

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November, 2010

Welcome

November is Cancer Prevention Month. In this issue of our newsletter we'll discuss common types of cancer, specific breeds affected by cancer, symptoms that can indicate a possible neoplastic condition, and ways to prevent cancer by using good nutrition and exercise. This month our featured employee is Roxanne, so we'll get to know more about her and her pets. And get to know Charlie, a special labradoodle and a patient here at EAH. Lastly, don't forget to check out the TAILS featured pets. Who knows if your next fur baby might be found here? Any questions can be addressed to a member of our staff at (630) 365-9599, or you can contact us via email at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.

November: Cancer Prevention Month

Over the past several decades more and more pets have been diagnosed with various types of cancer. Cancer now accounts for nearly 50% of deaths in companion animals over the age of 10 years (www.avma.org). Some breeds are simply more prone to developing cancer, especially in dogs. But there are ways to reduce your pet's risk of developing cancer, as well as ways to help him fight it should he develop this disease. Some types of cancer are terminal and cannot be cured; but with knowledge and vigilance even a pet diagnosed with a debilitating type of cancer can live as comfortable a life for as long as possible. Read further to learn about the dog breeds most likely to develop cancer, the types of cancers seen in pets most often, symptoms that need to be checked out by a veterinarian, and how to help prevent cancer through diet and exercise.

What breeds are more disposed to develop cancer?

This is one of the questions we are asked regularly by clients. The answer is complicated

because although there are breeds that are more likely to develop cancer, there may be bloodlines within those breeds that are more resistant to cancer. Conversely, a breed that is not known for developing cancer may have bloodlines in which several ancestors have developed specific types of cancer, leading to an increased risk for individuals in that bloodline. The important thing to remember is that each individual pet has its own set of risk factors. If possible, speak to the breeder and gather as much history on your pet's ancestors as possible. In animals obtained without a known family history, start preventive care early. This includes a good diet, pure water, moderate exercise, regular veterinary check-ups, spaying or neutering your pet, and a consideration of your pet's breed. The following breeds of dogs are considered more "prone" to developing cancer.

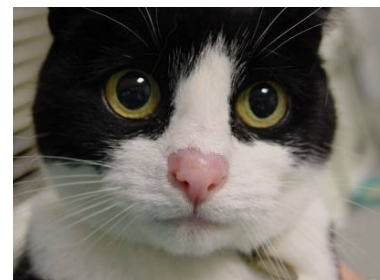
- Boston Terrier
- English Bulldog
- Scottish Terrier
- Cocker Spaniel
- Boxer
- Golden Retriever
- Rottweiler
- Bernese Mountain Dog
- Greyhound



What are the most common types of cancer in pets?

This is another question that we are frequently asked. Cancer can affect any body part, organ or system, but the following are some of the types of cancer we see most often.*

- **Skin** - Skin neoplasia is very common in older dogs, but much less common in cats. Most skin cancers in cats are malignant



Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November, 2010

—or likely to spread to other parts of the body (bad cancer), but in dogs they are often benign (“good” cancer, won’t spread). Your veterinarian should examine all skin neoplasms in a dog or cat to determine if any are malignant.

- **Mammary Gland (Breast)** - 50% of all breast neoplasias in dogs and greater than 85% of all breast neoplasias in cats are malignant. Spaying your female pet before 12 months of age will greatly reduce the risk of mammary gland neoplasia.

- **Head & Neck** - Neoplasia of the mouth is common in dogs and less common in cats. Signs to watch for are a mass or tumor on the gums, bleeding, odor, or difficulty eating. Since many swellings are malignant, early, aggressive treatment is essential. Neoplasia may also develop inside the nose of both cats and dogs. Bleeding from the nose, breathing difficulty, facial swelling or reluctance to eat or chew are signs that may indicate neoplasia and should be checked by your veterinarian.



- **Lymphoma** -

Lymphoma is a common form of neoplasia in dogs and cats. It is

characterized

by enlargement of one or many lymph nodes in the body. A contagious feline leukemia virus can be the cause of lymphoma in some cats.

