



# Pet Trails

A publication made especially for the clients of Hudson Road Animal Hospital.

Hudson Road Animal Hospital  
8154 Hudson Road  
Woodbury, Minnesota, 55125  
www.hrah-pa.com  
651-739-0117

## HOSPITAL HOURS:

Monday-Thursday 8am-8pm  
Friday 8am-6pm  
Saturday 8am-2pm  
Early drop-off available  
every morning at 7:30am

Dr. Ronald Clappier Dr. Michael Westfall  
Dr. Jodene Beck Dr. Carolyn Fletcher  
Dr. John Clappier

## Walk for Animals

The Animal Humane Society's annual *Walk for Animals* will be held at Theodore Wirth Park in Golden Valley on Saturday, May 1st, and the HRAH team will be there walking with our own pets. We would like to invite all our clients to join us in walking and raising money for animals in need.

The day's festivities include more than 50 booths with pet toys, food and entertainment! Last year, pet owners brought their dogs, cats, ponies, pot-bellied pigs, a wallaby and a hyacinth macaw.

In addition to funds raised throughout the year for the Animal Humane Society, Hudson Road raised more than \$1,000 towards the Walk for Animals with our clients' help. This year, our goal is \$3,000 and we know we can do it! If you and your pets would like to be a part of the HRAH Team on May 1st, give us a call.

Donations may be dropped off at Hudson Road Animal Hospital or at [www.animalhumanesociety.org](http://www.animalhumanesociety.org).

## Leptospirosis in Dogs

Leptospirosis is a potentially fatal bacterial disease that can be found in most animals, including livestock (cattle, sheep and pigs) and wildlife (raccoons, deer, opossums, rats and other rodents). The bacterium is passed through the urine and into water sources where it can reproduce and remain infective for a long time. Because of the widespread nature of this bacterium, nearly any dog can be potentially exposed; whether walking in damp areas, drinking or swimming in lakes and streams, or running in the woods and fields while hunting.

This bacterium is a potential problem in the Twin Cities due to recreational water sports, as well as flooding that can occur in the spring and summer. Bacteria can enter the bloodstream through minor cuts and abrasions in the mouth when your dog drinks contaminated water. Your dog could also become infected while socializing with other dogs at a dog park. The risk of exposure increases as the days become warmer and during rainy periods.

Flu-like symptoms (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, depression and lethargy) are common with leptospirosis. If untreated, this disease can progress to kidney or liver disease. Recently, leptospirosis has been identified in Cottage Grove, St Louis Park and St Paul. Many of these dogs were house dogs living typical suburban and urban lives.

Treatment includes supportive care and antibiotics. The safest approach is prevention: a vaccine is available for this disease. Initially, two doses are given about three to four weeks apart. From that time on, annual vaccination can prevent leptospirosis for most dogs. These vaccines are safe and affordable.

Interestingly enough, cats seem to have some natural resistance. In addition, cats are predominantly indoor in our area and have very limited potential for exposure.

People can get leptospirosis. The Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta estimates that there are more than 200 human cases each year. While the disease is rarely fatal in people, it can cause significant damage to our kidneys and liver. We can avoid exposure by wearing protective clothing and practicing good sanitation habits (washing hands).



**Vectra**  
3D™

We are now offering Vectra Flea and Tick Prevention. Vectra repels and kills fleas, ticks, mosquitoes, lice, mites and sand flies. Ask us about it next time you visit for flea and tick prevention!



## Southpaw

Is your cat a lefty or a righty? It may depend on its sex. According to a study published in the journal *Animal Behavior*, male domestic cats tend to be "southpaws," that is, they tend to preferentially use their front left paw for certain complex tasks, and females use their right paw.

Dr. Deborah Wells of Queens University Belfast, Ireland, studied paw preference in cats in their homes with their owners present. Researchers gave cats three different tests of varying complexity and recorded which paw the cats initially used. Each test was repeated 100 times. Forty-two neutered adult cats (21 males and 21 females) participated in the study.

In the most complex task, cats were presented with glass jars containing tuna that they were unable to retrieve with their mouth. The cats were observed as they attempted to extract the treat with their paws. Almost all the males used their left paw, and nearly all the females used their right.

Statistically, in the less complex tasks the cats were ambidextrous. No age-related preferences were observed.

