

SPECIAL  
POINTS OF  
INTEREST:

- Deworming products... are they necessary?
- Plants that can be very harmful to your pets, please be careful!
- Potential carrier of Lyme Disease found in Alberta!
- Pet cat confirmed with Rabies located in Alberta
- Kitten and cat behavior, is it possible to train them?



## Parasites and Pets: What's the deal?

It is true that our furry family members can become infected with either external or internal parasites. "External parasites" include fleas, ticks, lice, or mites and reside on the outside of your pet, while "internal parasites" include roundworms, tapeworms, coccidia, and giardia which are the unseen problem-makers residing inside your pet. Parasites can be zoonotic, meaning they can affect humans, particularly those with lowered immune function such as young children, the elderly and immuno-compromised individuals.

The prevalence of each type of parasite can vary according to different regions. In the past, Calgary's relatively dry and colder climate was believed to significantly reduce the prevalence of parasites. Recent studies, however, are indicating that these little critters are still able to sustain and thrive in our climate! It is possible for them to affect our pets and possibly us without even being visibly detected! As a result of this, we prefer to focus on parasite prevention as opposed to treatment.

A proper deworming protocol can vary according to each individual pet and its lifestyle. Cats in our community tend to reside mainly indoors resulting in little to no contact with soil, rodents, or birds. If adequately treated as kittens, their chance of a parasite problem is relatively low and may only require a yearly anti-parasitic protocol. If your cat does go out-

doors or if someone residing in the home has a weaker immune system, an increased regiment of deworming may be needed.

Dogs range from being almost exclusively lap bound to hunting hounds. The factors determining parasite exposure include multiple dog interactions, hunting activity, wildlife contact, and frequented areas. Dogs that go to "high-traffic areas" such as parks and trails are constantly exposed to other canine fecal matter along with fecal/parasite contaminated soil.

There are many different types of parasiticides available. It is imperative to state that according to the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, the veterinary deworming medications listed below are currently considered pharmaceutical prescriptions. Due to this, either a complete physical exam or an adequate veterinary/client relationship is legally required before dispensing them.

The following list includes commonly used veterinary products and their indications:

*Interceptor* is a relatively inexpensive chewable tablet that includes treatment for heartworm, roundworm, whipworm, and hookworm. It can be a great routine treatment for "social" dogs that often go to off-leash play parks.

*Revolution/Advantage Multi* are topically applied treatments that

have a much broader spectrum of action, addressing both internal and external parasites. They can be good treatments for dogs attending doggy daycares or other multiple dog facilities (such as grooming salons or training buildings) where lice, mites or fleas may be considered a factor.

*Sentinel* is a treatment that has similar actions to that of Revolution and Advantage Multi except it is administered via chewable tablet.

*Lopatul/Drontal/Milbemax* are oral tablets that treat for internal parasites including tapeworms. They can be a good treatment for hunting animals or pets that are often directly exposed to wildlife or wildlife feces.

Please feel free to contact us should you have further questions or like to get started on ensuring your pet is protected from all of these little critters!

Dr. Jason Tolton

# Plant Toxicities



**Poisonous Tiger Lily**

**Did you know that there has recently been a reported case in Alberta of a 3 1/2 year old cat testing positive for Rabies? The cat was an unvaccinated family pet that resided mainly indoors!**

Spring is in the air, and our green thumbs are itching to revive our fragrant and colourful gardens in anticipation of patio weather. Many of the hallmarks of spring gardening are the lovely bulb plants that persevere among the snow and rain to pop out of the ground and delight us with their vibrant colours.

Unfortunately for our pets, it is often these spring flowers that are the most toxic of our common Alberta landscaping plants. Toxicity can range from the mildly poisonous tulips, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea, to the sweet smelling but dangerous lily of the valley, which can cause heart arrhythmias and death.

The best way to avoid the tragic consequences of poisoning is to keep the plants away from our inquisitive pets. This can often be achieved by planting these species in the front yard, or by fencing them off to prevent pet access. It is also important to be careful with cut or potted plants indoors, since even if they are placed out of reach, cats and dogs can easily access fallen petals. The most notorious of the cut plant poisonings is lily ingestion by cats, which can cause kidney failure.

Common outdoor toxic plants in Calgary include castor beans, crocuses, azaleas, belladonnas, bleeding hearts, daphne, delphinium/larkspur, foxgloves, irises, lilies, lily of the valley, lupines, monkshood, morning glory, narcissus/daffodils, nettle, rhubarb, snowdrops, tobacco plant (nicotiana), tulips and yews.

For a more complete list, please visit our website at [www.cornerstonevets.com](http://www.cornerstonevets.com) and see the links section.

Links:

[www.calgaryhumane.ca/Document.Doc?id+78](http://www.calgaryhumane.ca/Document.Doc?id+78)

[www.greengate.ca/poisonous\\_plants.html](http://www.greengate.ca/poisonous_plants.html)

Dr. Ania Plenzik

## Tick Talk

For those dogs and their owners who are fond of bounding through tall grasses and hiking through wooded areas, concerns about ticks are always high during the spring season.

This April, a dog was identified to be carrying a tick not previously seen in the Calgary area, *Ixodes scapularis*. This tick is a known carrier of Lyme Disease, and can also cause Tick Paralysis.

Talk to your veterinarian about tick prevention products, and if you do find ticks on your dog, please bring them in to your clinic for identification.

## Are Coyotes Stalking You?

Many of our clients have been informing us of recent “followings” by the coyotes in the area. They are becoming much more brave and have not been hesitating to accompany people even in the broad daylight! Please be careful with your pets including cats and all sizes of dogs. They have even had the courage to follow an owner home with a German Shepherd by her side!

We'd love to invite you to become a fan on our facebook page.....[Cornerstone Square Veterinary Hospital!](#)

## Cornerstone Square Veterinary Hospital

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Do you often take your dog for a walk near our clinic? Please feel free to come visit and say hi! If your dog has a favorite treat bring it along with you so we can help make your pup feel comfortable with us as well as our hospital!

**Outstanding Veterinary Experience**

# Cats vs Dogs: Can We Train Them Equally?

People often attempt to train their kittens in the same manner as they would train a puppy. Unfortunately, instead of creating a well behaved adult cat, this identical training regime can often lead cats to mature seeming "aloof". Cats are solitary by nature and therefore need to learn to enjoy company. If a cat is having difficulties with another individual it is their natural instinct to simply use avoidance as a coping mechanism. Due to this natural response, any form of direct punishment (including yelling at your cat) can significantly affect your relationship and bond with your beloved cat. In fact, by using punishment, such as clapping your hands, you are often only reinforcing the belief that people are not safe. It is much more beneficial to personally reward your cat's positive behaviours

with praise and food treats, while simultaneously prepping its environment to do the training through means such as motion activated alarms. It is definitely possible to have a loving relationship with your well trained cat, it just takes a bit of a unique approach to get there! If you would like more tips on kitten training techniques, feel free to contact us and Amie (our AHT training extraordinaire) can offer you some additional information!

Amie Barnes, AHT



Did you know that you can teach your cat to find hidden food treats around the house to give it an outlet for its natural hunting behaviour?