- **Testicles** - Testicular neoplasia is rare in cats and common in dogs, especially those with retained testicles (testicles that did not move to their normal positions during growth, and may be located in the abdomen or between the abdomen and scrotum).



- **Abdominal Neoplasia** -

Cancers inside the abdomen are common but it is difficult to make an early diagnosis. Weight loss or abdominal swelling can be signs of abdominal neoplasia.

- **Bone** - Bone neoplasias are most often seen in large breed dogs and dogs older than seven years, and rarely in cats. The leg bones, near joints, are the most common sites. Persistent pain, lameness, and swelling in the affected area are common signs of the disease.

*from www.avma.org

What are the signs that my pet may have cancer?

Unfortunately this is an exceedingly hard question to answer. Because cancer can strike any portion of a pet’s body, the symptoms to look for vary a great deal. In general, watch for the following:

- Any new lump or bump.
- A change in size, shape, or consistency of an existing lump.
- Runny nose, especially if bloody.
- Difficulty urinating, bloody urine (also very common with urinary tract infections).
- Vomiting, diarrhea (common with many diseases).
- Limping, change in gait.
- Foul breath, excessive drooling, or teeth that appear displaced.
- Drainage and odor from ears (also very common with ear infections).
- Increased water intake and urination.
- Lethargy, inappetence.



How can I decrease the chances of my pet

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November, 2010

developing cancer?

There are several ways to decrease the chances of your pet developing cancer. Some of the risk factors for cancer are uncontrollable, such as genetic involvement and age. But diet, exercise and regular veterinary care are ways to keep your pet healthy that are completely controlled by a pet's owner.

Although there is no single "perfect" diet available for pet owners to use to ensure their pets don't develop cancer, a high quality food helps keep the body strong so it can fight the tiny abnormalities that may become pre-cancerous over time. A premium diet started as early in life as possible will decrease the likelihood of your pet suffering from cancer later in life, as a healthy immune system is imperative to remove those pre-cancerous changes in our cells that we all develop during our life. It also makes it easier for the body to heal, should your pet develop a cancerous mass that needs to be treated surgically or through alternative therapies. At the Elburn Animal Hospital website you can find lists of non-prescription dog and cat foods with high quality protein sources and healthy ingredients to help keep your pet in its optimum physical condition. If your pet has existing health conditions, talk to the doctor before changing his or her food to make sure the new food will bring about desired changes.



Ideally, pets (and people too) would eat foods that mimic the diet found in the wild, without risk of contracting harmful bacteria or parasites. These foods include grass fed, free range meat sources and organically grown vegetables and fruits, supplemented with a balanced vitamin

to ensure the pet gets all the necessary nutrition. If you choose to feed your pet a homemade diet, remember that the least processed foods are the most desirable. Pesticides, preservatives and processing are the three P's to avoid when serving your pet a homemade diet. Variety is another word to remember. The more colors and types of foods given, the more balanced and healthful the diet becomes. Working in conjunction with your vet you can develop a homemade feeding regimen that can help your pet remain healthy, even later in life.

Exercise is another important aspect of staying healthy, both for humans and our companion animals. We recommend moderate activity at least 30 minutes a day to decrease weight (being overweight is one risk factor that increases rates of cancer in humans and pets) and maintain a good balance of muscle, fat and bone mass. A brisk walk is an excellent way to carry this out. Some folks run with their dogs, or bicycle, or do special training activities such as agility and fly-ball. The best thing about getting your pet in shape is that it not only helps keep you in shape as well, but it allows for a distinct bonding time with your pet that often gets lost in the daily shuffle of work and household duties. Taking 30 minutes out of your day to walk the dog can help create both a physically and mentally satisfying routine for all the two-legged and four-legged family members.

The last way to prevent cancer in pets is to make sure your pets receive regular veterinary attention. The American Veterinary Medical Association recommends a full physical exam twice each year for all pets. They age much faster than humans do, and it is critical to detect abnormal patterns in pets as soon as possible in order to effectively treat and possibly cure disease states such as cancer.



