

# PRAIRIE PAW PRINTS

*Crookston Pet Clinic's Newsletter*



## Welcome!

Happy April! Here at the Crookston Pet Clinic we are continuing to stay busy protecting your pets health! We are allowing people into the clinic for appointments and to purchase the things you need to keep your fluffy friends healthy and happy! Our door will continue to stay locked during business hours, so just give us a call or knock on the door when you arrive. If you have anything you would like to add to the next newsletter please send us an email

*crookstonpetclinic@gmail.com*

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# DID YOU KNOW?

## SILKIES



Silkies are a very docile and friendly chicken breed.



They are the only breed of chicken to have a furry appearance and have several different color varieties.



They are one of, if not the oldest known domesticated breeds of chicken.

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## Dr. Leah's Corner

### News from the Minnesota Board of Animal Health

#### Avian Influenza

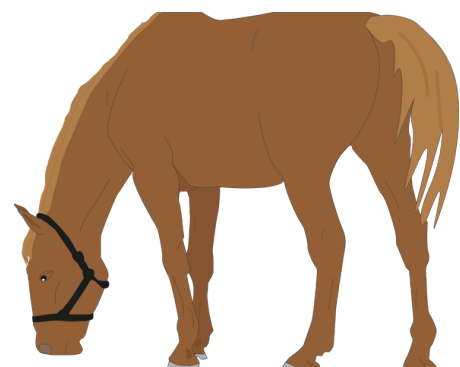
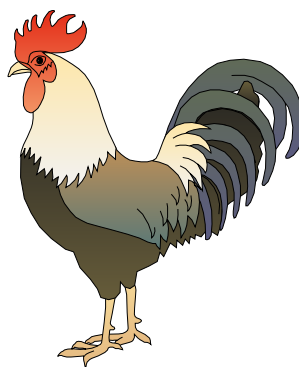
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H1N5) is found in wild migratory birds and is easily spread to domestic poultry. Infection is always fatal. If chickens, ducks or geese are part of your extended family, take steps to protect them Limit, visitors, feed inside a coop, cover and completely enclose outdoor feeding areas. Call if you see extreme lethargy, difficulty breathing, swelling or purplish discoloration of parts of the head or hocks or sudden death in your birds.

#### Equine Herpes Myeloencephalopathy

If horses are your companions, you should know that a case of Equine Herpes Virus - 1 which causes neurologic disease in horses, was found in Olmstead County. This is a highly contagious infection. Some precautions to consider are: do not let your horse contact other horses, especially nose - to - nose contact, do not share tack, grooming, feeding equipment or trailers. Disinfect hoses that have been in other water buckets before filling your own. Quarantine your horse for 30 days if you have been to a competition or exhibit.

#### Antibiotic resistant bacteria

A strain of E coli resistant to the antibiotic carbapenem has been found in dogs in a neighboring state. Everyone should be concerned about the antibiotic resistant bacteria because it effects your health too. Treatment options become more limited and toxic side effects of medications increase as bacteria become more and more antibiotic resistant.



# Smarty Cat Secrets

By Steve Dale for catster

*Intelligence is something some cats are born with, just as some people are more blessed. However, the trick is making the most of what a kitty has early on then to maintain it throughout a lifetime.*

Some cats may seem brilliant because they've been trained to perform all sorts of "circus tricks", like offering a high five or fetching. Of course, the more cats learn, the more they are able to learn. Still, arguably, other cats are even smarter, as they've trained their humans to feed them on command or get petted whenever they desire. We know in humans that learning at a young age ( excellent pre-schools and / or parenting that initiates learning at a very young age) primes the brain. We know in humans and in dogs that continued enrichment and problem solving through life helps support brain health and might delay or prevent the onset of dementia. And, indeed, geriatric cats can get dementia or an Alzheimer's - like condition referred to as feline cognitive dysfunction syndrome. Of course, learning in humans has been well - studied, and dogs are used as a model for brain aging in humans. Staying young hasn't been studied nearly so much in cats. Maybe it's because they're supposed to have nine lives anyway. However, there are lots of assumptions that can be made on results of studies in that species known as dogs, not to mention those few studies that have actually focused on cats.



