



## Veterinary Care in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Veterinary services have been deemed essential by the provincial government and can remain open to deliver essential Veterinary care. However, those services look different in lieu of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

**Please call staff prior to entering the clinic**, as the climate seems to be continually changing and our protocols with them. **The clinic remains open to ensure the continued care and treatment of our patients.** The front doors of the clinic have been locked to prevent access ensuring the safety of both our clients and staff.

Our hours have been modified during this time to accommodate for the extra staffing requirements. A big thank you to Mikayla who has done a tremendous job ensuring everyone has their medications and prescription diets available to them. Clients have an opportunity to pre-pay for medication, Web store items, or food over the phone or through e- transfers. If you require assistance, please call the clinic and we will help.

### Important measures to support public safety

- *physical distancing - stay at least 2 metres/6 feet apart*
- *use telemedicine when possible*
- *practice good hand hygiene*
- *clean and disinfect high contact surfaces*
- *if you are ill, stay home*
- *self-isolate for 14 days if you have travelled internationally ([www.publichealthontario.ca](http://www.publichealthontario.ca))*
- *encourage staff to be responsible with social distancing outside of work as well*
- *evaluate which services are essential*
- *identify high risk households*

**Upon arrival to the clinic, let the staff know that you are waiting in your car. We will bring items outdoors and leave them for you to pick up.**

### Urgent care and Emergencies

We continue to provide essential services and treatments with protocols that ensure the safety of our clients and staff. Please call the clinic should your pet be ill or have an emergency requiring immediate veterinary care. Advise the staff of the nature of the illness/emergency and estimated time of arrival. **If you or someone in your family is ill, or has recently travelled, make arrangements to have someone else bring your pet.** Once you have arrived at the clinic, call from your car, and one of our staff will come out and get your pet. Ensure that



your cat is in a carrier, and dogs on a long leash. Our staff will change out the leash for one of our own. Please safely ensure adequate social distance of 6 feet during this transfer. The veterinarian will communicate to you both prior to and after the pet is examined. Any diagnostic and treatment recommendations and the costing involved can be discussed at the time.

**Telemedicine, emails and phone calls** will play more of a role in the upcoming weeks. The Veterinary Association has temporarily allowed veterinarians the ability to dispense medication without a physical exam, using telemedicine and other technology to assist us. This will not be an appropriate option for all conditions. **A scheduled appointment is required, and an examination fee will be charged.** Without a physical examination, there will be limitations to the information that can be gathered; hence the conclusions arrived at. It will, therefore, be more critical than ever to communicate how a pet is responding to treatments or if you have any concerns. All elective procedures are postponed at this time.

## Veterinary Purchasing: Web Store

The Web Store continues to provide access to thousands of pet and veterinary items delivered right to your door. Delivery is free if orders are over \$125.00 and for automatic food reorders, a discount usually applies. As always, you can order items delivered to the clinic free pick up; staff will call you when your order has arrived. currently suggesting that you allow for extra time for medication and food orders to Fortunately, the veterinary purchasing company continues to prioritize medications. orders are arriving a bit more unpredictably and may take as long as 5-10 days.

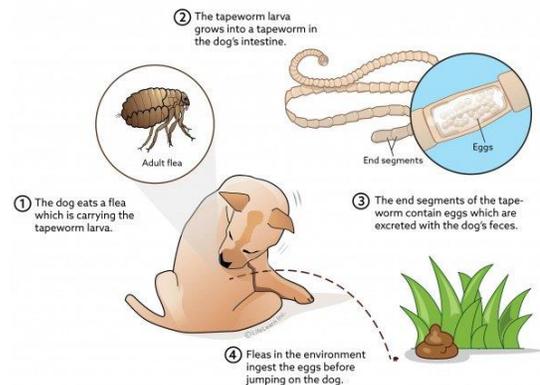


## Flea, Tick and Heartworm Season.. A Review:

Fleas spend the majority of time off of a pet and live in the environment. Prevention is both more effective and less expensive. Until proven otherwise any pet with hair loss on the lower back (in front of the tail) likely has fleas, and maybe sensitivities. A “flea allergy” refers to those pets that are sensitive to flea saliva as it is injected leading to an allergic response, itchiness and self-trauma. In the majority of the cases, the fleas are not seen on the pet. Looking for evidence of “flea dirt” is ideal. (Flea feces when thrown on a wet Kleenex will ‘bleed’ confirming the diagnosis) Flea preventatives are often combined with other products, currently we suggest a product that combines with tick control, against the Lyme disease tick. New this year for cats is revolution plus, now with many benefits including Lyme disease prevention, in addition to prevention of fleas, other ticks, mange, ear mites and some internal parasites.

**Not all scratching animals have fleas. Allergies are another common cause of self-trauma from itching.**

**Tapeworms** can be a sequel for a flea infestation. While grooming themselves, a pet ingests the larvae, which then develops into a tapeworm. Segments are passed, often sticking to the fur around anus. These segments look like rice. As tapeworms need an intermediate host (fleas or rodents), they are not passed directly between pets.



