



Veterinary Care and Specialty Group

423.591.0270 | info@vcsgvets.com | 24 Hour Emergency Care
3812 Tennessee Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37409



UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

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FEBRUARY:

National Adoption Days

February 22nd, 23rd, & 24th
Petsmart Highway 153
Times to be announced...

MARCH:

Chattanooga Chomp Flyball Club

Play Dog Excellent in Red Bank
Dates & Times to be announced...

APRIL:

Citizens' Police Academy Health & Safety Fair

April 13th
Eastgate Mall
Times to be announced...

Additions to our VCSG Team

We promised that we would have big news in the new year, and we think you will be just as excited as we are! VCSG is adding two new Doctors to both our Specialty and Surgery departments.



Doctor Mark Bohling, DVM, DACVS, will also be joining VCSG starting in February. He earned a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the University of California-Davis. Dr. Bohling then worked in general and emergency practice until completing his surgical residency at Auburn University where he also earned a PhD. Additionally, Dr. Bohling served on the faculty at the University of Tennessee – Knoxville for seven years prior to entering private practice. Dr. Bohling performs both orthopedic and soft tissue surgeries. All surgery referrals for Dr. Bohling, Dr. Krahwinkel and Dr.

Nunley please contact our surgery referral coordinator at 423.591.0270.



Doctor Jonathan Goodwin, DVM, DACVIM (Cardiology) will be taking appointments two days per month at VCSG beginning in February. Liz Olley will schedule appointments for Dr. Goodwin just as she does for Dr. Pullen. Dr. Goodwin is a graduate of Cornell University, and he received his Doctor of Veterinary medicine from Tuskegee University followed by an internship at Coral Springs Animal Hospital. Dr. Goodwin completed a Master's Degree in Cardiac Physiology and a Cardiology residency at Purdue University. Services available will be full comprehensive consultations and complete

cardiac evaluations to help diagnose and treat congenital or acquired heart disease and malformations.

As always, VCSG veterinarians and technicians are here 24/7 to provide monitoring and supportive care of post operative or critical patients. Referrals may be filled out online at www.vcsgvets.com emailed directly to us at info@vcsgvets.com or faxed to us at 423.803.4073. Please let us know if you do not have a hard copy of our referral form; we'll be happy to send you one!

24/7/365



Friends of the Month at VCSG!



TheHOWL.co

Chattanooga's animal advocacy and lifestyle website.

Featuring shelter links; adoptable pets; pet-friendly restaurant and trail reviews written by locals; Vet Talk; gift guide; a community calendar; emergency contacts; and oh, so very much more.

Looking for something pet-related in Chattanooga?

Don't Google it. Howl it.

info@thehowl.co



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Ask The Vet: Dogs in Winter

By Dr Reid Groman

Written for patrons of "The Howl"

We bundle up in the cold months, protect our skin with moisturizer and tend to pack on a few extra pounds—but what about our canine companions?

This month we received several questions from pet owners in the community about keeping their dogs safe and healthy during severe winter conditions. We passed some of these questions along to Dr Reid Groman, critical care specialist at Veterinary Care and Specialty Group.

Do dogs really need to wear sweaters or coats in the cold weather?

No—most dogs have adequate natural coats. However, shorthaired breeds may be more comfortable in the cold weather with a sweater. Admittedly, breeders of certain breeds are insistent on this for pet owners, but rational procedures (i.e. short leash walks on cold days, return home if your pet appears to be shivering) are sufficient. Some dogs, if not allowed to acclimate to their fashion accessories, will become very stressed by having their entire body covered suddenly, so let your dog get used to a sweater, scarf or boots if you're going to go that route. Generally it's only "necessary" to cover them from mid-chest to the base of their tail. Also, some pets will be reluctant to posture to urinate/defecate when they have clothes on.

How important is hydration in the winter?

Adequate hydration is always a priority. If dogs are predominantly kept outside in the cold, they must have access to adequate water (not snow and ice) and it is easy enough to purchase a water bowl heater to prevent freezing. Be sure the bowl cannot be easily knocked over.

Can salt on icy sidewalks hurt dogs?

The salt can be irritating and potentially predispose dogs to drying out or cracking of their foot pads. Cracking of pads is not common but if it occurs, pet owners should check with their veterinarian, and in the interim can apply a thin film of petroleum (Vaseline) to affected areas. Generally, it's a good

idea to keep the hair between toes trimmed. This hair can accumulate "ice balls" that can lead to irritation and potentially frostbite. Promptly dry off feet when your pet comes home. Ideally, pet owners should use ice melting compounds that are pet/child/environmentally friendly. Pet centers sell dog booties, that again, are not mandatory (and not at all necessary for Arctic breeds!) but will reduce any irritation and help owners feel better about taking their pets out.

Are dogs (like many people) less active in cold weather and more likely to gain weight?

Many people are less likely to walk their dogs in the winter, but most dogs are more than willing to exercise in cold weather. Dogs housed outdoors that participate in strenuous activity will need additional food in cold weather. Indoor dogs that exercise less frequently because it's cold probably need less food. It varies from pet to pet, breed to breed.

Our skin often gets dry in the winter. Does this happen to dogs?

Anecdotally (i.e., no hard evidence) fatty acid supplementation to diets may help prevent dry skin, and myriad supplements are on the market. Again, this is not based on hard literature, but is a common and may be a legitimate recommendation.

Any other cold weather tips?

Puppies and older/debilitated dogs are most susceptible to cold-induced injuries. Though not common, dogs can and do get frostbite. Be sure to clean up any antifreeze spills. Even a tiny amount of some antifreeze products can kill a dog. Clean and dry feet and bellies when dogs come inside. Pets should never be left outside when it's below freezing. Short walks are, of course, okay. Don't leave dogs in the car in the freezing weather. Many animals that get out of the house or run away cannot use scent to find their way back home when the ground is covered with ice. As such, take your dog only on leash walks and make sure your pet has an ID tag and ideally a rabies tag, too! Also, many states mandate that dogs who are kept outside in the cold weather have an elevated dog house, soft dry bedding and a flap or "doggie door" to protect them from frostbite or similar catastrophes. I endorse this.