## Make life interesting:

We know from various studies on domestic cats that brain stimulation and an enriched environment aren't only important for mental well being but also physical health. Cats who live in a dull environment actually are more likely to become anxious as a result and suffer from feline lower urinary tract disease or Pandora syndrome (which can impact gastrointestinal health, the bladder and more.) We also know that increased activity means decreased odds of being overweight and/ or obese. And obesity affects quality of life as well as life span.



## Golden rules of vitality:

We may not be able to offer our cats the fountain of youth - but here are seven ideas that promote and support your cats remaining mentally vital into going their golden years.

## Keep it fun:

Sure, cats don't play scrabble, but they can play games like hide- and - seek or the very popular "find the treat inside the paper grocery bag. Also enrich the environment. Indeed, while cats disdain change, a dull environment may be even more harmful. Some cat toys are incredibly sophisticated, or opt. for old-school, like an empty box with catnip dropped inside. Lifelong learning from kittenhood on, sprinkled with an enriched environment offering mental stimulation, physical exercise and appropriate nutrition, will help your cat continue to be smart enough to run your household the same at 20 years as at 20 months.

## Golden rules of vitality:

### Keep the prey drive alive:

Cats are born predators, and giving cats a safe outlet to satisfy this need allows them to be cats. They may not be able to hunt mice inside your home, but food and / or treats can be hidden in places around the house for them to "hunt". Also, consider food puzzles and food dispensing toys.

### Change diet as needed

As cats age, their dietary requirements change. Through the years, talk to your veterinarian (not Dr. Google) about the appropriate diet for your cats current age.



### Stop the pain:

In humans, we know chronic pain affects quality of life, flexibility and may speed the aging process. Mostly, people are able to communicate that they are in pain. Cats, however, are masters at masking pain. This is one reason why twice annual veterinary visits are important.



### Keep 'em learning:

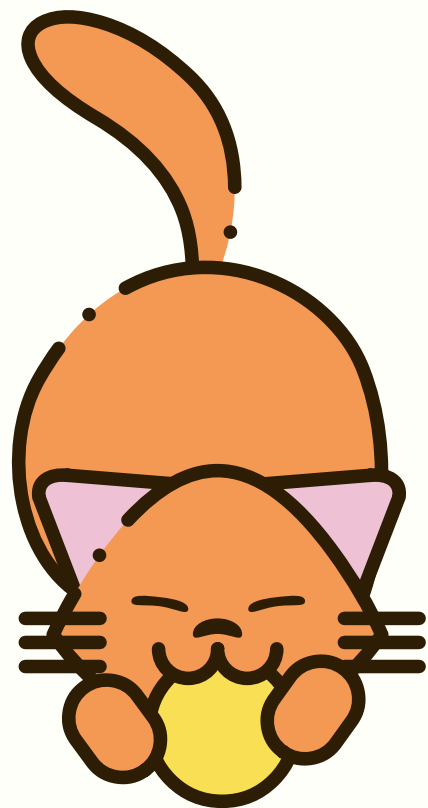
In assisted living centers people are taught to use computers or engage in crossword puzzles or Scrabble competitions. Senior cats don't play Scrabble, but they can learn- just as old dogs can learn new tricks. Numerous studies confirm that lifelong learning in humans and dogs is beneficial, so why would it be any different for cats?



## Ensure they exercise:

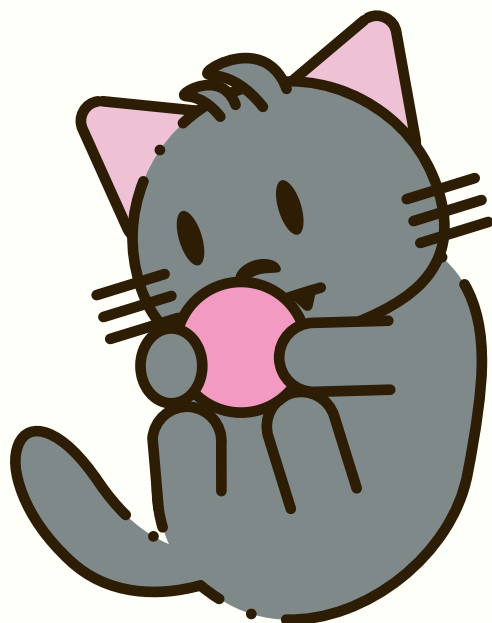
Exercise is a natural stress buster and calorie consumer. It's very satisfying for cats to catch the feather at the other end of an interactive cat toy. Twice daily, exercise can do the trick, even if it's just for two or three minutes at a time. Cat's don't require marathon play sessions- but they do require their needs be met.