Some types of

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November, 2010



cancer grow very quickly, and a once-a-year exam could be insufficient to catch these types of growths. At Elburn Animal Hospital we perform one physical exam when a pet comes in to fulfill their yearly recommended needs, and we highly recommend a second wellness visit six months later. At 3-4 years of age we begin recommending checking blood chemistries on an annual basis to monitor for any abnormal organ functions that may indicate cancerous conditions (or many other conditions that require attention). We are committed to keeping your pets healthy, happy and safe in your home.

In some ways preventing cancer is a daunting task. Pets are living much longer these days, and with an increase in longevity comes an increase in risk of developing a malignant tumor at some point. The genetic history of many pets is often unknown. But with three simple steps you can help control your pet's risk factors as much as possible. Through diet, exercise and regular doctor visits your pet (and yourself too!) can live as long and happy a life as is individually possible.

Meet Our Staff: Roxanne

Our featured employee for the month of November is Roxanne. Roxanne has been with us for two years.

She loves all kinds of animals, especially ones with wings, and little furry mammals! She



currently has only birds as she recently lost a very special guinea pig named Tyrone. Roxanne has a cockatiel named Phinz and a green conure named Rocky. She acquired Rocky not long after she began working with us at Elburn Animal Hospital. He belonged to an older lady who passed away, and her family was not able to care for him. Rocky was very bonded with his owner and could not adjust to the family without his longtime caretaker and friend. Roxanne volunteered to take him home



with her to see if he would bond with her and adapt to his new surroundings. At first he was confused and not very happy; he missed his previous life. Rocky was also not very fond of Roxanne's husband Jeff, even though Jeff tried very hard to make

Rocky feel comfortable and at home. As time went by, Rocky has become adjusted to his new home and Roxanne. He is even beginning to trust the new man in his life. Roxanne still has to keep Rocky and Phinz separate, as Rocky is used to being #1! Roxanne takes very good care of her birds and showers them with love and attention. She is still searching for a guinea pig that needs a good home, and we're sure the right one will come along soon. She's even considering adopting a dog! Good luck with your search Roxanne, and thanks for being a part of our family here at Elburn Animal Hospital!

Darlene Adams, office manager

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November 2010



Last month we included a cat Amanda is fostering, named Jude. Jude is still looking for a home. She's adjusted well to living with other cats and has a sweet disposition—with only a little mischief thrown in for fun! She was rescued from an unhealthy situation. Jude didn't know she could have it so good, but with Amanda's help she'll get her own home and have it even better someday. If you are interested in meeting Jude, please call the clinic at 630-365-9599 and speak with Amanda.

Feature: Spotlighting Our Patients

Each month our staff collaborates to present photos and a brief summary of an interesting or touching case we've seen the previous month. We want to showcase the diversity in patients we see and let you know a little more about our daily activities at Elburn Animal Hospital.

This is Charlie Cohen. Charlie is a labradoodle with a bit more poodle than Labrador in her. She's now almost two years old, and she's been a patient of ours since she was just a baby. Her family really keeps on top of her health with regular vet checkups and brushing her teeth. We recently saw Charlie for some urinary issues, but those are cleared up now. Charlie is rather small for a labradoodle (she's $\frac{3}{4}$ poodle), but her small size is more than made up for by her giant loving personality. Still, Charlie is more than just a pretty face—she recently passed her test to become a therapy dog! Mom and Dad aren't sure where they will take her to perform her new duties, but we know wherever Charlie goes she'll bring joy to all her clients. We chose Charlie as our interesting

pet of the month as a salute to all the therapy dogs out there. Keep up the good work, Charlie!

TAILS Pets:

This month we're featuring 11 new pets from TAILS Humane Shelter in DeKalb. As reported in our October newsletter, TAILS Humane Society has given all age-appropriate vaccines, spayed or neutered their guests, and tested for heartworms or feline leukemia (as appropriate). Check out their website at www.tailshumanesociety.org to see more of their available pets!



