



Veterinary Care & Specialty Group

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



May 2019 Newsletter

SAVE THE DATE AUGUST 17

Third Annual Continuing Education Conference

Four CE hours will be offered by VCSG.
Time and location will be announced.

Welcome to Dr. P.K. Hendrix

Dr. P.K. Hendrix received her DVM from the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine in 1987. Her first few years as a veterinarian included mixed animal practice and serving as a veterinary anesthetist at LSU-SVM. In 1989, she entered the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine for her Anesthesia Residency and Ph.D. From 1995 to 2001, she served as Associate Clinical Specialist at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine. During that time, Dr. Hendrix also became a Diplomat in the American College of Veterinary Anesthesiologists. In 2001, she began a seven-year commitment as Clinical Associate Professor at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine followed by five years with Nashville Veterinary Specialists as a Clinical Anesthesiologist. Before joining the staff of VCSG, Dr. Hendrix served as a Clinical Anesthesiologist at RIVER for three years. Beside her as an important part of this journey as a veterinarian has been her high school sweetheart and husband, Mitch, who has been a “wonderful and supportive man!” Dr. Hendrix says she is “now happy to be with Dr. Pullen’s team at VCSG.” Welcome, Dr. Hendrix! We are happy that you are with VCSG!

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

St. Elmo Animal Rescue of Chattanooga Spring Adoption Event

May 18
Noon - 4 p.m.
Petco - Gunbarrel Road

Riverfront Nights Summer Music Series

July 20, 27
August 3, 10, 17, 24
Ross's Landing

Welcome to Dr. Michael Krigbaum

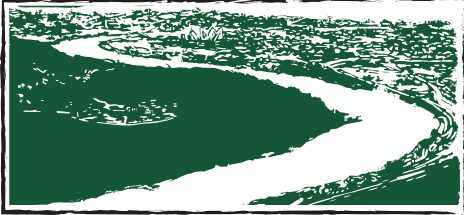
Becoming a veterinarian was Dr. Krigbaum’s second career! Before he received his DVM, he worked in a variety of positions in customer service, outside sales and management positions with a few different companies and organizations. When he made the decision to become a veterinarian, he entered the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine and graduated in 2012. Dr. Krigbaum moved to the Chattanooga area seven years ago from the suburbs of Washington, DC. He comes to us after seven years of general practice in Northwest Georgia at Dalton Animal Care and Dalton Animal Care North. Dr. Krigbaum is “excited for the challenge that emergency medicine will provide.” His interests outside of practicing veterinary medicine include spending time with his wife, Anna, and “spoiling their dog and four cats,” in addition to traveling and running. His favorite running event is the half-marathon. He enjoys watching sports, especially Virginia Tech and any of the professional sports teams based in Washington, DC. Welcome, Dr. Krigbaum! We are happy that you are with VCSG!





Friends of the Month at VCSG

NORTHRIVER



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Ask the Vet: Cabela's Dog Days Event

By: Dr. Jake Barnett

Basics and Proper care for dogs:

1. **Diet:** Often the most important aspect and commonly overlooked
 - a. Puppy food is essential for the first year of life for most breeds. Some giant breeds require puppy food for 1.5-2yrs of growth stages.
 - b. Appropriate adult food until age 7
 - c. Senior food should be given after the age of 7 to meet more standardized requirements for our older pets
 - This diet contains fewer calories, higher quality proteins, and other restrictions such as sodium.
 - d. Hard commercial kibble is ideal for most dogs. Will contain all essential vitamins and minerals necessary. Hard food also helps break down calculus on the enamel surfaces of teeth. Examples of great brands: Hills Science Diet, Royal Canin, Purina Pro Plan, but many other quality diets are available. Ensure that an AAFCO feeding trial is labeled on the bag.
 - e. Other RAW diets and home cooking meals can be done as well, however, typically found are higher rates of food poisoning with organisms such as listeria, salmonella, and clostridium.
 - f. Important note: dietary stray- when making homemade meals many owners forget ingredients or often will feed only things a pet enjoys eating.

2. Grooming:

- a. Routine hair clipping and trims are important to improve the look of the pet, to reduce hair matts and skin infections.
- b. Reducing hair accumulation will help owners detect any underlying concerns with the skin and remove "hiding places" for organisms such as bacteria and yeast.
- c. Helps owners detect any growths or skin lesions that should be addressed with their primary care veterinarian.
- d. Senior pets, Arctic breeds, and those not normally indigenous to this region need regular grooming, especially during summer.
- e. Hair accumulation can contribute to "hot spot" formations typically secondary to an underlying skin disease or infection.
- f. Frequent nail trims are important to eliminate toe nail fractures, pain, and other paw pad injuries. Proper trimming also helps with senior pets when walking on hard surfaces and traction.

