



Northland Animal Hospital Newsletter

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Issue #3 2014

Aug/Sep 2014

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If you have further questions

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Preventive Care

Preventive medicine includes vaccinations, annual health exams, base-line blood testing to assess internal organ function, and annual parasite screening and prevention.

ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAM

Just as annual physical exams are recommended for humans, they are recommended for our pets as well. If your pet is older or has medical problems, he may need even more frequent examinations. A year is a long time in a dog's life. Assuming our pets will live to their early teens; receiving a yearly exam means they will only have about thirteen exams in a lifetime. That is not very many when you think about it.

During your dog's annual physical exam you should review these aspects of your dog's health with your veterinary team:

- **Vaccination status**
- **Parasite control** - for intestinal parasites, fleas, ticks, and heartworms
- **Dental health** – care you give at home; any mouth odors, pain, or other signs of disease you may have observed
- **Nutrition** – including what your dog eats, how often, what supplements and treats are given, and changes in water consumption, weight, or appetite
- **Exercise** – how much exercise your dog receives including how often and what kind; and any changes in your dog's ability to exercise
- **Ears and Eyes** – any discharge, redness, or itching
- **Stomach and intestines** – any vomiting, diarrhea, constipation, gas, belching, or abnormal stools
- **Breathing** – any coughing, shortness of breath, sneezing, or nasal discharge
- **Behavior** – any behavior problems such as barking, 'accidents,' or changes in temperament
- **Feet and legs** – any limping, weakness, toenail problems
- **Coat and skin** – any hair loss, pigment changes, lumps, itchy spots, shedding, mats, or anal sac problems
- **Urogenital** – any discharges, heats, changes in mammary glands, urination difficulties or changes, *neutering* if it has not already been performed
- **Blood tests** – especially for geriatric dogs, those with medical problems, and those who are receiving medications



Fluid Therapy

What is it and why do we recommend it?

Fluid therapy is the administration of a specific liquid for the treatment of disease or prevention of problems.

When pets are sedated they experience a decrease in blood pressure from the anaesthetic. We recommend fluids during anaesthetic procedures as it will be used to help maintain normal blood pressure during the procedure.

In addition the intravenous catheter serves as a quick access point for medications should an emergency arise.

This is true even in a young, healthy pet.

Pre-Anaesthetic Blood Work

What is it and why do we recommend it?

Pre-anaesthetic blood work allows us to perform a thorough assessment to detect abnormalities or disease conditions.

With these tests we can evaluate the status of your pet's major organs. The function of the **liver** and **kidneys** is especially important as these organs process and excrete the medications and anaesthetics used during surgery.

With these readings the doctor can determine if a different anaesthetic protocol is required for your pet.

Whether your pet is 6 months or 11 years, blood work will provide valuable insight to the overall health of your pet. This will also establish baseline values for overall health in the future.

What Tests might We Do?

CBC (complete blood count) - Abnormalities could indicate anemia, infection, or blood clotting disorders

BUN and Creatinine - Measures the kidneys' ability to excrete waste. Elevations may indicate kidney disease.

Blood Glucose - Elevated levels can indicate problems such as diabetes.

PCV, Total Protein and Albumin - Measures hydration and important protein components that ensure that blood will clot normally, liver is functioning appropriately, and that the body can efficiently excrete anaesthetics.

ALP and ALT - Elevations can indicate liver disease or endocrine disorders such as thyroid disease,