You can try this test at home! Show your cat the morsel of food in the jar first, then place the jar directly in front of your cat, so that you do not influence which paw he or she chooses to use.

# Allergies

For many people, spring heralds the beginning of allergy season. An allergic reaction occurs when our immune system, which is responsible for protecting us against foreign invaders such as bacteria and viruses, overreacts to a substance. Pets can suffer from allergies too, although their symptoms are usually very different from humans'.

Itchy skin is the most common symptom of allergies in pets, so if your dog or cat displays frequent scratching or excessive licking (especially the face and paws), you may be dealing with allergies. Some pets will develop "hot spots," or "acute moist dermatitis," in response to an allergy. One tell-tale sign that your dog has been licking its paws might be a reddish-brown discoloration of the fur on the paws and between the pads. Other symptoms include ear infections in dogs, and lip ulcers or other oral problems in cats. Left untreated, these symptoms may get progressively worse and lead to more complicated problems.

**Inhalant allergies** are the most common allergies in pets. Environmental allergens such as pollen, dust, mildew and mold can all be culprits. These allergies can be seasonal, or your pet may suffer year-round if the allergen is in the home. Most pets that have inhalant allergies are actually allergic to more than one thing, making it even more difficult to nail down the cause.

**Contact allergies** are not common in pets, but they do occur. For example, the chemicals in flea collars can become an allergen for some pets.

**Food allergies** and food sensitivities can develop at any time, even if your pet has been eating the same food for years. In addition to digestive distress, such as vomiting and diarrhea, skin problems are a common symptom. Symptoms are usually caused by a reaction to a protein or carbohydrate molecule found in one or more ingredients in your pet's diet. The molecule causing the reaction can be found in any ingredient that is part of your pet's diet, including food, treats, human food and flavored medicines.



**Flea allergies** are common in pets. The allergen is actually the flea saliva, not the flea, and pets with these allergies can suffer from significant reactions to a single flea.

There are many potential causes of skin problems in dogs and cats, so when diagnosing allergies, your veterinarian must also rule out other possibilities, such as parasites or a thyroid condition. Identifying specific allergen(s) can be difficult. Skin and blood tests are available for some allergies, and the process of elimination may be used for others, especially when food allergies are suspected.

Allergies cannot be cured—they are chronic conditions—however they can usually be managed. Treatments vary depending on the allergens and symptoms, and may involve food or environmental changes, immunosuppressants, allergy shots, antihistamines or steroids. Patience is important, as many of the treatment protocols can take months to become effective because allergens can remain in the body for a long time.

**"There are few things in life more heartwarming than to be welcomed by a cat." – Tay Hohoff**



# MANGE

Mange. It starts with an itch, but can quickly turn into a scabby, scaly skin condition causing untold discomfort to the infected animal.

Mites, like ticks, are not insects but are members of the spider family, in the class Arachnida. Scientists estimate that there are more than 45,000 species of mites, many of them microscopic. A few of those species are of special concern to us: some causing "scabies" in humans (*Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis*), while others pester our cats (*Notoedres cati*) and dogs (*Demodex canis* and *Sarcoptes scabiei canis*).

The classic symptom in dogs and cats is crustiness around the edges of the ears, although the infection may start on the abdomen or legs, and untreated infections may become generalized over the entire body. Hair loss, intense itching (pruritis) and skin pustules will appear, and secondary bacterial or yeast infections are possible. Chronic cases can lead to further disease, emaciation and even death.

*Demodex canis* mites occur naturally in the hair follicles of many dogs, and normally don't cause a problem. Dogs with healthy immune systems usually have no symptoms, but in an immune-compromised animal (especially young puppies or older dogs), the mite population might grow out of control. Other species of *Demodex* mites occur in cats and humans as well.

