



Monroe Pet Press SEASON'S GREETINGS

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Steven E. Hornstein, DVM, Medical Director



179 Prospect Plains Road
Monroe, NJ 08831
Phone: 609-655-1717
www.monroevet.net

Santa Claus is Coming to Town!!

Please call and book your time to meet Santa on **Saturday, December 12th from 1PM-4PM** for our 2nd annual pet photos with Santa. **Free** pictures will be taken and printed out for you and your four legged friend.



In the spirit of giving, a representative from Animal Rescue Force a local pet rescue group, will be in attendance. Please make a donation to our furry friends in need.

Nutrition Myths

There are many myths about dog and cat foods. Below are some of the most common:

MYTH: Corn is just filler with no nutritional value

FACT: Corn is a natural and wholesome ingredient loaded with highly digestible carbohydrates for ready energy, essential fatty acids for healthy skin coat, quality proteins for muscle and tissue growth, as well as beta-carotene, vitamin E, and lutein (which are natural antioxidants)



Most grains, including corn are poorly digested before they are cooked. Once cooked, however, they become highly digestible.

MYTH: Dry food is better for pet's teeth than canned food

FACT: In research no difference has been seen in dog dental disease between dry food and canned food UNLESS a dental diet is used. These foods (such as T/D, science diet oral care, etc.) are specially formulated to act as "mechanical toothbrushes" and remove plaque. A listing of pet foods proven to reduce plaque accumulation, as well as treats that are effective for dental disease reduction can be found online at www.vohc.org

MYTH: Raw food is better for pets than cooked or pre-made food

FACT: No studies support the nutritional benefit of raw foods. There are concerns that these diets are not nutritionally balanced. The American College of Veterinary Nutrition (ACVN) does not recommend them. In addition, there have been numerous case reports of pets becoming ill or dying from contaminated raw food. In one study of 21 commercially available raw-meat diets, all tested positive for *E. coli*, and 10 tested positive for *Salmonella*.

Another concern is that it has been shown that pets fed contaminated raw meat shed viable organisms in their stool. In one study, *Salmonella* was isolated from 80% of the BARF (bones and raw food) diets sampled and from 30% of the stools from dogs consuming those diets.

MYTH: Pet food labels are a good source of information

FACT: Pet food labels can be confusing and misleading for owner and veterinarians alike. Currently, there is no standardization of labeling (though the ACVN is pushing for this). Ingredients can be listed in a dry matter or wet matter basis which can significantly affect the way foods are listed on a label. For example, since meat is moist it will be heavier than corn and be listed on a label first if a wet matter basis of listing is used. If dehydrated, meat is lighter than corn and therefore corn would appear to be the first ingredient if listed on a dry matter basis

Two of the most important things to look for on a pet food label is if the food is appropriate for the animal's life stage and if a feeding trial has been performed; an animal's life stage is whether it is a puppy or kitten, adult, or senior animal. Like people, animals have different nutritional needs at different times of their lives. Foods that say "appropriate for all life stages" would mean that they can be used at any time (i.e. cradle to grave) and would be less recommended.

Many commercial diets are formulated using computer programs and not tested on animals. This is because feeding trials are expensive and add to cost of producing pet food. These foods would say "Formulated to meet AAFCO standards." Foods that have been tested will have a statement that reads "Animal feeding tests using AAFCO procedures substantiate that *Name of Food* provides

complete and balanced nutrition for maintenance of *Type of Animal*.

MYTH: Home cooked diets are better for pets than commercial diets

FACT: No evidence supports this statement. Commercial diets have been shown to be nutritionally adequate and are more cost effective than home prepared ones. However, if an owner wishes to cook for their pet, we urge them to consult with a Boarded Veterinary nutritionist PRIOR to instituting a homemade diet. There are some specialists whom we can recommend locally; in addition several can be consulted online at www.petdiets.com (which is also a wonderful general nutrition resource).

Pet Insurance: Worth Considering

We often get questions as to whether we recommend pet insurance. We have found that it is beneficial for pet owners, but that many people do not understand how it works.

In the United States, only 2-3% of pets are insured. By contrast, nearly 20 percent of pet owners have insurance in England and 49 percent have insurance in Sweden. It is important to realize that pet insurance is vastly different from human health insurance. Many options now exist that make the cost of insuring your pet's health quite affordable. Policies range from less than \$300 to over \$600 per year.

Veterinary insurance is similar to property casualty insurance. There are no veterinary HMO's and virtually all pet insurance companies allow pet owners to utilize any veterinarian they want to bring their pet to. Typically the invoice is paid by the owner at the veterinary office, a claim is submitted to the insurance company, and reimbursement is made directly to the pet owner from the insurance company. The benefits paid to the owner vary and depend on the level of coverage and the type of plan the owner has. While it most likely won't cover all costs, insurance can help defray the expense of costly treatments. There are many companies, with a variety of coverage plans, so study each plan carefully before making the choice that best fits your needs and budget. Some plans also cover wellness and routine health care.



Some of the better known veterinary insurance companies include VPI (www.petinsurance.com), ASPCA Pet insurance (www.aspcapetinsurance.com), and Pets Best Insurance (www.petsbest.com). As many insurance companies have come and gone, it is probably best to use one with an established track record.

It is best to obtain insurance PRIOR to a medical problem occurring. This is because most companies do not provide insurance for pre-existing conditions.

Parasite Reminder: They are Still Out There!

While the weather is cooling, we would like to remind our clients to continue to use flea and tick preventatives, as well as heartworm preventatives year-round



Whenever it is warm enough outside for insects to be seen, flea and tick infections can occur. In addition, we have had several dogs come into our office last year with Ticks on them despite cold weather.

Also, intestinal parasites such as roundworm or hookworm can be infective to pets any time during the year. As these parasites are potentially contagious to people, year-round prevention is advocated by the Human Centers for Disease Control.

For our feline patients we recommend the use of Revolution; for our canine patients we recommend Interceptor and Vectra 3D.

Updates on Rabies and Canine Influenza

As of this date, the local referral hospital in Clarksburg has seen 23 confirmed cases of Canine Influenza virus.

Also, 6 animals (four raccoons, one skunk, and one kitten) have been diagnosed with Rabies in Monroe Township this year.

We recommend that contact with wild animals be avoided. All dogs and cats (whether indoor or outdoor) should be kept current on Rabies vaccination. Dogs that go to dog parks, groomers, or kennels should receive the canine influenza vaccination.

Expanded Hours

To better serve our clients, we recently expanded our hours. Our current office hours are as follows:

| DAY OF WEEK | OPEN/CLOSED | OPEN TIME | CLOSE TIME |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Sunday | closed | | |
| Monday | open | 9:00 AM | 7:00 PM |
| Tuesday | open | 9:00 AM | 4:00 PM |
| Wednesday | open | 9:00 AM | 8:00 PM |
| Thursday | open | 9:00 AM | 3:00 PM |
| Friday | open | 9:00 AM | 4:00 PM |
| Saturday | open | 9:00 AM | 2:00 PM |

Have a healthy and happy holiday season and may the New Year bring you peace and joy!!!