

# SAULT STE. MARIE ANIMAL CLINIC



## NEW PUPPY GUIDE



"YOU are an important member  
of your pet's health care team!"



# THE FIRST YEAR

## FIRST APPOINTMENT (RECOMMENDED AT 6-8 WEEKS OF AGE)

- General Physical Examination and weight
- Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, and Parainfluenza Virus (DHPP) Vaccination (Puppies from the Humane Society, Rescue organization or a breeder may have had this needle already)
- Fecal Examination
- Parasite Control - for Fleas/Heartworm/Intestinal Parasites depending on Fecal results and time of year

**TIP: THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO THINK ABOUT APPLYING FOR PET INSURANCE!**

## SECOND APPOINTMENT (RECOMMENDED AT 10-12 WEEKS OF AGE)

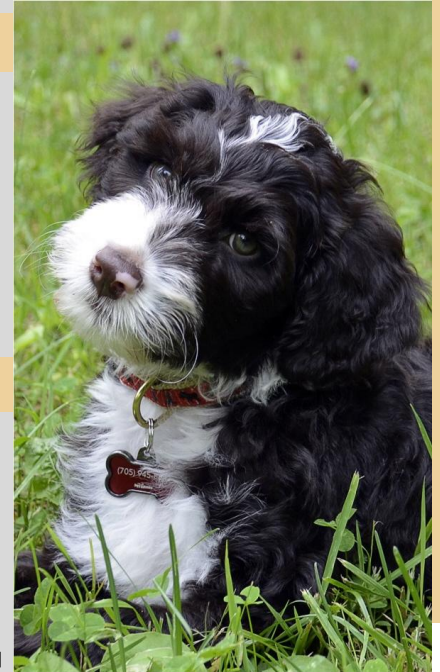
- General Physical Examination and weight
- DHPP 2nd Booster Vaccination +/- Leptospirosis (Lepto)
- Fecal Examination
- Parasite Control - if not dispensed at previous visit

**TIP: THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO LOOK INTO OBEDIENCE CLASSES**

## THIRD APPOINTMENT (RECOMMENDED AT 14-16 WEEKS OF AGE)

- General Physical Examination and weight
- DHPP 3rd Booster Vaccination (+/- Lepto)
- Rabies Vaccination
- Fecal Examination (if not done at least twice previously)
- Parasite Control - if not dispensed previously

**TIP: THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO BOOK THE APPOINTMENT FOR SPAYING OR NEUTERING!**



**SPAY OR NEUTER:** Spaying or neutering is the surgical removal of your dog's reproductive organs to prevent pet over population as well as avoid some health and behavioural issues as your puppy gets older. Most dogs will reach puberty between 7-9 months of age - but we will take several factors such as breed, size, and lifestyle into consideration when recommending the best age for your pet to have the procedure done. Ask us if your female puppy is a candidate for "Laparoscopic Ovariectomy"...a new and less invasive way to sterilize female dogs.\*

**TIP: THIS IS THE IDEAL TIME TO HAVE YOUR PUPPY MICROCHIPPED!**

## GENERAL PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND VACCINATIONS (RECOMMENDED AT APPROXIMATELY 16 MONTHS OF AGE THEN ANNUALLY)

You will receive reminder notifications for:

- General Physical Examination and weight
- DHPP/RABIES/ Lepto/ Kennel Cough Booster Vaccinations as needed
- Fecal Examination
- Heartworm Test
- Dispense Flea/Heartworm/ Intestinal Parasite Control as required

Please let us know if your puppy will be travelling, going to the boarding kennel, groomer, dog park or dog shows - we may recommend additional vaccinations for "Kennel Cough" and/or Canine Flu

**This is an example only - your puppy's schedule will be tailored to his or her specific needs**

# LEPTOSPIROSIS: A POTENTIAL THREAT TO PETS AND PEOPLE

- Leptospirosis is a complicated and devastating disease caused by spiral shaped bacteria (called spirochetes). It can affect all mammals - humans included.
- It is unique in that there are over 200 different serovars (strains or subtypes) and each serovar will have a preferred \*host\* species (for example rats or raccoons) that it will most commonly infect. In the host species, it can cause mild illness initially but then the bacteria go on to live in the kidneys with the host animal being relatively unaffected. These host species are responsible for spreading the bacteria throughout their environment, usually in their urine.
- **When a \*non-host\* species (for example, a dog) encounters the bacterium by drinking or running through urine contaminated water or damp soil (puddles, ponds, swampy areas) they can become very ill. Clinical signs range from mild flu like symptoms to severe disease including kidney and liver failure. Antibiotics can be used to treat the disease but recovered animals might shed the bacteria in their urine intermittently for years.**
- 'City Dogs' can be exposed through contact with rat, raccoon or other wildlife urine.
- **Dogs that have been infected with Leptospirosis can be a potential source of infection for their owners during the initial infection and potentially for several years afterwards.**

**Because of the health risks posed by Leptospirosis to both your pet and yourself, we recommend that your dog be vaccinated for Leptospirosis yearly - for most dogs this will be done as part of their annual examination and vaccinations.**



## Is there a vaccination available?

- There are over 200 types or serovars of the Leptospira bacteria
- Vaccination against one serovar does not guarantee protection against other serovars
- It is impossible to completely protect any pet against ALL of the different subtypes of Leptospirosis. However, a **vaccination is available that will protect your dog from four of the subtypes most commonly associated with Leptospirosis in dogs.**
- Vaccination will not stop a dog who has been previously infected with Leptospirosis from shedding the bacteria in its urine.
- Improvements to the vaccine, including extra steps to \*purify\* it, have significantly reduced the risk of reactions.





# THE SOCIAL DOG



In addition to the core vaccines that are recommended for all dogs (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Rabies Vaccine +/- Leptospirosis) some dogs may be at higher risk of being exposed to additional diseases depending on their lifestyle. 'Social Dogs' are ones that encounter other dogs on a fairly regular basis – for example at a boarding kennel, groomer, dog park or dog show.

Two examples of diseases 'Social Dogs' are at potentially higher risk of being exposed to are:

## Kennel Cough:

- Also known as **Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRD)** - caused by a combination of bacterial and viral organisms.
- Causes signs like a cold in people – coughing, sneezing, +/- mild fever. Just like people, most cases in dogs are fairly mild and self limiting – however some individuals can develop a more severe and persistent cough, and some can go on to develop pneumonia.
- **Infections are HIGHLY contagious** and dogs that go to groomers, boarding kennels, dog parks and or dog shows ie 'Social Dogs' are at a higher risk of being exposed.
- A bacteria called Bordetella bronchiseptica is associated with most cases of Kennel cough and a vaccine is available (given in the nose or mouth). **We recommend Bordetella aka Kennel Cough vaccination for all 'social dogs' at least once a year.**

## Canine Influenza:

- **Influenza A virus that is highly contagious between dogs.** (H3N8 and H3N2)
- Both viruses tend to occur in '**Out Break**' situations where there are a lot of dogs together in relatively stressful situations such as shelters, boarding kennels and dog shows.
- Dogs can develop mild form (ie mild flu like symptoms) or severe form (more severe clinical signs, pneumonia and occasionally fatal).
- At time of writing, there have been a couple of small outbreaks in Southern Ontario that were contained. More common in certain areas of USA. Currently we do not recommend for all dogs but do suggest it for dogs travelling to out break areas or events including large numbers of dogs from different areas. For example, we vaccinate our dog Hudson because he occasionally travels to agility trials (ie a form of dog show) in lower Michigan where he can be exposed to dogs who from all over the US.