Trixie is an 8-year-old small (12-pound) Chihuahua mix who was given up because her owners were moving and couldn't take her with them. Trixie is a spunky and smart girl. She loves to chase balls, but even more loves people! If you're looking for a little dog with a huge personality, check Trixie.



Rex is a 32-pound, 6-month-old male Pit Bull Terrier mix. He's a people-pleasing lover. He'll run and chase squeaky toys and balls but drop when he's tired and roll on his back for a belly rub. Rex is a tail-wagger! Ready to love this guy and see his tail wag?



Dottie is a German Shorthaired Pointer/Australian Cattle Dog mix. She's only 5 months old and will be a medium-sized dog when full-grown. She was the hit of TAILS' Mutt Strut. Everyone wanted to hug her and she loved everyone. She would chase a tennis ball all day

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November, 2010

if she could. She's another who loves belly rubs. Want a star in your family? Choose Dottie.

Snider is a small, 11-month-old Jack Russell Terrier mix. He is an active little guy who is interested in everything you're doing. He'll jump softly into your lap for cuddles and loves to chase balls. Snider quickly falls into a routine---yours?



Charlie is a 3-month-old, small Terrier mix. Rescued from a high-volume shelter, Charlie is ready for his Forever Home and to begin obedience classes. He seeks gentle attention--yours?

New Beginning Program: Cats who are shy or have special needs are recognized as cats who need A New Beginning and TAILS has waived their adoption fee. Right now, 17 New Beginnings cats have found homes, but six more are still waiting. The following two are from this program:

Trillian is a medium-sized, 1-year-old female. She survived at another shelter since 2009 and TAILS rescued her. She's fearful of people right now and in our New Beginning program. Her adoption fee is waived. A supervisor will teach you how to acclimate Trillian to your lifestyle. Ready for a challenge--it's sure to end in love.



Nala is an 8-year-old, small female. One of her owners
6



developed an allergy to cats and thus, Nala was given to TAILS. She's been at TAILS since March, probably because she's on the shy side. When Nala is stressed, she tends to over-groom herself. She is a New Beginning Cat and is anxious to have a loving, understanding owner--you?

Cats—the following cats are not in the New Beginnings program. They may not be “special needs” kitties, but they're certainly each special!



Cinnamon is a one-year-old female. She only weighs 8-pounds but she gives people a ton of love. If you want a cat with unique

coloring, choose Cinnamon.



Peanut is a baby at only 4 months old and he's also truly a peanut--weighing just 4 ½ pounds! He was dropped off at TAILS as a tiny stray.

Peanut takes only a little space but will hold a big place in your heart.

Simon is a young male, only 3 months old. Simon weighs almost 4-pounds. He's a little kitty who was a stray. Simon loves exploring and playing with toys. Are you ready for this little love?

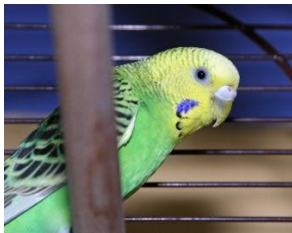


Lil' Critters

Elburn Animal Hospital Newsletter

November, 2010

Among the rabbits, rats and guinea pigs at TAILS is one parakeet, Lima Bean. He was at a pet store and ran out of time so TAILS took him in. He's just 2-years old. His bright green coloring will brighten up your life.



In December's newsletter we will include happy holiday tips for keeping your pet safe. Look for recipes to share with your pets so they get some treats during the holiday season too! If you have any questions or concerns, or would like more information, visit our website at www.elburnanimalhospital.com, or give us a call at (630) 365-9599. If you would like to opt out of receiving our newsletter, please send an email to us at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net.

November Special: Receive 15% off any wellness blood check. Up to a \$30 discount! Make sure you mention this ad to get the discount! ☺

Do you have an idea for a newsletter? A question you'd like answered about caring for your pet? Email us at 3lburn@sbcglobal.net and let us know! We are always interested in what you have to say, and what you want to know.