**Deer ticks** potentially carrying Lyme disease have, unfortunately, spread into our area within the last 3 years. This tick is usually associated with forest floors. We have seen a huge jump in the number of pets exposed to Lyme disease; no longer limited to those walking the Oakridge trails. Protect your pet and yourself against this disease. Screening your pet for Lyme disease exposure often tells your family about the risk of human exposure as we often are accompanying our pets. A great reference is the companion animal parasite council website for accurate information on pets and common parasites. <https://capcvet.org/guidelines/lyme-disease/>

Lyme Disease prevention in people from CAPC website:

**“ People should take basic precautions when in tick-infested areas. Such precautions include wearing light-colored, protective clothing; performing frequent tick checks and promptly removing any ticks found; and using repellent products specifically labeled as effective at preventing tick attachment.”**

Flea and Tick preventatives are now recommended YEAR ROUND on our pets. For dogs a tick/flea preventative is usually given Nov-May each year. A tick /flea/heartworm medication is administered between June-Oct.

## **Accuplex**

We usually perform an Accuplex blood test prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>. This panel includes heartworm testing, as well as screening for some tick borne diseases including Lyme disease. (We had 25 positive dogs in our clinic last year). We are seeing dogs infected YEAR ROUND as the outdoor temperature has fluctuated throughout fall and winter.



Please ensure your pets are put on tick/flea preventatives **12 months per year.**

At this time, with COVID-19, blood testing for otherwise healthy animals will not be routinely carried out. If a blood profile for geriatric or ill animals is/ has been run, it will usually include the Accuplex at no additional charge.

Prior to June ensure that in addition to tick/flea preventatives, a heartworm preventative is started. Note please make us aware of any animal that has travelled to heartworm endemic areas prior to starting a heartworm medication. This includes the southern states. These dogs should definitely be tested for heartworm prior to starting any preventative.

**How do I know if my pet is ill?** Watch for changes in their behaviour (straining, hiding, lethargy, vocalization, and aggression), appetite, drinking, and urinating or weight loss. Coughing, vomiting, sneezing or diarrhea is more obvious clue that your pet is ill. Please call should you have any concerns.

A cat that lets you do anything without complaint always concerns me.

An animal that vomits more than once monthly is not normal.

Cats that groom themselves all day will likely have hair in the vomit. Hairballs are overrated.

An older pet will develop age related diseases. Identifying them early leads to both a longer and better quality of life. I often hear "I just thought they were getting old". Age is not a disease, although I agree it sucks to get old. Slowing down? Maybe they have arthritis and are uncomfortable moving. We can help them.

## **What should be considered an emergency?**

Anything that you think is an emergency. No one knows your pet better than you. CALL!!

I will start out with the obvious; the list is not all inclusive and please call if you have concerns. Any pet with breathing difficulty, is bleeding or has obvious broken bones.

Animals that have known trauma, especially involving the head, as well as those ingesting medications or having had other toxin exposure.

Any pet that has not eaten in 2 days, any pet that is straining or inappropriately urinating outside a litter box. Again, if you have concerns please call.

## **Feline Urologic Syndrome**

**Idiopathic cystitis** is an inflammatory process of the bladder linked to stress. Affected animals become painful, are often urinating outside the litter box, or the urine can contain visible blood. Male cats are particularly prone to a urinary blockage as they have a narrow urinary tract. If 'blocked', these cats are unable to urinate, and this can rapidly develop into a life threatening condition. They may be noted to be straining (often thought to be constipated), vocal and can be

seen to frequent the litter box. THIS is an emergency.

The Canadian Veterinary Association, our governing body attempted to answer commonly asked questions pertaining to COVID-19 in pets. Below please find a link to that article.

<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/documents/covid-19-animals-faqs-veterinarians>

Information from Dr. Scott Weese's Worms and Germs Blog, another good source for both parasites, infectious disease and current concerns in vet medicine can be found at: <https://www.wormsandgermsblog.com>

### **Gorham Animal Hospital Website**

Our website contains articles pertaining to common procedures carried out at the hospital, as well as articles about common illnesses seen in pets. We have also purchased the search engine for Lifelearn to allow clients to have access to further veterinary related topics.



Educating our clients remains our NUMBER ONE priority to ensure that you can make informed decisions pertaining to your pets' health.

We are also members of the Veterinary Information Network allowing our veterinarians to access the most up-to-date resources on your pet's health.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic, we will be adding additional video footage to help our clients with demonstrations that we would normally carry out with our clients. If there is something you would like to see here, please let us know.

We will start with common topics including medicating a pet, safe restraint, and nail trimming. If there is something else that you would find helpful, let us know. We would love to help.

In order to allow telemedicine consider becoming Sylvester's friend on Facebook; Sylvester McCat! 😊



Thank you for the continued referral of friends and family and to those who have taken the time to give us a Facebook or Google review. We appreciate you all so much.

We hope you are able to enjoy the additional time with family, and please, stay safe!

FROM OUR TEAM AT GORHAM ANIMAL HOSPITAL..