## Lyme disease:

Lyme disease is caused by the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*. This bacterium can be carried by the Black Legged tick – for most dogs, we aim prevention at using products that kill the tick before it has a chance to infect the dog with the bacteria. For dogs that are travelling to areas where Lyme disease is more prevalent or for owners who are particularly worried, we do have a Lyme Vaccine that will prevent the dog from developing an infection if bitten by a tick carrying the bacteria

# PARASITES

- **Parasites are very common in puppies.** They are often infected with intestinal parasites (i.e. worms) by their mother before they are born or shortly after birth. They can also be infected with external parasites (i.e. fleas, mites, ticks) by their early environment..
- **It is very important that all new puppies are checked for parasites** since they can cause serious health problems for the puppy and can pose a significant risk to human health as well. We check for external parasites by giving all new puppies a thorough physical examination. To check for intestinal parasites, we need to perform a test on a sample of your puppy's stool (poop!) called a "Fecal Floatation" to check for microscopic parasite eggs.
- Since the parasites only pass eggs in the stool at certain stages of their development, it is important we perform fecal floatations on each puppy at least twice during their early months and then at least once a year as adults. Many people choose to put their puppies on treatment that will prevent/treat some of the more common parasite infections as a precaution even if the fecal exam is negative.



## HEARTWORM DISEASE

- **Heartworm Disease is caused by a parasite (a worm) that lives in the heart of infected dogs.** The disease is not transmitted directly from dog to dog but is spread by mosquitoes. A mosquito bites a dog with Heartworm Disease and picks up some of the immature or larval form of the parasite called microfilaria. The mosquito then bites a new dog and transmits the heartworm larvae into the new dog. Over a period of about six months, the larvae migrate to the heart and mature into adult worms. This **can cause serious debilitating disease and even death for the dog.**
- Fortunately, **we have easy to give, once a month medications that will prevent your dog from developing heartworm disease even if he or she is bitten by an infected mosquito.** These medications are referred to as heartworm preventives and work to prevent the disease in healthy dogs - dogs that already have the disease (i.e. adult worms in the heart) need different medication. Therefore, it is important to perform a blood test, called a Heartworm Blood Test, on all dogs periodically for the disease to make sure there are no adult worms present.
- Since it takes six months for the adult worms to grow in the heart, puppies less than six months old do not need a blood test but should be put on preventive medication. We will be recommending that your puppy have a blood test for Heartworm next year and then approximately every three years after that. Since the parasite is carried by mosquitoes, preventive medications are given May to November in Canada and year round for dogs who travel to warmer climates (example Florida or Texas) during the winter months.

Many Heartworm preventives have the added benefit of preventing intestinal parasite infections and several are combined with FLEA and TICK preventives for broad spectrum parasite control. We recommend giving your dog a broad spectrum parasite preventive once a month May to November



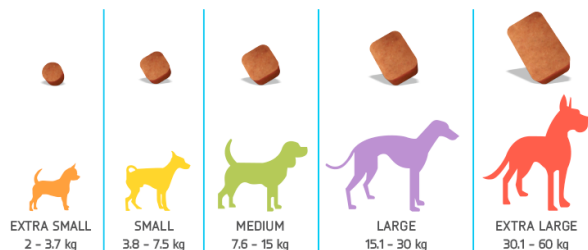
# PARASITE PREVENTION

There are many products available on the market that claim to treat for various parasites such as flea, ticks and intestinal worms. **We recommend only using products prescribed by your veterinarian.**

We are able to advise you as to which product will best suit your pet's individual needs. Some "over the counter products" are either ineffective or are too harsh (especially for cats). We carry a variety of products that are safe, cost effective and guaranteed by the manufacturer when used properly. We currently recommend using **Nexgard** or **Nexgard Spectra** for safe, effective and comprehensive parasite control.

**NexGard™**  
(afoxolaner) Chewables

Effective **flea** and **tick** control in a once a month chew



Flexible dosing for dogs of all ages and sizes.

**NexGard SPECTRA™**  
(afoxolaner and milbemycin)

Effective **flea, tick, heart worm** and **intestinal worm** control in a once a month chew

**CHEW ON THIS.**

Easy to give.

A tasty beef-flavoured soft chew that dogs love.

Easy to remember.

A once-monthly treatment routine that pet owners prefer.

**Parasite prevention for your pet is not only important for their health but for your entire family as well.** Some parasites which infect pets can pose a "Zoonotic Risk" - which means that:

- 1.) They can in some cases be associated with serious illness or disease in people.
- 2.) Young children, the elderly and people with compromised immune systems are at the greatest risk.

**Treating your pet with an effective parasite preventive on a regular basis can help to minimize the risks for everyone.**



- **Puppy training should begin from the moment you bring your new pet home** - it will go much faster and smoother when your pet is young! Exposing your young puppy to a variety of environments and experiences in a positive, safe and controlled manner while young (ideally less than 12-16 wks old) will make them more adaptable and less fearful as adults.
- **Having the chance to learn appropriate play behaviour from other dogs will help your puppy develop good "dog" social skills as an adult.** Of course, your puppy's safety is the top priority so when arranging "play dates", try to find dogs who are healthy, well vaccinated, even tempered and of an appropriate size. All interactions should be supervised.
- When making new two-legged friends, **puppies should learn to sit quietly and wait for petting and treats rather than jumping up or biting the new acquaintance.**
- **Puppies should also learn to accept having their feet handled** (for nail trims) and accept routine grooming/examination of the eyes, ears etc.
- We believe **training methods focused on positive reinforcement, i.e. rewarding good behaviours, clicker training, are more effective** and humane than methods relying on punishment and dominance.

**Please go to 'Cricket's Corner' under the 'Helpful Pages' on our website:  
[www.ssmanimalclinic.com](http://www.ssmanimalclinic.com)  
 for tips and videos to start your puppy's training off right!**

**Adequate exercise, social interaction and mental stimulation are crucial to any dog's mental and physical well being.**



**For everyone's safety and comfort, all dogs should know how to walk properly on a leash, sit calmly on command and to not jump up on people.**

- **Investing in obedience training for your puppy is time and money well spent.** Teaching your puppy some manners will help create a bond of trust between you and your pet and both you and your puppy will be happier if you know how to give your pet clear consistent guidelines for acceptable behaviour. There are several options available ranging from structured classes and private lessons to books and DVD's.
- Many people and puppies enjoy obedience classes so much they choose to go beyond the basics and participate (or even compete) in more advanced activities like agility training and flyball. These are wonderful ways to stimulate your puppy both mentally and physically and to enhance the pet-owner bond - not to mention lots of exercise and fun for you!
- **Puppies thrive and have fewer behaviour problems when they receive adequate mental and physical stimulation.** Crate training is a wonderful way to house train your puppy and give them a 'Safe Place' but it needs to be balanced with adequate exercise and social interaction.