Same as in people, exercise generates positive endorphins, which not only have a "feel - good" effect but also are beneficial to physical well- being, including brain health.



**Cat exercises can include playing with a laser pointer, cat puzzle toys, hide treats, food, and toys. Teaser and wand toys are also a fun interactive game for cats that allows them to feel like they're pouncing on their prey.**

**Cat trees can also provide elevated rest or play areas for your kitty. Many cat trees also have scratching posts that encourage healthy scratching behaviors.**





# RETIRING FROM DUTY

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF CANINE FECAL DONOR LUCY PUT THE HEALTH OF DOZENS OF DOGS BACK ON TRACK



*LUCY, A BEAGLE-MIX WHO RECENTLY RETIRED FROM SERVING AS A FECAL MICROBIAL DONOR, POSES FOR A PHOTO. PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY COFFEY.*

BY BRANDI RUPARD

He might wear a collar instead of a cape, but an 11 year-old Beagle-mix named Lucy is a hero to more than a dozen dogs treated over the past two years at the Lewis Small Animal Hospital at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM).

One of them is Gretl, a 1.5-year-old golden retriever whose life was saved thanks to a very special gift from Lucy: her poop.

Lucy is a now-retired fecal microbial donor. Fecal microbial transplants (FMT) use donated stool samples to restore balance to a patient's gastrointestinal biome, which is composed of millions of microorganisms that can support operations of the body like digestion. Illnesses and medications such as antibiotics can uproot this balance and cause additional issues.



"A common reason for dogs to get antibiotics is because they have diarrhea, but dogs that have sort of waxing and waning diarrhea may end up receiving antibiotics quite frequently," says Dr. Emily Coffey, Lucy's owner and PHD student in the Comparative and Molecular Biosciences program at CVM, "That's when we worry those dogs' microbiomes have been affected by all of those antibiotics. They've lost a lot of their happy bacteria, and there is an overgrowth of some of the bad bacteria."

Coffey has a personal connection to the area of FMT. She is a former Lewis Small Animal Hospital internal medicine resident, which is the service that facilitates the hospital's FMT program. When she heard the program was in need of donors, she volunteered Lucy for the role.

Lucy underwent rigorous testing, which meant sending her stool off to be analyzed and confirm she had a healthy biome ideal for donations, according to Coffey. Lucy passed the tests and met the health criteria necessary to become a donor.

## **A LONG ROAD**

During her two-year stint as a donor, Lucy's donations helped more than a dozen dogs recover from gastrointestinal conditions. Sometimes it took one or two donations for the patient's condition to improve. In Gretl's case, it took four.

Gretl's medical troubles began in 2020 when she wandered too far from owners Amy and Ray Leshner at a park and took a drink from a water holding area. Not long after, she began experiencing extreme diarrhea. Even with antibiotic treatments and other care from her vet, Gretl's symptoms continued.

**I mean it was day after day, week after week, food in food out, food in food out. There were times that we were up eight times a night with her," Amy Leshner says. "it was endless, just endless She wasn't gaining weight. You could count every rib, every vertebra on this tiny little puppy."**

**The Leshners were referred to the Lewis Small Animal Hospital for treatment and samples of Gretl's feces were sent off for special tests, the results of which indicated her gut biome had been ravaged by the antibiotics that had initially kept her alive. Clinicians determined a fecal microbial transplant would be the best course of action.**

**Enter Lucy. Her end of the process was quite simple. Lucy did her business, Coffey collected the sample and then sent it to the hospital, where it was liquified using sterile saline and administered rectally to the awaiting patient.**

## HAPPY RETIREMENT

While FMTs are an established medical practice for humans, Coffey says their use in veterinary medicine is still relatively new and protocols vary from practice to practice. CVM chooses to use fresh samples while other facilities have banks of frozen samples. Some practices administer the FMT by creating a pill from samples.

No matter how the FMT takes place, it isn't viewed as a cure-all and is part of a larger treatment plan.

"FMTs are really just one tool in the toolbox," Coffey says. "A lot of times, we have a very multimodal approach where we're using diet and probiotics and maybe other medications in some combination."

