



Northland Animal Hospital Newsletter

695 Trunk Road – SSM – ON – P6A 3T1

Phone: (705) 759-9000

Issue #2 2014

Apr/May 2014

In this issue:

- *Spring!
- *Easter Hazards
- *Leptospirosis



If you have further questions regarding Leptospirosis feel free to call us we are always happy to help answer your questions.

(705) 759-9000



SPRING IS HERE!

With the Easter bunny preparing to make its annual rounds, spring is also the time that people start thinking about picking up their own pet rabbit or consider ducks as pets.

Sadly, each year, thousands of baby rabbits, chicks, and ducks are purchased as Easter gifts only to be abandoned or left at shelters in the days, weeks and months that follow Easter.



Easter Hazards

- **Easter lilies** are highly toxic to cats - symptoms of poisoning will develop within six to 12 hours of exposure. Early signs include vomiting, loss of appetite, lethargy and dehydration. Symptoms worsen as kidney failure develops. Some cats will experience disorientation, staggering and seizures.
- **Easter grass** is the fake grass that often accompanies Easter baskets. When your cat or dog ingests something “stringy” like Easter grass, it can become anchored around the base of the tongue or stomach, rendering it unable to pass through the intestines. It can result in a linear foreign body and cause severe damage to the intestinal tract, often requiring expensive abdominal surgery.
- Certain types of **chocolate** are very toxic to dogs. In general, the darker and more bitter the chocolate, the greater the danger. Baker’s chocolate and dark chocolate pose the biggest problem. The chemical toxicity is due to methylxanthines (a relative of caffeine) and results in vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, an abnormal heart rhythm, seizures, and possibly death.

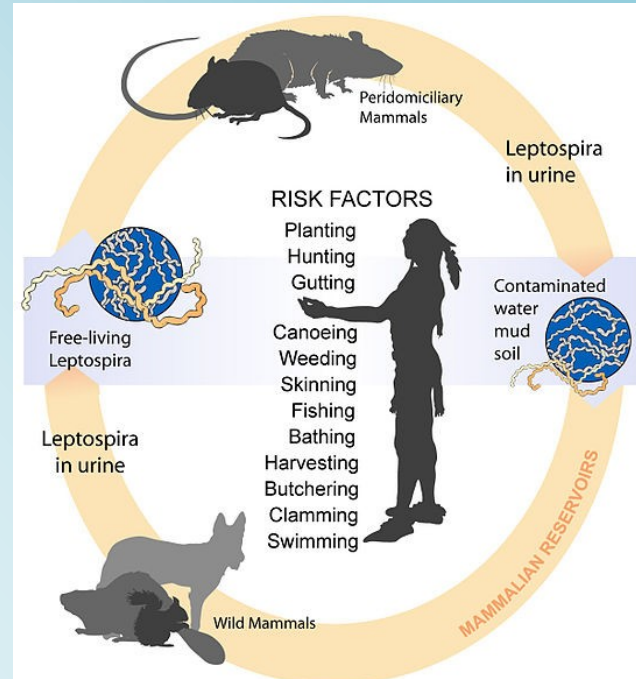
WHAT IS LEPTOSPIROSIS? SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED?



Canine leptospirosis, or “lepto,” is an infection caused by at least four species (serovars) of *Leptospira* bacteria.

Most of the infected wild animals and domestic animals that spread leptospirosis do not appear ill. In these animals, the leptospira have taken up residence in their kidneys. The type of infected animals varies from area to area. In some areas it is raccoons, in others, skunks, in some, rats. When infected animals void urine, they contaminate their environment with living leptospira. These carrier wildlife shed leptospira intermittently. Sometimes they shed for months and sometimes for life.

Dogs typically pick up the bacteria from water or soil contaminated with infected urine. Most at risk are pets that spend a lot of time in the water or in areas that get rain or snow runoff, as well as dogs that drink from puddles or ponds.



Lepto is zoonotic, meaning humans can pick up the bacteria from contact with the urine of an infected dog

Signs and Symptoms of Leptospirosis

The signs of illness can be variable. Most commonly, an acute infection with Lepto causes a severe disease that can be rapidly progressive; in some cases, it can be fatal. In other dogs, illness is mild and the infection may be present for long periods, or may even go unnoticed.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), symptoms of lepto vary according to the organs affected by the disease and can be nonspecific. Acute kidney failure is common in dogs with lepto. Hepatitis and bleeding disorders may be caused by lepto.

Common Signs are:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Abdominal Pain
- Diarrhea
- Severe weakness, or muscle pain
- Excessive water consumption or refusal of water
- Jaundice
- Depression