# SOCIALIZATION AND OBEDIENCE TRAINING





# HOUSE TRAINING

- **Choose a preferred area and surface** (such as the grass in your back yard) for your puppy to eliminate on. If possible, we prefer to have puppies eliminate outside from the very beginning rather than paper or pad training.
- **Feed your puppy on a regular a schedule** - puppies have a gastro-colic reflex - they need to have a bowel movement shortly after eating. When puppies eat meals on a regular basis, we can predict when they will need to have a bowel movement! Take away uneaten food between mealtimes.
- **Supervise your puppy at all times!** Use a crate (more on that later), a play pen (wire pen with linoleum remnant underneath) or 'safe room' such as a small puppy proofed bathroom or laundry room with a non porous floor whenever you can not adequately supervise your puppy. Some people find the **umbilical cord technique** useful - attaching a short leash to your belt loop so that your puppy stays right with you. If you don't want the puppy underfoot, try looping the leash over a door knob of the room you are in so that you can still see the puppy and the puppy can see you. **DON'T LET THEM SNEAK OFF TO ANOTHER ROOM!**
- **Learn to read the signs!** Puppies will usually signal that they are about to eliminate by sniffing the ground. They may also get fidgety or whimper and whine a bit - especially if they are right next to you and unable to wander off.
- **Set your puppy up for success!** Take them outside frequently (once an hour while very small) and set them in the desired location - give **EFFUSIVE** praise every time they eliminate in the appropriate area.



- When accidents happen, **clean** the surface well - puppies can smell where they have gone before and it will stimulate them to go there again. With carpeting, it is very difficult to clean sufficiently that the puppies sensitive sense of smell can't detect it - so avoid carpeting initially. **Do not scold puppies for mistakes - calmly remove them from the scene while you are cleaning up.** Never "put a puppy's nose in it!" you will just bewilder them and make them frightened of you. If you happen to catch them "in the act" you can say something like "Uh-uh-uh" (in a warning, not scary tone), pick them up and rush them outside where they are praised effusively for finishing the job.
- **Assume that your puppy has a full bladder and or bowels EVERY time** you take them out of the crate or confined area - take them to the appropriate elimination spot before setting them down inside.
- **"Pair words" to the act of eliminating** - every time your puppy is posturing to urinate or defecate in the right area say your chosen word "Go Pee", "Go Poop", "Hurry Up" then praise effusively. Eventually your pup will learn to go on command which is very handy!
- **Be patient!** Just like kids, some puppies learn the whole business a lot faster than others but eventually they all get there. If you have any questions or concerns about how your puppy's house training is going please feel free to give us a call - we are happy to help!



# CRATE TRAINING



Crate training works with a dog's natural instincts - they are "den" animals by nature and tend to feel safe in a small confined area. They will not soil where they sleep (if they can help it) so crate training helps tremendously with house training.

- **A crate should be a puppy's "safe place".** Like a child with their own room, properly crate trained puppies will often seek out their crate at bedtime or when there is too much noise and confusion about.
- **A crate should NEVER be a place of punishment** - Use another puppy proofed place like a small bathroom or laundry room for 'time out'. The crate should be in a quiet area but the puppy should not feel banished - it might be a good idea to keep the crate in your bedroom at night where your puppy can still see and hear you. Even if you would like your dog to sleep on the bed as an adult, it is good to crate train them as a puppy.
- **A puppy should be rewarded with a treat and verbal praise for going into the crate.** Close the door softly - don't slam it. Wait until the puppy has turned around and is facing you before giving the treat so they don't feel tricked. Simple praise should suffice, too much praise can elevate their arousal level and create a separation anxiety issue.
- **Don't leave the puppy in the crate for too long** - a reasonable time frame is their age in months plus one hour - so an 8-12 week old puppy should be able to hold their bladder and bowels for approx. 3 hours, a 12 to 16 week old puppy 4 hours - provided they have been given the opportunity to empty their bladder and bowels before hand. Some puppies will be able to "hold it" over night while others may need a potty break throughout the night when they are very young.
- **Crate time needs to be balanced with adequate and good quality exercise and social interaction** with you and/or other dogs. It can be helpful to have highly prized treats or toys (safe chew toys) that the puppy only gets while in the crate.
- **WAIT for a quiet moment before you go to them.** Puppies should not feel abandoned in their crate but they must learn that creating a racket doesn't get them out! You, the pet owner will have to balance and use your judgment to learn when the puppy really needs to go outside. If your puppy does need a potty break in the middle of the night, wait for a moment of quiet before going to them - try to be as calm and non-committal as possible (again to avoid excessive arousal for your puppy) - take them out to do their business then put them back in the crate - it is not cuddle or play time!
- **For house training purposes the crate needs to be small enough for the puppy to stand up, turn around and not much more** - if the crate is too big, they will urinate and defecate in one end and sleep in the other. You may need to borrow a small crate initially or try to barricade off a small area within a larger crate.
- **Besides house training, the biggest advantage to crate training is safety** - puppies that are in a crate cannot engage in destructive chewing of shoes, furniture or clothing. They are also kept safe from dangers such as electrical cords, household toxins, falls from furniture etc.

At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we recommend crate training for all puppies. It is important for dogs to know how to settle themselves calmly in a confined, safe space for their own safety and mental well being.



# PREANESTHETIC BLOOD SCREEN

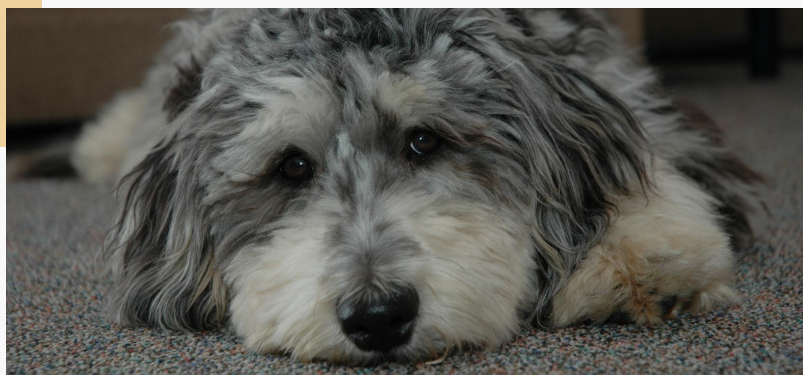
A preanesthetic blood screen (PABS) is a series of laboratory tests performed on a blood sample to help identify patients who may be at a higher risk of complications during general anesthesia and surgery. It screens for abnormalities in liver and kidney function, protein levels, red cell and platelet numbers, all of which could adversely affect a patient's ability to respond to the demands of general anesthesia and surgery. **Since the frequency of these kinds of abnormalities tends to increase as pets age, a preanesthetic blood screen is mandatory for all pets over the age of 7 who are scheduled to receive a general anesthetic or surgical procedure. The testing is usually optional for younger pets in good health.**

It is not mandatory to perform a PABS on a young healthy animal undergoing elective general anesthesia and surgery. Fortunately, anesthetic or major surgical complications in this age group are relatively rare. It is however sometimes possible to have subtle or early changes in a patient that appears to be perfectly normal and healthy on physical exam. **Performing a PABS can help to identify a pet who might be at a higher risk of complications and take steps to help minimize these risks.**

**For healthy, young pets undergoing spay or neuter procedures, we generally obtain a blood sample the morning of their surgery and have it analyzed within the hour.** For older pets undergoing dental or other procedures, the blood sample may be drawn a few days prior to the procedure.