Madison Ellis, CVT, is a familiar face during FMT procedures like Gretl's at Lewis Small Animal Hospital. She is often the person sitting with the canine patient and holding them to ensure the sample remains internal for about 30 minutes. The procedure is straightforward, but Ellis says its impact is incredible and she enjoys supporting the patient while it takes place.



*GRETl, NOW A HEALTHY DOG, STOPS FOR A REST BY A LAKE. PHOTO COURTESY OF AMY LESHER.*

We just talk to them and cuddle them," Ellis says. "It's just like kind of relaxing and there's nothing negative that can come out of it besides a little bit of poop." When it came time for Lucy to retire due to her age, Ellis organized a party for her in December 2021, inviting owners of pets who had received an FMT using Lucy's samples to send in well wishes and thank yous.

Amy and Ray Leshner were among those expressing their gratitude. Gretl has made steady improvements since her last transplant. The Leshners are still cautious after their experience, but they've watched their sick puppy bloom into a happy and sweet dog. "We are just incredibly thankful for that service and for Lucy," Amy Leshner says. "they saved Gretl's life. There isn't a single doubt in my mind about that."



## Spring- Time Pet Hazards

- Ticks and Tick-borne disease: Ticks are more than just creepy; they can spread a number of different diseases that affect both pets and humans. The best way to protect your pet is with a preventative treatment. Our clinic carries Bravecto- a chewable tablet that lasts for twelve weeks.
- Antifreeze: Antifreeze is extremely dangerous to pets because most types have a sweet taste and smell. Because of this, antifreeze poisoning is one of the most common forms of poisoning in pets.
- Heartworm: Heartworm disease is transmitted by mosquitoes. It is a serious disease that primarily affects the heart and lungs, but can also affect the liver, kidneys, eyes and central nervous system; if left untreated it can cause death. Fortunately, we have preventatives for that as well. Our clinic carries Sentinel.
- Fertilizers and Mulch: According to the Pet Poison Helpline, most fertilizers contain a wide assortment of potentially toxic substances including iron and nitrogen. They could have pesticides, fungicides or herbicides. Even if the chemicals don't poison your pet, large amounts of fertilizer could result in gastrointestinal or pancreatic problems.
- Metaldehyde: (Slug Bait): Snail bait represents a major risk for dogs and cats and is a more common source of poisoning than you may expect. Snail and slug bait products typically contain the poison metaldehyde, and they taste sweet to pets. It's important that you know the symptoms of metaldehyde poisoning in case your pet is exposed. Watch for drooling, vomiting, panting, anxiety, muscle tremors or seizures.
- Bee Stings: Like people, some dogs can have an allergic reaction to bee stings, especially if stung by multiple bees. Talk to your veterinarian about how you can keep your pup safe from bee stings.
- Snakes: There are 20 species of venomous snakes in North America, and they are found in every state except Alaska, Hawaii and Maine. A rattlesnake can bite your dog even if the meeting is not face - to - face. Rattle snakes can strike as far as half of their own body length. Although they usually warn before striking by rattling their tails, they don't always.



Our Bravecto / Sentinel  
Rebates are still available!

2 Doses of Bravecto & 1 Box of  
Sentinel can save you \$25!!

4 Doses of Bravecto and 2 Boxes of  
Sentinel can save you \$75!!

## Lymes Disease Effects

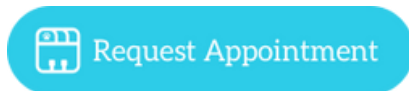
Once ill, dogs can become feverish and lame in one or more joints. They also may exhibit sluggishness, and their lymph nodes may swell. A more serious form of the disease that affects the kidneys often is fatal.



When scheduling your pet please keep in mind that for surgeries we are scheduling about 6 weeks in advance. For annual appointment / vaccinations about 4 weeks.

We thank you for your patience and we are trying our best to squeeze everyone in!

THANKYOU



A smartphone displaying the PetDesk app interface. The screen shows a "PET PROFILE" section with a photo of a dog, and tabs for "Medical", "Lab Results", and "Prescriptions". Below the tabs, there is a notification for "Bordetella Intranasal" with details about the pet's status and the date of the appointment.

**Download PetDesk for Free in the App and Google Play Store!**

Make sure to use the email your veterinary provider has on record when you sign-up.

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