

CRITTER KEEPER

Willamette Valley Animal Hospital



JULY 2011
ISSUE 23

Super Savings

Microchip Monday

Permanent, un-lose-able ID. Inserted and registered for just \$15 all day!

Toenail Tuesday

Stop that annoying clicking across the kitchen! Nail trims for cats are just \$7, only \$8 for dogs!

Wonderful Wednesday

See a vet for anything! Pay just \$15.75 for the exam all day!

TGI Thursday

Super discounts on vaccines for your pets from 1 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. every week! Rabies vaccine only \$6!

Fabulous Friday

Anal gland expressions only \$10! Feline Leukemia and FIV (feline aids) test just \$30!

Savvy Saturday

Need an exam today? We can do that! Need flea products today? We can do that, too. Get both and SAVE \$5!

Super Savings Sunday

Get TGI Thursday and Toenail Tuesday prices today from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.!!

What NOT to do at the Vet's Office

We all have those moments, waiting in the veterinarian's lobby for our name or our pet's name to be called and seeing that cat clawing up its owners shoulder to get away from the barking dog on the end of a retractable leash (now at full extension) while one or both owners are on their cell phones and the receptionist repeatedly calls for one of them to go back into a room...but no one can hear anything over the barking, hissing and overly loud one-sided conversations. Here's a few hints to make everyone's life a little easier, especially the pets!

Don't fail to contain your cats.

Even if your cat is the sweetest thing on record, some other animals may not agree. A large dog walking in may love to chase cats and whip himself into a frenzy, or worse, Fluffy may get scared and dart out the front door and right into traffic. The last thing we want is to see in our lobbies is an altercation in which one animal dies. Cat carriers are cheap and widely available. Use them.

Don't give dogs free reign.

Don't use retractable leashes! You wouldn't (hopefully) go into an emergency room and lick the face of the person puking in the

corner or the kid hacking up a lung. Your pet's not as discriminating. Some pets are at the vet because they are sick. You don't want your pet to get what some other pet has and if your pet is sick, please do NOT pet other animals, many illnesses are contagious!



Also, not all dogs and cats are social, especially in a strange environment. You don't want to

change your vaccination visit to a "vaccinate and stitch up the big wound on my dog's face" visit.

Don't bring in animals you cannot personally control.

As above. Lack of control equals increased risk to other animals, your animal, and potentially other people. No one wants any of those things, so if you can not control your pet, bring some help. If no one is available, please leave you pet in the car (temperature permitting) or call from the car to check in and we'll come get you when a room is ready for you.

Don't do the puppy park meet-and-greet thing.

The vet's office is not the dog park. It's a strange environment in which pets don't always act the way you expect them to. Moreover, in a veterinary hospital responsibility falls on the doctor's staff to keep your dogs safe. Please keep all pets apart. After all, no matter how well you know your pet, can you

honestly say you know someone else's?

More mixing and more contact equals a greater risk of disease transmission. That's acceptable in many situations where the risk of coming into contact with an infectious animal is low, but the odds are higher in a place where sick animals congregate.

Give the cell phone rest.

In a place as potentially anxiety provoking as the vet hospital, cell phones can be a hazard. Even if you don't feel the anxiety, your pet certainly does. She deserves the comfort of your undivided attention for her safety and her stress level.

Cell phone etiquette is generally terrible everywhere. I enter a public arena and often hear a loud one-sided conversation. That doesn't belong in an exam room. If you are caught on your cell as the veterinarian walks into the room, promptly end the call. If you don't, your veterinarian may just walk out on you. We've done it.

Don't walk a dog into a packed waiting room.

If the lobby is crammed wall to wall with pets, don't chance it. Ask someone to let the receptionist know you're waiting outside. Or use your cell phone for something really useful and just call us!



Don't take a potentially infectious pet into a waiting room, packed or not.

If you have an animal that might have an infectious disease (e.g. diarrhea, sudden onset of coughing and/or sneezing) it would be ideal to call when you arrive so they can take your pet right back to an exam room or isolation for examination. That way, if your pet is infectious, you won't expose other animals.

Don't bring small children unless you can't help it.

A busy animal hospital is tough on small kids. They're not old enough to benefit enough from the educational experience relative to their risk of getting hurt.

Sometimes you have to, but if you can avoid it, that's preferred. Vet clinics can be busy. There are a lot of animals around and it may be hard for a child to resist reaching out for another animal. I haven't seen any data on bites and scratches in waiting rooms, but they certainly occur. As well, if you are distracted by your child, you may not be able to tell your vet all the relevant information or ask all the questions you have.

Don't be rude.

Courtesy is king. Kill them with kindness. I shouldn't have to offer so many versions of the same cliché, but the fact that they all exist is fine testament to their utility.

Being polite and considerate to those around you applies to just about any situation, and generally makes everyone feel better and makes things go smoother.

Don't wait until your vet visit to start disciplining your pet.

Most pets, when confronted with the unfamiliar and sometimes terrifying prospect of their veterinary visit, will act uncharacteristically anxious, fearful, or aggressive. Vets expect this. Veterinarians dread owners, who probably haven't invested much time in training the pet, that resort to screaming and correcting the dog in a volume loud enough that the dogs in the waiting room obey the commands.

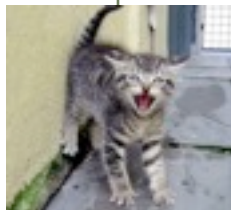
On the other hand, finding the pet's biting, scratching, and fearful behavior funny is just as bad. Don't laugh and think it's cute when your pet bites at the staff. Bites and scratches are serious threats to well-being.

Your vet visit is the time to start disciplining your children.

Ok, this really isn't phrased as a "don't", but you should have as much control over your children as you do your pet.

Children should never handle instruments in the exam room. They are expensive and not designed for little hands to bang and drop on the floor, to break or bend. It's happened.

Don't allow your children to pinch, poke, or otherwise agitate the pet or the veterinarian. That's happened as well. And it's always a good idea to keep your kids away from Fluffy's face



during the exam and vaccinations. You cannot always anticipate fearful behavior and bites can happen.

Don't send your pet in with someone else.

A face-to-face conversation with your vet is invariably more valuable than connecting later via phone or email because your child or neighbor can't recall everything that was said or needed to be done.

Actually being there allows you to view X-rays and see how to administer medication. And don't forget, given the choice, your dog would absolutely, positively want you to be by his side! So, do not ask your mother, your brother, your housekeeper, the kid next door or anyone else to pinch-hit for you.

Unless you've had recent discussions with your veterinarian to arrange a procedure, if at all possible, avoid simply dropping your dog off at the veterinary hospital in the morning before you go to work or school. If this is truly necessary, consider arranging a discharge visit, during which time you and your veterinarian can talk about your dog face-to-face.

When a dog is experiencing significant symptoms or is sick, it helps to have all the decision-makers present at the time of the office visit.

If this is difficult to arrange, the person present should take notes, and even consider tape-recording the conversation with the vet. This is useful, since details inevitably get lost in translation - especially when traveling from spouse to spouse!

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Don't forget about our daily specials! There is always something fantastic going on at Willamette Valley Animal Hospital that will save you money and give you the peace of mind that your pets are healthy and well cared for.
-WVAH-



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