## **Are there other extra precautions we can take to minimize risk?**

Older pets and pets who have been identified with health issues that may be of concern during general anesthesia or surgery will be put on intravenous fluids (through an intravenous infusion pump) for the procedure. Intravenous fluids or an "IV" support the patient and help them cope with the stress of surgery. An IV also provides a way to administer drugs quickly and effectively should any complications arise. While it is not mandatory for most young pets undergoing routine spaying or neutering, intravenous fluids do provide an extra margin of safety.



- **At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we do not believe in "cutting corners" when it comes to the care of your pet! Your pet's comfort, well being and safety are our PRIMARY concern.**
- We use complete, balanced, safe anesthetic protocols that incorporate effective pain relief for your pet.
- Pets are placed on a specialized warming pad during surgery and monitored with specialized respiratory, heart and blood pressure monitors as well as hands on monitoring by the veterinarian and veterinary technician/assistant.
- We use individually sterilized surgical packs and always open a "fresh" pack for each patient.
- We use premium surgical supplies such as individual packs of suture material and the majority of surgeries are performed using a state of the art surgical laser.



# SPAYING AND NEUTERING



- **We strongly recommend that all puppies be spayed or neutered!**
- For female puppies this involves either an ovariectomy (surgical removal of the ovaries) or an ovariohysterectomy (surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus) commonly referred to as a "spay". For male puppies, it involves surgically removing the testicles (neuter).
- The ovaries and testicles are the source of sex hormones in the body and are responsible for many undesirable behaviours and health issues in un-neutered adult dogs.
- There are many health and behavioural benefits to spaying or neutering including decreased risk of mammary and reproductive cancers, decreased marking territory, decreased aggression towards other dogs, decreased roaming and prevention of unwanted pregnancy.
- These procedures require general anesthesia and may require an overnight stay in the hospital.

Traditionally, spaying or neutering was done at 6 months of age (prior to puberty at 7-9 months of age) however, current studies suggest there may be some health benefits to waiting in some cases - particularly for larger breed dogs.

**We will make a specific age recommendation for YOUR puppy based on life style and expected size at maturity.**

## Lap Spay



**Laparoscopic Ovariectomy** is an exciting technique for sterilizing female dogs that we are pleased to offer at Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic. Using specialized video and surgical instruments, the ovaries are visualized and removed through one or two tiny incisions. Laparoscopic surgery is used frequently in human medicine for procedures such as gall bladder removal and tubal ligations.

**The advantages of Laparoscopic Surgery over traditional surgical methods are smaller incisions, less pain, faster recoveries and less trauma to other tissues and organs.**

**PATIENT SAFETY and COMFORT is our top priority for any pet undergoing General Anesthesia and Surgery**

- Premium injectable and gas anesthetic agents
- **All patients are intubated** (a breathing tube is placed in the windpipe)
- Heart rate, pulse, breathing, anesthetic levels and oxygen concentrations (+/- blood pressure and EKG) are **monitored continuously** using a combination of high tech monitors and good old fashioned, 'hands on' clinical skill
- Use of Force Triad electrosurgical cutting and coagulation in place of traditional scalpel where appropriate
- Liberal but judicious use of **pain killers** (analgesics) help ensure a safe, comfortable experience for your pet
- Warming pads
- **Individual sterile surgical packs and suture materials packs** for each patient
- **State of the art** surgical equipment is sterilized in our state of the art sterilizers
- Enrolled in **quality assurance** program through outside lab to ensure proper functioning of our sterilization equipment



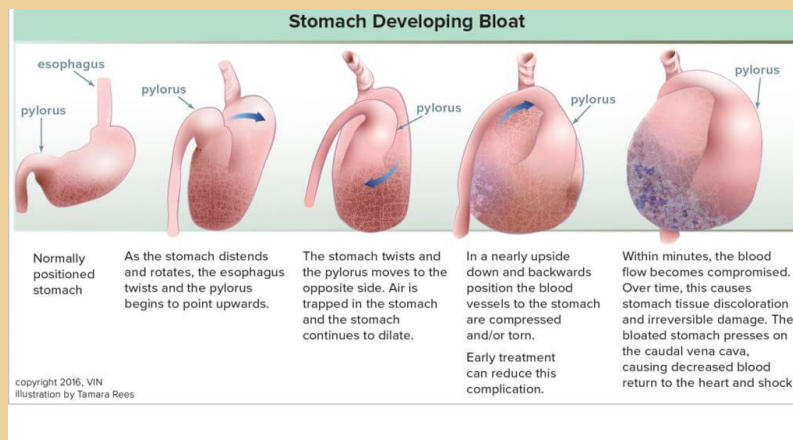
# GASTRIC DILATION AND VOLVULUS (GDV) – AKA BLOAT

## A TRUE VETERINARY EMERGENCY



### What is Bloat?

- Bloat is a condition in dogs where the stomach fills with gas and fluid and stretches to many times its normal size (aka Gastric Dilation).
- The bloated stomach then twists on itself and prevents further fluid and gas from escaping (Volvulus) – this quickly leads to multiple life-threatening problems including damage to (ie death of) the stomach wall, damage to the spleen, irregular heartbeat, dangerously low blood pressure and a dangerously high heart rate.
- It is extremely painful and affected dogs will die in a matter of hours without immediate and aggressive veterinary care – usually surgery.

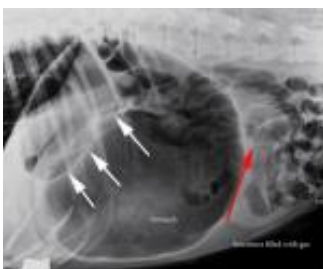


### What causes Bloat and Who is at Risk?

- It is not fully understood why some dogs develop bloat but **body shape** (ie deep chested like a Great Dane, Boxer or Poodle), **size** (giant breeds), **age** (risk increases with age) and **genetics** all appear to play a role.
- Lifestyle factors** such as eating rapidly, eating a large meal followed by vigorous exercise, and stress can also increase the risk. Feeding dry food diets high in fat have also been implicated.

