



# The Official Newsletter of *Companion Animal Hospital* and *Paws Inn*

July 2007

## *Summer*

The dog days of summer are upon us. During the summer months, do not forget about your furry little four legged friends. Learn about what you can do to help keep your companions out of harms way this summer with our hot weather tips. Read up on the dangers of canine bloat and what to do if you come across a wildlife animal.

## **Paws Inn Requirements for Boarding.**

At Paws Inn, the following is required of all animals in order to use the boarding facilities:

- \* **All vaccines must be up-to-date:**
  - Rabies, Distemper, Lepto (dogs)
  - & Kennel Cough (dogs)
- \* **Fecal analysis every 6 months**  
(Yearly if on Interceptor or Sentinel)

**\*All vaccines must be up-to-date for Grooming!**

## **The Facts On Bloat**



"Bloat", otherwise known as gastric dilatation and volvulus, is a life-threatening emergency. Bloat is the one medical condition that is so drastic in terms of rapidity of consequences and effort in emergency treatment, that it over shadows all other medical emergencies.

The normal stomach in dogs sits high in the abdomen, containing small amounts of gas, mucus, and digested food. The stomach contracts in a normal rhythm by receiving food from the esophagus at the opening of the stomach, grinding the food in the stomach and then passing the ground food out of the stomach into the small intestines.

In a bloated stomach, gas and/or food accumulates and stretches the stomach to many times its normal size, thus causing extreme abdominal pain. This distended stomach can have the tendency to rotate, twisting off both the blood supply to the stomach and exit routes for gas trapped inside the stomach. This condition can become extremely painful, and is life-threatening. A dog with a bloated, twisted stomach will die in a matter of hours without medical attention.

Bloat is known for affecting "deep chested" dogs, meaning the length of their chest from backbone to sternum is relatively long while the chest width from right to left is narrow. According to a study done by Purdue University Research Group, Great Danes were the number one breed at risk, then St. Bernards followed by Weimaraners. Small breeds such as Dachshunds and Chihuahuas can be affected also.

Although we do not always know why a dog may bloat, a classic factor can be when a dog has just eaten a large meal and is then exercised heavily shortly after eating. Risk factors increasing the chance of bloat include: feeding only one meal a day, eating rapidly, family history of bloat, being thin or underweight, fearful or anxious. Male dogs are more likely than females and older dogs (7-12 years) are at a higher risk. Risk factors decreasing the chance of bloat include: adding canned food into a diet, easy-going temperament and eating two or more meals a day.

How can you tell if your dog is bloated? Look for a distended stomach, especially near the ribs (this may be hard depending on your dogs body). The number one clue is vomiting or retching with little coming up. If either of these are seen, seek medical attention immediately.

Once a dog has bloated, there are several steps in the medical process. First the stomach must be decompressed in order for the stomach to receive blood circulation and help prevent the stomach tissue for dying. At the same time, intravenous fluids are started to help replace the blood that is not able to bypass the stomach to get to the heart. Medications may also be given to help with pain and shock.

Once the animal is stable, surgery is next on the list. Surgery is needed to assess the damage done to the stomach and make any repairs necessary. While in surgery, the stomach will be tacked into normal position so that is may not be able to twist again, this is called gastropexy. Without surgery, there is a 76% chance of re-bloating at some point.

It is important that owners are aware of this condition and know what to do if it ever occurs. Make sure you know where to take your dog when your regular veterinarian is closed, avoid exercising after large meals and know what signs to watch for.



## I Found a baby bird, now what?

If you were to come across an orphan wildlife, would you know what to do? Knowing when to help or just walk away is key. Here are a few tips on how to handle the situation if you ever stumble across wildlife on your next outdoor adventure.

### Baby Bunnies

If you find baby bunnies, check to see if the nest is damaged, if so, it can be repaired. Find a shallow depression and line it with fur or grass. Place the baby bunnies in the nest and cover them with grass to hide them. Leave the area or the mother will not return. Mother rabbits only return twice a day, at dawn and dusk. If you find healthy bunnies 4-5 inches long, able to hop, with eyes open and ears up, leave them alone. They are able to survive on their own.

Jennifer Mattive, wildlife rehabilitator, Snyder County 570-837-3377 (daytime)  
Mark & Kathy Gullfoose, wildlife rehabilitator, Montour County 570-271-0273 (daytime)

### Baby Birds

I found a baby bird, now what? Is the bird hurt or sick (unable to flutter wings, bleeding, wings drooping unevenly, weak or shivering, attacked by a cat/dog)? If yes, call a wildlife rehabilitator for instructions. If no, is the bird feathered? If the bird is feathered, it is a fledgling. It is normal behavior for this bird to be hopping around on the ground and the parents should be still feeding it. If the bird appears to be safe from other animals and people, then leave it alone. If the bird is not safe, then place it in a bush or on a tree limb nearby. Watch from a distance to see if the parents return. If no parents return, call a wildlife rehabilitator.

If the bird is not feathered, then it is a nestling and needs help. If you are able to find the nest and it is intact, put the baby back and observe from a distance. If the parents visit the nest, then the baby is okay. If no parents return, call a wildlife rehabilitator.



## Hot Weather Tips

- Never leave an animal alone in a vehicle.
- Exercise your pet early in the morning or in the evening.
- Avoid walking your dog in chemical treated areas.
- Beware of coolant leaking from vehicles.
- Provide plenty of shade and cool water for outdoor pets.
- Consider bringing pets indoors during extreme temperatures.
- Keep old and overweight pets in air-conditioned rooms.

**Referral Rewards Program:** 1st Referral = 5 Kind Cafe Bucks  
(refer a friend, get a thank you!) 2nd Referral or more = \$15 Gift Certificate to any downtown business of your choice.

Companion Animal  
Hospital  
and  
Paws Inn  
335 Rt 35  
Selinsgrove, PA 17870  
570-374-2247

**July is Dental Month!**  
Ask how you can save  
**10% off your pet's  
dental cleaning.**

[www.companionah.vetsuite.com](http://www.companionah.vetsuite.com)  
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