

# Paw Talk

A professional publication for the clients of East Valley Animal Clinic

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## East Valley Animal Clinic

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## Farewell, Jerry

Friday, January 19, 2018 will be a day that all of us here at East Valley Animal Clinic will forever remember. Our clinic kitty, Jerry, crossed the rainbow bridge surrounded by many of our doctors and staff.

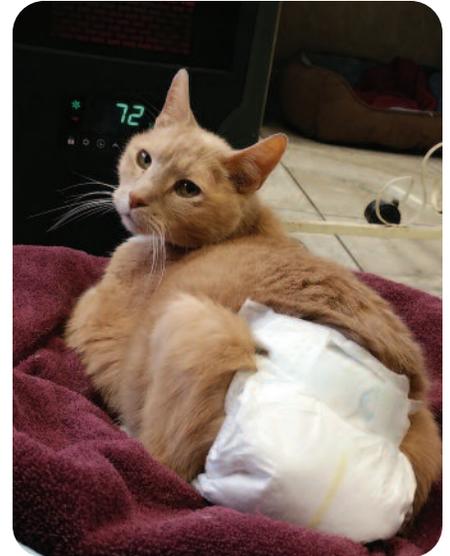
Jerry was an extra special kitty and that left a lasting memory with many of our clients, and will always be referred to as our "diaper kitty." He knew where to find the most comfy of sleeping places, and was perpetually seeking out the yummiest of treats from our staff during our lunch breaks.

Jerry came to EVAC in 2003 after he was hit by a car and had damage to his pelvis that left him unable to feel when his bladder was full. His bladder had to be emptied twice a day by manually expressing it. His owner was unable to perform the task, so Jerry was surrendered to us.

In his younger days, Jerry was a mischievous cat. He would torment our older clinic cats as he tried to get them to play. He would sit on the computer keyboard as we were trying to work. He was also the founder of "the Jerry discount." Jerry would sneak into the food storage room and open bags of expensive prescription food. We would offer those bags to clients at a significant discount!

He mellowed as he aged, which made him all the more loveable. Many would say that he was lucky to live here at the clinic and have all of us care for him, but we feel that we were very lucky to have him. He was the most loving and tolerant of cats. He will always have a special place in all of our hearts.

We love you, Jerry, and will miss you deeply. We know that our other clinic kitties will be waiting for you on the other side of the rainbow bridge. Until we see you again...



## It's a Heatwave!

As summer finally approaches, we want to remind you about the danger of your pet overheating in the warm weather. It is important to never leave your pet in a car on a warm day. Even a comfortable 70 degree temperature outside can cause your car to heat to 90 degrees in just 30 minutes.



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## Recalls

There have been a number of pet food recalls in recent months. Pet food safety affects both pets and humans. In some cases, contaminated pet food poses more danger to people handling their pet's food than it does to the pet.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) oversees the safety of human and pet food. According to their website, "The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) requires that all animal foods, like human foods, be safe to eat, produced under sanitary conditions, contain no harmful substances, and be truthfully labeled." Recalls occur when a sample of food has been found to be unsafe, or if there is some suspicion that it may be unsafe. There are three types of recalls: voluntary manufacturer initiated recalls, FDA requested recalls, and FDA mandated recalls.

Some recent pet food recalls were due to the presence of Salmonella or Listeria monocytogenes. These are bacteria that can cause food-borne illness in humans and pets. Young children and elderly people are at greater risk than healthy adults, and the same is true in pets. Infections usually cause gastrointestinal distress, but can lead to other complications, especially in compromised individuals. Other recalls were due to elevated beef thyroid hormone levels, chemical contamination, and/or the presence of pentobarbital, which is a euthanasia drug. Proper handling and storage of pet food is important. Be sure to keep the original container until all the food has been consumed. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling pet food.

You can keep track of pet food recalls on the FDA's website, at [www.FDA.gov](http://www.FDA.gov).



## Ticks, Pets, and People

New tick-borne diseases are being discovered, ticks' geographic ranges are expanding, and the reported incidence of tick-borne diseases, or TBDs, is increasing each year.

For those of us who spend time outdoors, ticks can pose a serious health threat. Many people are aware of the threat of Lyme disease and a few other TBDs, but Heartland virus, Powassan virus, and Bourbon virus are far less well known. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) currently lists 16 different tick-borne diseases that ticks can transmit to humans. It's still not known whether some of the diseases can be transmitted to dogs or cats, and even in humans, it can be difficult to test for some of these diseases.

The pathogens that cause illness vary. Some TBDs are bacterial, such as Lyme disease, some are viral, such as Powassan virus, and others, like Babesiosis, are caused by microscopic parasites. Ticks can spread multiple pathogens in a single bite, potentially causing co-infections of several diseases, further complicating diagnosis and treatment. In addition, a condition known as "tick paralysis" can occur, which is not caused by transmission of an infectious agent; instead, it occurs when an engorged tick transmits a toxin (which is produced in its salivary glands) while biting the host (dog or human).

An insect or organism that transmits a disease is known as a "vector" for that disease. It's important to note that tick-borne diseases require the tick as a vector for transmission. Different tick species are vectors for different diseases; for example, the black-legged tick is a vector for Lyme disease and the Lone Star tick is a vector for Ehrlichiosis.

Some tick species, such as the brown dog tick, are found throughout the United States. Others are more common in specific regions, but the territories for those species have been expanding each year. Recently, an infestation of longhorned ticks (*Haemaphysalis longicornis*), native to East Asia, was found on a sheep in New Jersey.

While Lyme disease and other bacterial TBDs have been shown to need about 24 hours of tick attachment for the disease to be transmitted, others, such as Powassan virus, appear to be transmitted far more quickly. A study in mice showed an attachment time of only 15 minutes was required for transmission of Powassan virus.