### What are the Signs of Bloat?

- Typically, a dog with bloat will rapidly become very uncomfortable – they will pant, appear distressed, repeatedly attempt to vomit without bringing much, if anything, up.
- Many dogs will appear distended through the belly which may be hard and painful to the touch.



### What to do If You Suspect Your Dog Has Bloat?

- **Contact a veterinarian immediately! Do not wait!** Even if it is the weekend or the middle of the night – call the office for instructions on reaching the Veterinarian On-Call.
- If you are unsure, it is always better to err on the side of caution. Waiting can be disastrous.

### How Is Bloat treated?

Once at the veterinarian, several things will need to happen quickly:

- **X-rays** will be taken to confirm the diagnosis, **IV fluids** will be needed to counteract shock and attempts will be made to 'de-compress' the stomach ASAP – usually by attempting to pass a stomach tube.
- Your dog may need **emergency surgery** – which will involve untwisting the stomach and may involve removal of the spleen and part of the stomach wall.
- Most dogs will have a **gastropexy** performed at the time of surgery to prevent the stomach from twisting again in the future.
- After surgery, your dog will need to be monitored closely for several days - sometimes a life-threatening cardiac arrhythmia (irregular heart beat) can develop.

# PROPHYLACTIC GASTROPEXY (PEXY) FOR LARGE BREED DOGS



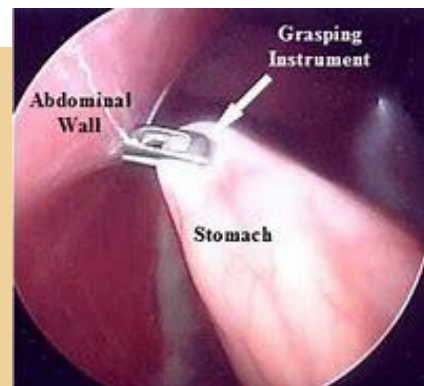
Although ANY breed or size of dog CAN develop GDV or Bloat, some breeds have been shown to have a predilection:

Akita  
Bernese Mountain Dog  
Boxer  
Collie  
Doberman Pinscher  
German Shepherd Dog  
(Any) Giant breed dog  
Gordon Setter  
Great Dane  
Great Pyrenees  
Greyhound  
Irish Setter  
Irish Wolfhound  
(Any) Large breed dog  
Mastiff  
Newfoundland  
Otterhound  
Rottweiler  
Saint Bernard  
Standard Poodle  
Weimaraner

- A prophylactic gastropexy is a surgical procedure done in young dogs that are at higher risk for developing GDV or bloat later in life
- Risk factors include being an 'at risk breed' or a dog who has a known relative that has bloated in the past.
- The surgery involves creating a permanent attachment of the outer stomach to the body wall (a pexy) so that the stomach can't twist on itself.
- A dog with a pexy may still bloat – ie fill up with gas – but since the stomach can't twist on itself, it is far less serious.
- Ideally, the procedure is done at the time of spaying or neutering.



Ready to go home just a few hours after  
'Lap Spay and Pexy'!



At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we do a 'Lap-Assisted Gastropexy' which means we do part of the procedure laparoscopically - resulting in a smaller incision, less trauma to surrounding tissues and thus a faster recovery.  
**Please ask for more information!**

# PET HEALTH INSURANCE

There are several companies offering Pet Health Insurance to help cover the cost of unexpected veterinary expenses. Many plans do not cover routine veterinary care such as vaccinations and spaying but will reimburse the owner for unexpected veterinary costs incurred as a result of illness or trauma. The cost and the amount of coverage varies from plan to plan. We have included some pamphlets in your folder but further information is available in pet magazines or on the internet.

**We strongly recommend pet owners review and consider insurance options - especially for young pets BEFORE they have any health issues that could result in exclusions being placed on their policy.**



- **Microchipping is a safe, effective and permanent way to identify your pet.** A microchip is a small (about the size of a grain of rice) chip that is injected under the skin of your pet between the shoulder blades.
- **It is encoded with a number that becomes registered to your pet.** Information such as your address, phone number and some medical information (such as the pet is diabetic or epileptic) is stored in a computerized central data bank by the microchip company. Most Humane Societies and Veterinary Clinics are equipped with scanners that can read these chips and by contacting the microchip company they can identify your pet even without a collar or tags.
- **We recommend having your pet "microchipped" when they are in for their spaying or neutering.**

## DIET RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The diet you choose for your new pet will play a crucial role in your pet's overall health and development.** Proper diet will help maintain healthy teeth, skin, urinary tract and weight.
- Unfortunately, all pet foods are not created equal and there is huge variation in both the cost and quality of pet foods on the market. "Bargain Foods" may end up costing more in the long run!
- **Beware of pet food labels that make impressive claims - the pet food industry is not as well regulated as you might expect and some of those impressive claims may not be backed by valid science or research!**
- At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we carry **premium pet foods** available only through Veterinarians (at comparable prices to pet store brands) that **provide optimal levels of nutrition backed by extensive scientific research.** Please ask for a specific dietary recommendation for your pet.
- Cats and some breeds of dogs can be prone to developing crystals in their urine which can lead to life threatening urinary tract blockages ...in the majority of cases, this can be avoided by feeding your pet the appropriate diet. Ask us what diet best suits your pet's needs!

Puppies that are expected to be over 25kg/50lbs as an adult dog should be on a **LARGE BREED PUPPY DIET** to ensure healthy bone and joint development



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



One of the biggest decisions you will make as a pet owner is what type of food to feed your puppy. New puppy owners are often bombarded by information (and misinformation) about pet food, pet food companies and the nutritional needs of a growing puppy.

## Here is some 'food for thought':

**Sometimes bigger IS better!** While large corporations often get a bad rap for what they put into pet food, there are large companies that are very reputable. Companies like Hill's and Royal Canin are huge multinational companies with world class research centers staffed by THE leading experts in the field. All diets are thoroughly researched to make sure they do what they are intended to do without undesirable consequences.

- The sheer size of these companies gives them huge buying power so they can secure a **consistent supply of top-quality ingredients** – products will be consistent from bag to bag.
- Their foods are produced in their own factories which enables **superior quality control and accountability**.
- **Smaller or boutique brands may be good in theory, but, often do not have the same infrastructure for the level of quality control and consistency that the larger companies have.** For example, many smaller companies will 'outsource' the actual processing of the food to other facilities potentially giving up a significant aspect of quality control.
- **'Processing'** gets a bad rap as well but again it **enables the food company to ensure nutrients are stable and that the food is safe** for both your pet to be eating and your family to be handling.

**Beware of pet food diets that follow human dietary fads and trends.** For the most part these are relatively harmless (ingredients like blue berries are not likely added in enough quantities to have a significant antioxidant effect) but occasionally, lack of appropriate research can lead to significant harmful effects. For example, it has recently come to light that large breed dogs, Golden Retrievers in particular, may be at increased risk of Dilated Cardiomyopathy – or heart failure – if fed a 'Grain Free' diet!