3. Vaccines/Visits with a Veterinarian:

- a. Typical vaccine series start around age 6-8 weeks. At this appointment a general check up will help owners and vets establish a relationship and point out any genetic flaws such as heart murmurs, abnormal mouth occlusions, hair coat quality, hernias, and any possible reproduction abnormalities.
- b. Vaccines include both core vaccines and lifestyle vaccines:
 - Core vaccines: DAPP (distemper, adenovirus, parvo virus, parainfluenza), Rabies. Given every 3yrs.
 - Lifestyle vaccines: Bordetella (kennel cough), leptospirosis, influenza virus, rattlesnake. Given yearly.
- c. Schedule of vaccines is generally every 3-4 weeks after the initial visit until beyond age 16weeks. After the last round another series is given at the 1yr mark, then repeated every 1-3 years depending on the vaccines included in your pet's plan.

4. Preventatives:

- a. Many different products on the market. A lot of preventative products are sold over the counter and many work but not nearly as effective as products prescribed by your veterinarian.
- b. Heartworm prevention: Absolutely essential across the country and especially in the southeast region.
 - Heartworms are very common and are transmitted by mosquitos.
 - A monthly preventative is necessary, even in toy breed

dogs, to ensure control of the disease. One mosquito can cause disease and the risk to pets is too great.

- Examples: Heartgard, Triheart, Sentinel, Triflexis, Revolution, Advantage multi, and Proheart 6 injections. All products are prescription and require annual heartworm testing and a Patient-veterinarian relationship.
- Many Heart worm preventatives also contain routine dewormers as well.
- c. Flea prevention: Extremely debated topic
 - Many over the counter products: frontline, canine advantix, seresto collars. All work but not nearly at the same efficiency as newer products. Best products to purchase: Simparica, Bravecto, Nexgard, Credelio. Recent studies have exponentially proven that these products are close to 98% - 100% effective compared to much lower with over the counter products.
- d. Tick prevention: Most often overlooked. Ticks are extremely “hardy” in the environment and often carry diseases: Ehrlichia, Rocky Mtn spotted Fever, Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, Tularemia.
 - Ticks can often lead to paralysis and other types of lameness. Ticks can cause immune mediated conditions as well including diseases such as anemia (low red blood cells), arthritis, and/or thrombocytopenia (low platelets).
 - Products available for best tick coverage are: Simparica, Bravecto, Nexgard, Credelio

5. Reproduction and other preventative procedures to consider:

- a. Spay: Unless using a pet for reproduction is commonly considered a routine aspect of early care.
- b. Spaying prevents numerous conditions including:
 - Pregnancy
 - Heat cycles
 - Pyometras: Very common in middle to older aged females- uterine infections typically requiring emergency surgery
 - Mastitis- infection of mammary glands
 - Urinary tract infections
 - Mammary tumors, which commonly metastasize to other locations such as the lungs.
Research has proven that even spaying before the 3rd heat cycle can greatly reduce chances of mammary tumor development.
- c. Neutering:
 - Some advantages for behavior, however, not always guaranteed benefits to reduce aggression.
 - Testicular tumors
 - BPH- benign prostatic hyperplasia- typically presents in most breeds at middle to older age
 - Unwanted breeding, roaming, and population control
- d. Gastropexy: Common today in large/giant breeds
 - This is when the stomach is prophylactically “tacked” to the abdominal wall.
 - A common emergency concern is a GDV or gastric dilatation and volvulus. This condition is when the stomach in relatively deep chested breeds “flips” within the abdominal cavity. This requires surgery.
 - Common causes of a GDV: heavy meals or eating large quantities of food at once. Often exacerbating the condition is rough or intense play/exercise after eating.
 - Have found in many breeds including: Great danes, Labradors, golden retrievers, Dobermans, rottweilers, irish setters, border collies, and even toy breeds like dachshunds to name a few.

6. Routine Veterinary visits:

- a. Developing a trusting relationship with a healthcare professional is important. They can guide you and explain reasons why an animal needs specific recommendations. Your Veterinarian will be up to date on the latest disease trends and newest medications available for disease prevention.
- b. Oral cavity assessment: Toy breed dogs are known for bad dental health and having your Vet routinely examine will help conclude needs for dental care. Most small breed dogs will need dental cleanings starting as early as 2-3 years of age and depending on diet and lifestyle may require cleanings every 6 months- yearly.
- c. Heartworm screening and prescriptions
- d. Labwork: Many of us consider labwork as necessary in our middle to older aged pets. Important to screen early for diseases such as renal and liver changes.
- e. Heart evaluation: used to detect arrhythmias or heart murmurs so we can step in early and prevent continued heart disease developments.
- f. Other key benefits: Skin evaluation, ocular changes, tumor/growths evaluations, arthritis screening/other orthopedic changes, proper nutrition, lymph node and abdominal palpations.

