

# Lone Peak Veterinary Hospital

## Optimum Pet Wellness Recommendations

Optimum health care can add years to the life of your pet as well as substantially decrease your cost of treating medical problems associated with aging. We make the following recommendations:

- 1. Comprehensive Physical Examinations.** Since pets age 5-7 times faster than humans, a minimum of one physical examination annually is a must to detect problems as soon as possible. Exams are recommended twice yearly for pets over 7 years.
- 2. Laboratory Screening For Disease.** Many medical problems can be diagnosed through the use of laboratory diagnostic testing long before clinical signs of disease become evident. Specific recommendations can be made for your individual pet. We also recommend pre-surgical blood testing prior to any anesthetic procedure, at any age, as with people.
- 3. Spaying and Neutering Your Pet.** We recommend spaying or neutering at 4-6 months of age. Spaying a female dog or cat before age 2 years helps to prevent breast cancer and dangerous infections. Intact male dogs and cats tend to be more aggressive and roam, putting them in harm's way. They also tend to mark or spray urine in the house.
- 4. Keep Your Pet Under Control.** Letting pets run loose takes years off their lives. Statistics show pets who spend the majority of their lives outdoors do not live as long. Be sure your pet wears an ID tag and is microchipped. Lost pets without ID tags or a microchip are seldom returned home. Microchipping is easy and affordable.
- 5. Nutrition.** Feed the highest quality pet food you can afford. "Premium" foods are more digestible and result in less stool volume. Ask for our recommendations. It is best to avoid table scraps because they can lead to many serious problems. Water is the most necessary nutrient for good health. Any changes in water consumption should be brought to our attention.

- 6. Vaccinations.** Maintaining appropriate vaccinations prevents many serious diseases. Vaccination recommendations will be individualized for each pet based on breed, age, physical condition, regional diseases, etc.
- 7. Heartworm Prevention.** Heartworms are a serious and deadly problem. The American Heartworm Society recommends that all pets should be on heartworm prevention all year long and tested annually. Certain heartworm preventatives also protect dogs from getting intestinal parasites that are infectious to people. Children are especially at risk for these diseases, one of which can cause blindness.
- 8. Prevent Obesity.** Extra pounds burden the heart, kidneys, muscles, and joints, decreasing life expectancy 30%-50%. It is much harder to lose weight than to prevent the weight gain. If your pet is prone to weight gain, feeding diets made to maintain weight and limiting access to food are important for weight control. Ask our educated staff for recommendations.
- 9. Dental Hygiene.** Tartar buildup is a result of bacterial infection in the mouth and leads to periodontitis. Bad breath is often the first sign of dental disease. Unfortunately, left untreated, this may lead to tooth loss and pain. In addition, many respiratory, kidney, liver, and heart infections are a result of bacteria spreading from the mouth.  
  
Dental exams, routine use of dental products, and dental scaling/polishing are important for a healthy mouth. Many pets require an annual preventative dentistry. This does require general anesthesia, but is routinely done. We also do dental X-rays to help us assess tooth health.

**Thank you for bringing your pet to Lone Peak!**