stress to have a few more drops of blood drawn and it could give you the peace of mind that your pet is truly as healthy as you believe him or her to be.



This is particularly true for any pets that are on long term medication or that are getting older. Many medications can have side effects that will not initially be apparent; a blood test may be the only way we can make sure there are no negative consequences to the medication we are giving to our pets. Our older pets may need a little more attention too. There is a lot we can do to help pets age well, provided we know what is happening in their bodies. More frequent check ups and simple blood and urine tests will help us keep ahead of the aging process.

Although cats are not having heartworm testing done, any cat that is coming in for an annual physical examination may also benefit from wellness testing.

## Kennel Cough Vaccine

*Bordetella bronchiseptica*, better known as Kennel Cough, is a bacterial infection that causes tracheobronchitis. Affected dogs will exhibit a characteristic dry, harsh, hacking cough that can last up to 3 weeks. Dogs are most commonly infected in kennels, pet stores, exhibitions and off leash parks where they are in close contact with other dogs. Although most dogs require only supportive care to recover, young, older or otherwise weaker dogs can develop a serious bronchopneumonia that may require them to be hospitalized. Vaccination is recommended for dogs going to boarding kennels, puppy classes, grooming facilities or off leash parks. If your dog is not vaccinated against Kennel Cough and is likely to be exposed, please call us to schedule an appointment for a vaccination against *Bordetella bronchiseptica*.

## Leptospirosis Vaccine

Leptospirosis is a serious and sometimes fatal disease that can afflict dogs of all ages. Dogs most commonly become infected by drinking from rivers, streams, puddles or ponds that have become contaminated by the urine of other infected animals (raccoons, rats and skunks). Leptospirosis tends to attack the liver and kidneys causing a variety of symptoms including fever, nausea, lethargy, abdominal pain and increased urination. Many dogs afflicted with Leptospirosis will die from it. If your dog has access to wildlife, roams free, or drinks from water sources that may have become contaminated, he or she should be vaccinated against Leptospirosis this spring. We would be happy to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of vaccinating your dog against this disease.