Outdoors with your dog and hunting dogs - General tips and considerations while in the field:

1. Disease prevention:

- a. Proper vaccination and disease control are most important. These dogs have more exposure risks.
- b. Vaccines such as Parvo virus and Rabies are necessary
- c. Rabies is very important for coon dogs and those coming into contact with animals such as skunks (the most common carrier of rabies behind bats)
- d. Lifestyle vaccines such as Leptospirosis are extremely important in water dogs or really any animal that comes into regular contact with locations high in moisture.
 - Leptospirosis is a species of bacteria that commonly is contracted from wildlife species and typically found in higher concentrations in stagnant water or heavy traffic animal areas.

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- Any hunting dog, especially duck hunting dog, should be vaccinated for this organism.
 - More recent research as also found that toy breed dogs appear to be over-represented to contract this disease due to not vaccinating; so individual lifestyle plays a huge role.
 - Leptospirosis can cause renal and liver failure; considered a zoonotic disease transferable to humans.
- e. Proper flea/tick prevention: oral products are best, especially for those dogs swimming a lot.
 - f. Heartworm prevention is a must and should be given monthly
 - Proheart 6 is a great product for individuals who have trouble giving monthly tablets. This is an injection that lasts for 6 months at a time.
 - g. Spay- Animals in heat should not swim or be active in water. The compromised urogenital tract can increase chances of infection and potentially require surgery.

2. Proper identification:

- a. Micro chipping- Great way to provide a lifelong route for identification and used by every rescue and vet office initially to help try and determine if a pet has an owner.
- b. ID tags and collars: please place phone number and pet name on tags
- c. Harnesses or any other distinguishing features that help identify that the pet is owned

3. Shock collars:

- a. These can be great tools for the working dog if used correctly.
- b. If not in use please remove. The prongs can contribute to underlying skin inflammation and lead to secondary infections/irritation.
- c. Use the setting appropriately: many types have sounds, vibrations, and gradual effective ranges that can be used. In my experience the shock setting is typically not even needed and relaying the sound is enough to control the pet.

4. Vests/harnesses:

- a. Ensure proper fit- Hunting vests, while providing great camouflage, insulation, and a device to grab onto, they often can rub in the inner arms and contribute to forelimb inflammation and rash developments.
- b. Harness: Great tool for controlling animals; avoids collar slipping from neck leads and overall best way to avoid injuries
- c. Retractable leashes: while they do allow much freedom for pets these devices are bulky and often break

5. Common medical concerns with active dogs:

- a. Cruciate tears- Same as the ACL in people
 - Breed disposition is Labrador retrievers, middle-aged, females
 - Commonly seen in active breeds and will require an orthopedic surgery to correct.
 - Canine cruciate tears differ in that they are generally a slow progression with ligament fibers breaking down over time until they eventually break.
 - Without corrective surgery this condition will cause severe arthritis and knee changes with time. Advice is to have it correctly identified and surgically fixed as soon as possible with an orthopedic surgeon.
- b. Swimmer's tail/lumber tail - commonly found in water dogs
 - Usually presents with the tail "drooped" downward and animals refuse to wag their tails.
 - This condition happens when muscle fibers at the base of the tail break down suddenly and cause severe pain.
 - Conditions leading to this are cold water or exercise intolerance. Remember it's important to properly train or exercise pets to condition them for activity. Just like people!

6. Safety and first aid:

- a. If going on a long trip, pack a first aid kit for your pet (antiseptic, bandages, wraps).
 - Cover injuries until they can be properly evaluated and treated.
- b. Respiratory: evaluate your pet routinely and ensure they are not over doing it. Dogs will commonly fatigue and continue without slowing down. Use good judgment and provide breaks and pack water.
- c. High energy diets: Companies such as Purina Pro Plan offer sporting breeds diets, which commonly contain high levels of protein and fat to help with more intense work loads. Consider this dietary change during hunting/working seasons.

7. Proper insulation and retrieving:

- a. Remember during those cold months providing insulation with blankets and bedding material will be important. Animals' ability to thermo regulate is great, however, when in extreme cold weather they too need to be warmed up
- b. Warm months: Dogs do not sweat and therefore eliminate heat by panting. Remember that if your own body is facing heat exhaustion then your pet is likely suffering worse.
- c. When pets are swimming, pay attention to the locations they are going. Common concerns are duck hunting dogs getting tangled in decoy lines or hydrophilia/milfoil plants in our local lakes. These plants are very common in this region and can drown pets if not monitored closely.

We all love getting outdoors and taking our dogs with us is an amazing way to bond. Please consider any safety tips and instructions provided to ensure we all enjoy our time outside together!!