

Verona Veterinary Medical Service, S.C.

Fall/Winter 2009

655 Half Mile Rd • Verona, WI 53593 • 608-845-6512 • www.veronvetmed.com

CANINE INFLUENZA

Influenza has made a lot of news lately. Canine influenza, also known as strain H3N8, was first reported in 2003 in Florida among racing greyhounds. There have been several isolated outbreaks around the country since then, primarily in dog shelters and kennels. It is transmitted from dog to dog by direct contact, coughing or sneezing, and by contaminated objects and hands. Fortunately, there is no evidence that humans or cats can be infected with this strain of influenza. Because this virus is so new, nearly all dogs exposed to it will contract it. Symptoms vary from a mild cough and lethargy (very much like the "Kennel Cough" syndrome) to pneumonia. Less than 20% of dogs that become ill from this virus develop pneumonia or other severe symptoms and a very small percentage become gravely ill.

So far, there have been no outbreaks of this virus in the Madison area. Most dogs that live in the suburbs and don't travel to dog shows are at a low risk of contracting canine influenza. Dogs that go to day care or kennels are at a little higher risk of contracting the illness. A vaccine for canine influenza became available recently. We follow the American Veterinary Medical Association's recommendations on all vaccines and currently they recommend that ONLY dogs that frequently are exposed to large groups of dogs be vaccinated for it. If the disease becomes widespread or if there are outbreaks in our area, these recommendations will likely change. It should also be noted that the vaccine does not completely prevent dogs from contracting the illness; it usually just decreases the severity of the disease if they do contract it. For more information, please go to: www.doginfluenza.com. If you would like to discuss vaccinating your dog, please give us a call.

As far as the other influenzas making the news lately... a few cats and ferrets around the country have been diagnosed with the H1N1 virus that they presumably caught from humans. These remain rare, isolated incidents and thus far, no dogs have been shown to have contracted this virus. Also, no pets have been known to have contracted the human seasonal influenza virus. For updates on the H1N1 virus as it affects pets, please go to http://www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/new_virus/new_flu_virus_faq_pet_owners.asp or see the links on our website, www.veronvetmed.com.

SMOKING AND YOUR PET

We all know the dangers of firsthand smoking, but did you know that secondhand smoke can affect your pets? Studies have shown that cats and dogs that live with people who smoke in their homes have higher rates of asthma, respiratory infections, and cancers than those who don't. Quitting smoking (or at least stopping smoking in the house) is great for you and your pets! For more information and to post a picture of your smoke-free pet, please go to www.fluffyquits.com.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Carl & Barb Miller and Sue Riley were the lucky VVMS clients to win the \$25 cash prize give-away from our Summer Newsletter. Congratulations! Wishing all of our two and four-legged friends Warm Holiday Greetings from the staff at Verona Veterinary Medical Service.

ANNA'S GROOMING TIP: WINTERIZING YOU PET

Your pet has many needs during the winter months. Keeping your pet warm is just one factor to consider. If your pet's hair mats or tangles easily, you may want to keep a shorter haircut and have them wear a sweater or coat for better warmth. Regular grooming keeps clean skin for better circulation and warmth. Also, the ground, snow and ice melt can be harsh on your pets' feet. Removing excess hair from between the pads stops snow from collecting and forming uncomfortable ice chunks. Make sure to wipe salt and ice melt products from your pets' as they may irritate the skin.

A warm pet makes a happy pet! Call 848-3647 to make a Professional Grooming appointment with Anna today!



655 Half Mile Rd • Verona, WI 53593 • Ph. 608.845.6512

Fax. 608.848.5906 • www.veronvetmed.com

*It is important to keep your companions free of intestinal parasites and fleas, YEAR ROUND.