Because dogs are at risk of contracting many of the same tick-borne diseases as humans, and because of the low cost and accessibility of testing dogs for some TBDs, dogs are now considered sentinels for humans regarding the risk of tick-borne diseases.

With the increasing threat of tick-borne diseases occurring across the country, it is now more important than ever for pet owners to be aware of the importance of tick prevention.





# Tick Prevention

Ticks pose a serious threat to pet and human health, but the benefits of spending time outdoors far outweigh the risks, as long as you're smart about tick prevention. Remember, dogs and cats that go outdoors can bring ticks inside, so your prevention strategy should consider multiple factors. Here are some tips:

**Dogs:** There are a number of highly effective tick preventive products on the market today. Products include chewables, topicals, and collars, and it's worth investigating the pros and cons of each. Talk to your veterinarian about recommendations for your dog's lifestyle.

**Cats:** Remember not to use products meant for dogs on your cats, as they can be highly toxic! If you have an indoor-only cat and you don't feel it needs preventives, you should still do a daily tick check in case you or your dog brought some ticks inside. Cats are good at self-grooming, but ticks often still find a safe spot on cats' necks and other places they can't reach with their mouth. If you have an indoor/outdoor cat, tick prevention is especially important. Mice play an important role in the lifecycle of some tick species, so if your cat is a mouser, it will likely be exposed to ticks.

**Buyer Beware:** Be aware that counterfeit tick products have been found on the market, both online and in some stores. These counterfeits may either not work at all, or worse, they may contain ingredients that cause serious side effects to your pets. Only buy products from a trusted source. For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/pets/avoid-counterfeit-pesticide-products-dogs-and-cats](http://www.epa.gov/pets/avoid-counterfeit-pesticide-products-dogs-and-cats)

**For you:** Avoid tall grass, leaf litter and brush while out walking. Wear long, light-colored pants (which make it easier to see ticks), and pull your socks up over the pants. Use bug repellents, and consider buying clothing treated with permethrins (but remember permethrins are toxic to cats). Do a tick check in front of a full length mirror each night before bed. See the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website for more information.

**In your yard:** Create an area that is not friendly to ticks. Keep grass mowed. Remove all leaf litter and brush. Consider putting a three foot wide barrier of wood chips, pea stone or gravel between your lawn and wooded areas. Discourage deer from entering your property. Remember that mice are important for certain parts of some ticks' lifecycles, so reduce the areas that mice find appealing, such as wood piles, old furniture or trash. Consider looking into "tick tubes," which are available commercially or you can make your own.

# Ringworm

Ringworm is an infection caused by a fungus. Despite the name, it has nothing to do with worms. The medical term for ringworm is dermatophytosis. This fungal infection can affect humans, cats, dogs and other animals, and is often highly contagious. It's one of the most common skin disorders in cats world-wide.

There are about 40 types of dermatophytes (the type of fungi causing the infections), which infect the skin, hair, and nailbed (fingernails, toenails and claws). Ringworm sometimes appears as a round, itchy, scaly rash, but the lesions are not always round. Other signs include broken hairs, inflammation, dandruff and excessive grooming. Cats can be asymptomatic carriers, with no clinical signs of infection. Puppies and kittens, senior pets, and immunocompromised pets are at greatest risk. Long-haired cats are at greater risk than their short-haired peers.

Treatment consists of topical antifungal medications, and sometimes oral medications and shampoos or "dips" may be necessary as well. It can take weeks or months to successfully eliminate ringworm.

Environmental decontamination is important when treating ringworm, because the fungal spores can remain in your home and cause further infection. Consider replacing your pet's bedding, and decontaminate hard surfaces with a disinfectant. Vacuuming is the most important first step for carpets, but studies have shown that commercial carpet cleaning works best.

The skin is the largest organ of the body, and many things can cause itchy skin. Fleas, mites, allergies, bacterial infections and thyroid problems are some of the culprits that can cause signs similar to ringworm. Proper diagnosis is crucial for selecting the right treatment, so be sure to visit your veterinarian at the first sign of a problem with your pet's skin.



**"Authors like cats because they are such quiet, lovable, wise creatures, and cats like authors for the same reasons."**

*– Robertson Davies*



## HEATWAVE *continued from pg. 1*

A recent study published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association highlighted some things that can make your dog more prone to overheating in the summer. High risk categories include overweight dogs and brachycephalic breeds. These are the snub-nosed dogs, such as Bulldogs, Pugs, and Boston Terriers. They can become overheated much faster than other dogs.

Overheating can result in heat stroke, which can cause seizures and lead to death.

If you need to leave your dog in the car, you should leave your dog at home instead. It can only take minutes for tragedy to occur.



East Valley Animal Clinic clients have access to VetSource Online Veterinary pharmacy. VetSource offers access to prescription medication, foods and supplements. All you have to do is go to our website, [EastValleyAnimalClinic.com](http://EastValleyAnimalClinic.com), and click on the VetSource icon.



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## Welcome Kaitlin

East Valley Animal Clinic is happy to introduce our newest veterinary technician, Kaitlin. Kaitlin recently completed her internship after finishing her studies at Argosy University, and we were so impressed with her that we couldn't let her get away.

Kaitlin has always loved animals, but she started out her education as an art major. She felt something was missing, and found herself working at an animal shelter. There, she fell in love with helping animals and decided being a veterinary technician was her passion.

In her free time, Kaitlin enjoys hiking with her mixed-breed dog, Jace. She is crazy for card games. She can't get enough of them and will happily learn any card games you have to teach her!

We are thrilled to have Kaitlin join our family. Please welcome her the next time you stop in the clinic.