Raw diets are becoming increasingly popular – **At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic we do not recommend feeding pets 'raw diets' because of the risk of bacterial contamination (for both people and pets).** We are also concerned about how well balanced they are for your pet's nutritional needs. People eat a variety of foods to meet their nutritional needs, but pets thrive on consistency – so small imbalances in a diet can lead to a significant nutritional imbalance for your pet.

Not all puppies have the same nutritional needs! A Chihuahua will have different caloric, calcium and phosphorus needs than a large breed dog! The right puppy food can encourage appropriate rates of growth which will encourage healthy bone and joint formation and a healthy weight for your puppy – overweight puppies tend to become overweight adults. Once again, larger, more reputable companies, can differentiate themselves by doing actual feeding trials on litters of puppies and ensuring their formulations are properly balanced.

There are many factors which will affect your puppy or kitten's overall long term health and quality of life. Some things, such as genetics and breed predispositions, you will have little control over. In other areas such as nutrition, vaccinations, parasite control, spaying or neutering, dental care and the judicious use of a leash, the choices you make as an owner can have a huge impact on your pets health!



Of factors you can control,  
**preventing obesity**  
is probably the single most  
important thing you can do to  
help your pet live a long and  
good quality life!

- **Feed good quality pet food with appropriate calorie density** (your average lap dog does not need a "performance" diet....we can help you make an appropriate choice.
- **Invest in a measuring cup!** Feeding guides refer to 250 ml measuring cups....not coffee mugs or margarine containers.
- **Know your pets weight and monitor it both "hands on" and by the scale.** Feel free to drop in any time with your pet to weigh them on our scales. There is no charge for this and it is a good way to monitor for changes.
- **Exercise your pet.** Dogs love leash walks, off leash play in a safe environment and activities like fly ball. Cats can be encouraged to play with toys like lasers and some can be taught to walk on a leash as well. **Exercise is crucial for both your pet's physical and mental well being.**
- **Limit treats and avoid table food altogether** (we can recommend tasty low calorie treats).
- **Make your pet "work" for food** by using kibble dispensing toys or maze feeding dishes. This helps prevent boredom.
- **Puppies and kittens can be overweight even while still growing** - and overweight kittens and puppies tend to become obese adult dogs and cats.
- **Over feeding large breed puppies can result in very rapid growth which can lead to poor bone and joint development.** Slower, 'lean' growth will result in healthier growth.

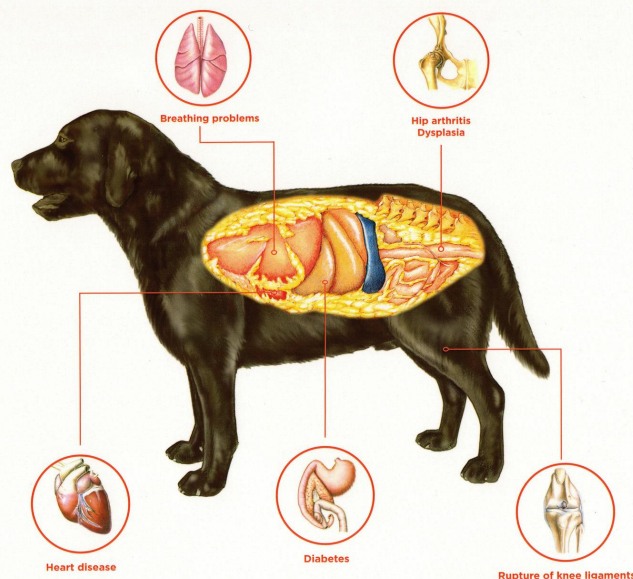
### Keep it in Perspective!

- a 1oz cube of Cheddar cheese is the equivalent of eating 1.5 hamburgers for a 20 lb dog or 3.5 hamburgers for a 10lb cat!
- A 5lb weight gain for a 30lb dog is the equivalent of a 120lb person gaining 20lbs and a 2lb gain for a 10 lb cat is the equivalent of a 120lb person gaining 18lbs.



Obesity is more than just a cosmetic problem — dogs just a few pounds overweight run the risk of developing serious diseases<sup>3</sup>
















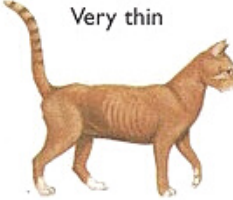

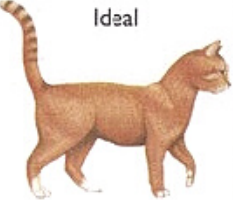


### Health risks linked to obesity



# FIT FOR LIFE

# BODY CONDITION SCORE



Fit				
1	2	3	4	5
				
Very thin	Underweight	Ideal	Overweight	Obese
				
Ribs are easy to see or feel. When viewed from above, there is an accentuated waist.	Ribs are easy to feel. When viewed from above, there is an hourglass shape.	Ribs can be felt. There is a slight waist when viewed from above.	Ribs are difficult to feel. There is no waist when viewed from above.	Ribs are very difficult to feel. When viewed from above, there is no waist and a broad back.
1	2	3	4	5
				
Very thin	Underweight	Ideal	Overweight	Obese
				

## Your pet is at a healthy weight if:

- Ribs are easily felt
- Tucked abdomen
- Waist is easily noted when viewed from above

## Your pet may be overweight if:

- Ribs are difficult to feel under the fat
- Stomach sags
- Back is broad and flat
- Waist is barely visible or absent



# DENTAL CARE



An important part of your pet's overall health care!

- **Dental diets can be an effective way to help prevent plaque and tartar accumulation** in pets. The shape, size and texture of the kibble encourages more chewing action by the pet and work somewhat like a "squeegee" to scrape the surface of the tooth clean.
- We recommend **Hill's T/d or Royal Canin Dental** diets and treats to help prevent plaque and tartar accumulation in healthy adult dogs and cats. These diets are extensively researched, clinically proven and guaranteed - if your pet won't eat it, you can return it for a full refund.
- **Appropriate chew toys or treats** can be helpful but be careful not to give your pet anything too hard. They can actually chip or break teeth with overzealous chewing. Avoid real bones as they can cause broken teeth, can splinter, be swallowed and they can be a source for significant bacterial infections.
- We carry a raw-hide chew treat called **Denta Pro Dental Chews** that not only encourages good chewing but are coated with an enzyme that will help prevent tartar formation.
- **Brushing is an effective way to prevent plaque and tartar from accumulating.**
- **Use pet toothpaste and a pet toothbrush.** Human tooth paste foams and is not designed to be swallowed; most pets don't know enough to "spit". There are many different models of pet toothbrushes available, you might have to try a few to find what works best for you. **Start brushing early in your pet's life before plaque and tartar have a chance to accumulate. Aim to brush everyday but even twice a week will make a significant difference.**

Puppies and kittens have deciduous or baby teeth that start to fall out around four months of age. By six months of age they will have their full set of adult teeth.



The only way to effectively treat **ESTABLISHED** dental disease is with a professional cleaning of the teeth under general anesthesia. Some pets may require additional treatment such as a root canal or extractions. Your pet's annual physical examination includes an assessment of oral and dental health and recommendations for appropriate treatment.

- **Without intervention, most pets will accumulate plaque (a sticky, yellowish substance made up of bacteria and food debris) on the teeth. Plaque hardens into tartar followed by gingivitis, an inflammation of the gums. Left untreated this will progress to periodontal disease or a loss of the bony structures around the tooth.**
- **Not only is dental disease associated with bad breath and tooth loss, it can be a significant source of pain and infection for your pet. Bacteria associated with dental disease can travel elsewhere in the body through the bloodstream and can cause life threatening infections in organs such as the heart and kidneys.**

# POTENTIAL POISONS



- **Chocolate:** Lower doses cause vomiting and diarrhea, **Higher doses can cause increased heart rate, collapse, seizures and even death.** The level of toxicity will depend on the type of chocolate – the darker it is, the more toxic it is – and the size of your dog.
- **Sugar free Gum** (and other sugar free) products: Can contain a sweetener called **Xylitol** which is extremely toxic to dogs. Xylitol can also be found in a wide range of products from peanut butter to face wipes. Can cause seizures and even death. Even if a dog survives the initial exposure, they can go on to develop liver failure a few days later. **Particularly a risk because people tend to keep sugar free gum and or mints in things like purses, gym bags and pack sacks – items that are often left on the floor where curious pooches can get into them.**
- **Marijuana:** Increasingly common! **Dogs will EAT marijuana cigarettes (joints) or any kind of edible product – often giving themselves a massive dose of THC.** The most common signs are lack of co-ordination, disorientation and frequently dribbling urine.
- **Antifreeze:** Taste attracts dogs and cats to drink antifreeze which may have leaked from vehicles or containers. **Even a small amount can cause acute kidney failure and is often fatal.**
- **Rodenticide aka Rat or Mouse bait:** Variety of products, therefore a variety of toxins. Anticoagulant formulations cause internal bleeding while other formulations affect the nervous system, and some cause kidney failure. In Canada, rodenticide products are only sold in 'tamper proof' bait stations but one still **needs to be very aware of potential for your dog to get into it – especially when at camps, cottages or in rural settings.**
- **Human Medications:** **Puppies and dogs will eat human medication (prescription or over the counter) if given the opportunity!** Birth control pills, pain killers and antidepressants are common things for dogs to get into – how sick it will make your dog will depend what it is and how much the dog consumed.

If you suspect your dog may have been exposed to a toxin, call us immediately.

705-759-8888

- Have pen and paper handy to write down phone number and other important information
  - **Bring any product wrappers and/or vomit with you to help us determine what toxin and potential dose your pet may have been exposed to.**
  - **Grapes and or Raisins:** The exact way these foods cause toxicity is still unknown and toxicity does not necessarily appear to be dose-dependent. This unknown toxin can cause vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, anorexia, and **acute renal (kidney) failure.**
  - **Onions, garlic, chives, and leeks can be toxic to both dogs and cats.** Toxic doses of onion and garlic can cause anemia and gastrointestinal upset. **Some dogs and some breeds of dogs will be much more sensitive than others.** Onion and garlic poisoning may have a delayed onset and clinical signs may not be apparent for several days.
- Table food and/or Garbage Gut:** Not really a toxin but probably the most common issue we see with dogs eating something they shouldn't! A sudden change in diet, consuming too much food, eating high fat foods and/or bones along with string and plastic food wrappers can cause vomiting and diarrhea – sometimes needing IV fluids and medications to resolve. Some severe cases can result in pancreatitis – a painful and potentially dangerous inflammation of the pancreas. Bones, strings and other food wrappers have the potential to cause dangerous blockages. **To be safe, do not feed your pet table food and/or 'scraps' and prevent all access to garbage!**
- Bones (and other body parts):** We recommend NOT giving your puppy real bones to chew on – raw bones can harbor harmful bacteria and cooked bones tend to splinter and break. Bones can get stuck or cause serious problems anywhere in the gastro-intestinal tract from the mouth to the large intestine. They can also be the cause of broken teeth. Other 'body parts' (hooves, antlers, tendons, pigs ears) given to dogs or sold as treats in pet stores can also be too hard and cause broken teeth or they can harbor harmful bacteria.



# EVERY DAY HAZARDS:

Dogs explore their world with their sense of smell and their mouth - left unattended, a new puppy can get themselves into trouble surprisingly fast! This means the new puppy owner must be constantly vigilant to keep their new puppy safe!

## **Electrical cords and Electronics:**

When chewed, electrical cords can cause life threatening, even fatal electrical shocks plus electronics can be potential foreign bodies or contain hazards like batteries.

## **Socks, Shoes and Underwear:**

Puppies and many adult dogs LOVE to chew on clothing items that have your scent on them - socks, shoes and underwear being frequent targets since they tend to harbor higher concentration of your scent. Not only is it heartbreaking when a puppy destroys an expensive pair of favourite shoes, it can be dangerous - if a puppy or adult dog swallows an article of clothing or even a piece of fabric, it can get stuck in the intestinal tract and cause a blockage (foreign body) that might even require surgery to remove!

**Cleaning Products, Pesticides, Detergents, Medications, Fertilizers** - must all be kept securely out of reach of a curious puppy!

**Other Dogs and Cats:** Supervise and control (with leashes) all interactions with other dogs until confident both dogs are comfortable interacting. If puppy is tormenting another dog or a cat in the household, make sure the other pet has a way of getting away from the puppy so that they do not have to resort to biting or clawing.

## **Automobile Hazards**

**Hot cars:** Mot dogs love to ride shotgun and running errands with their owner can be the highlight of their day - however, a parked vehicle can very quickly become a death trap. The temperature can rise extremely fast and extremely high. Unattended pets can rapidly develop heatstroke and die. Even parking in the shade and cracking open the window does not ensure their safety. **PLEASE NEVER LEAVE YOUR PET UNATTENDED IN A PARKED VEHICLE!**

**Pick-Up Trucks:** Dogs riding in the open box of a truck are at risk of serious injury - even if they are tied.

**Hit By Car:** Never trust your dog to have 'Car Sense'! Even the most well trained dog can and will bolt if they see something that excites them enough. Devastating injuries and even death can happen in the blink of an eye - please keep your dog on a leash when near any kind of roadway!

**Nervous Puppy?** A puppy's early experiences can have a big influence on the rest of their lives. Between the ages of 2-4 months is a window of opportunity to expose a puppy to a variety of people, other pets and situations in a safe and controlled manner so that your puppy develops into a confident, well adjusted dog. A puppy can't learn well if it is frightened - some puppies are genetically pre-disposed to being fearful. If you feel your puppy is excessively fearful and/or doesn't 'bounce back' from something that has momentarily startled them, please talk to us ASAP. Pheromone sprays, nutritional supplements and special diets may be helpful if introduced early.

We have some excellent reading material suggestions to help you with your new puppy.



# EMERGENCY CARE:

The veterinarians of the seven Sault Ste. Marie Ontario Veterinary Hospitals work together to provide twenty-four hours, seven days a week emergency service for their clients.

**If you require emergency service for your pet please:**

- **DO NOT COME DIRECTLY TO THE CLINIC - CALL (705)-759-8888 FIRST!!**
- **Have a pen and paper handy to write down phone numbers, name and address of veterinarian seeing emergencies if out of hours and other important information**
- If our clinic is not open, an answering machine will give you directions for contacting the answering service who will take your name and phone number and a brief description of the problem. The "On-Call" veterinarian will be paged and they will call you right back. They will help you to decide whether or not your pet needs to be seen on an emergency basis. **If your pet does need to be seen, please pay attention to which Veterinary Hospital the "On-Call" veterinarian is calling from so that you go to the right one!**
- There is an additional fee called the "Emergency Fee" to see a veterinarian on an emergency basis or, if you and the "On-Call" veterinarian decide that the problem does not require immediate medical attention, you may be charged a fee for the telephone advice.
- The "On-Call" veterinarian will provide us with a summary of the treatment your pet received and the follow-up care required.

## **Payment is due at the time of service.**

For pets admitted to the hospital, payment is required at the time of discharge. A deposit may be required at the time of admission.

For your convenience, we accept Visa, Mastercard, Debit and Cash. We will accept personal cheques from regular clients with appropriate identification.

Pet Health Insurance may be a good investment if you are worried about being able to manage unexpected expenses with your pet.



## Appointment Booking

- **We try very hard to schedule appointments according to the urgency of the problem, at your convenience and according to availability.**
- Please call at least two to three weeks in advance to schedule routine preventative care appointments such as vaccinations and one to two months in advance for elective surgeries such as spaying and dental cleanings. Office appointments for examinations and routine vaccinations are scheduled weekday mornings and afternoons. Saturday morning appointments are available occasionally.
- Appointments for surgery or diagnostic procedures such as taking x-rays and some blood tests will require that your pet be dropped off at the hospital between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning (usually fasted) and some surgical procedures require an overnight stay in the hospital.
- Given the busy nature of our practice, **we are unable to accommodate walk-ins.** If your pet requires medical care please call and we will try our best to accommodate you. **If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, please give us twenty-four hours notice.**

**Clients who miss more than one appointment without notification will be charged.**

# TAKE HOME TIPS

- **You are the most important member of your pet's health care team!** We rely on you to both bring your pet to us when you feel something is out of the ordinary and to follow through with our recommendations.
- **Feel free to ask questions** at any point in time and ask for clarification when needed. There is no such thing as a stupid question!!
- **We want both you and your pet to enjoy coming to see us** so please let us know if there is anything we can do to make visits more comfortable for you and your pet. Feel free to stop by any time to weigh your pet or just pop in for a treat - the treat jar is always full!
- **Regular check-ups are an important part of your pet's overall healthcare.** We give every pet a complete physical exam every visit - this is particularly important since pets can't talk! **We must rely on both our observations and the owners observations to identify changes and potential problems.** Vaccine schedules will be tailored to your pet's lifestyles and risk factors.
- **"An ounce of prevention..." At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we emphasize preventive medicine and care.** Routine vaccination and parasite prevention for your pet are an important part of keeping both you, your human family members and your pets healthy. Investing in proper nutrition can prevent a multitude of health problems and save you significant amounts of money in the long run. Keeping a cat indoors and a simple \$5.00 leash for your dog can prevent future expense and heartache.
- **Spending time training and/or socializing in your new puppy or kitten will pay off in the long run.** Obedience classes for puppies/dogs are time and money well spent.. Teaching your puppy basic manners will help him or her grow into more secure and confident adult, will strengthen your bond with them and will make him or her much more welcome in a variety of situations.



The biggest decision you, as a pet owner, make for your pet every day is 'WHAT you put in the bowl'.

Feeding the **appropriate** diet for your pet can prevent a multitude of problems and health issues. The diets we sell are made with premium ingredients and backed by extensive research - they are also cost competitive with many pet store/grocery brands that may not have the same degree of research and quality control behind them.

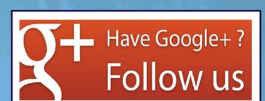
The second part of this statement is 'HOW MUCH you put in the bowl'. **Keeping your pet at a lean, healthy weight is probably the single biggest thing you can do to help them enjoy a long and healthy life.**

For more information about us, the services we provide and other useful information, please go to our website:  
**[www.ssmanimalclinic.com](http://www.ssmanimalclinic.com)**

## JOIN OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY!



(you can find us as  
'SSMAAnimalClinic')







# MyVetStore.ca

Shop for and purchase **premium** and **veterinary exclusive pet foods** (foods available only through your veterinarian) as well as **treats** and **toys** from the convenience and privacy of your own home - and have them **delivered to your door!**

VISIT  
OUR  
ONLINE  
STORE



**Save Time and money, Order Online!**

Instead of picking up the phone, go online! Ordering online allows you to:

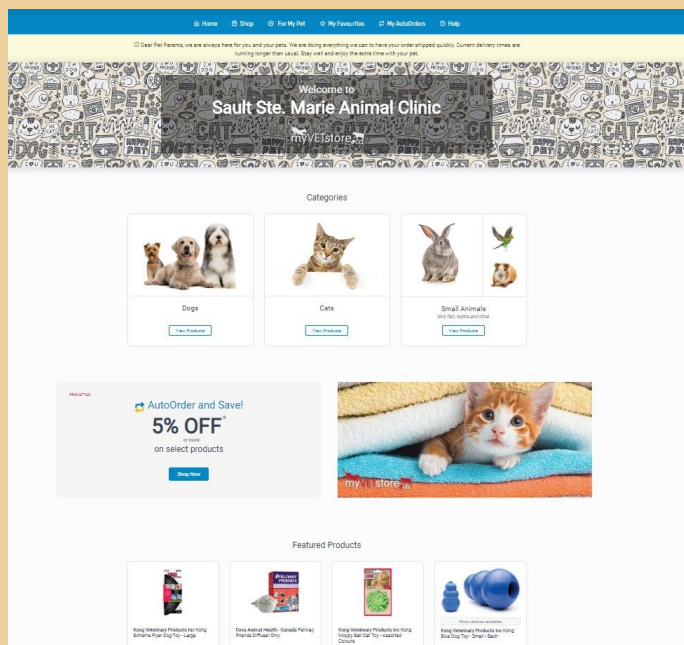
- Order 24/7 – from anywhere
- Express Pickup: guarantee your order will be ready and waiting for you when you come in to pick it up
- SAVE with AutoOrder: up to 10% rebate directly from the manufacturers!
- Home Delivery available - FREE on orders over \$100.00
- Shop from our selection of over 3,000 products including: diets, toys, treats, supplements and much more!

CLICK HERE TO  
SHOP NOW



**Signing up is easy:**

1. Go to MyVetStore.ca
2. Follow the prompts to find us
3. Create account



**Free home delivery on orders  
over \$100.00**

**The ultimate in convenience,  
consistency, and value when it  
comes to purchasing top quality  
products for your pet!**