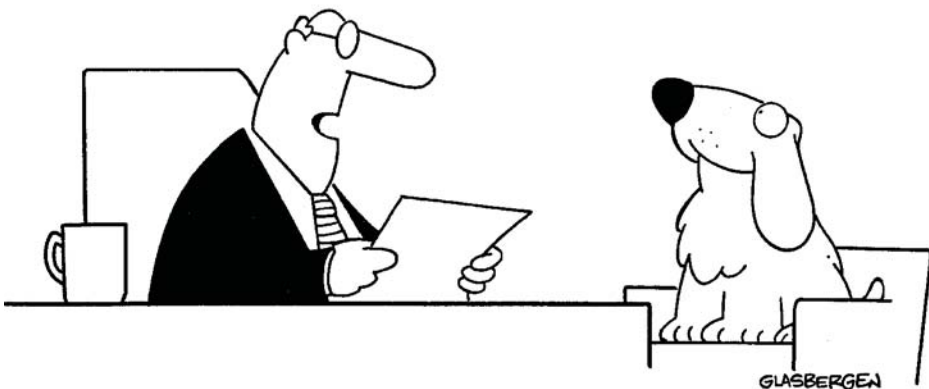
Sarcoptic mites burrow beneath the surface of the skin and cause severe itching, even in a healthy dog. This species is highly contagious to other dogs, and also to humans and cats to a lesser degree. These mites can live for several weeks without a host, so indirect transmission is possible, and asymptomatic carriers may exist.

*Notoedres* mites, which primarily affect cats, are closely related to sarcoptic mites in dogs. These mites are rare but highly contagious, and can be spread to humans and other animals.

Diagnosis is typically accomplished by examining skin scrapings under a microscope; however these creatures are so difficult to find that sometimes a scrape will appear negative even in an infected pet.

Treatments vary according to which type of parasite is present on your pet. Home remedies usually don't work, and prescription medicines can have side effects, so use them cautiously and according to your veterinarian's instructions. Because of mites' lifecycles, it may take weeks of treatment to eradicate the problem.

Copyright 2004 by Randy Glasbergen.  
www.glasbergen.com



**"Loyalty and enthusiasm are the two things I value most in an employee. You're hired!"**

# Epiphora

Brown tear stains are a familiar sight in many dogs, especially white or light-colored poodles and cocker spaniels, and some breeds of cats as well. Overflow of tears onto the face is known as "epiphora," and in pets this is usually due to excessive production of tears by the lacrimal glands or obstruction of the lacrimal ducts that drain tears. Tears are clear, but the stains in the corners of your pet's eyes are dark. The color change occurs when bacteria on the fur and skin reacts with the tears. Often the problem is merely cosmetic, but conscientious owners should always pay close attention to their pet's eyes.

Tears are naturally produced to help lubricate the eyes, and also to help rid foreign objects from the surface. Tiny ducts in the eyelids help drain this lubrication into the nose. In some breeds of dogs and cats the eyes protrude, which stretches the eyelids and makes the ducts less efficient, causing more tears to spill.

Pets can also have eyelids that turn in, causing irritation and tearing. Ingrown eyelashes can cause similar problems. Both issues can sometimes be surgically corrected. Excessive hair around the eyes can be an irritant that causes tears, and can damage the cornea as well. Allergies and upper respiratory infections may also cause tears.

If you're concerned about your pet's tear stains, or if your pet suddenly develops a problem with overflow tears, contact your veterinarian to determine if it is something that needs attention.





Elvis Beck

## Home Away From Home

There may be no place like home, but our boarding facilities come close. We care for your pet the way you want—with lots of love and attention.

Boarding guests enjoy a bright, climate-controlled area that is air conditioned in summer and heated in the winter. Dogs are walked four times daily, and have the opportunity to join in play with other pets. The boarding area is an integral part of the hospital so your pets interact with people during the day.

A doctor is always available in case your pet needs medical attention. A boarding visit is an ideal opportunity to schedule routine vaccines, teeth cleaning or grooming.

Call us for more information or to schedule a stay.

## Farewell!

Kellie Rosenberg has been part of the Hudson Road Client Services team for more than four years, in addition to studying full-time to become a veterinary technician. Kellie will be graduating from Argosy University this spring, and moving into an internship where she will work hands-on in a clinical setting.

Sarah Sprecher has also completed her veterinary technician coursework and will be moving back to where she grew up to start working as a vet tech.

Sarah has been working here for more than two years, caring for the animals that board with us.

Hudson Road Animal Hospital would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to these two team members. We're proud of their accomplishments. They will be greatly missed and we appreciate all of their dedicated service.



From left: Kellie and Daphne; Sarah and "D"



Emily, Matt and Stevie Jo Huppert

## A New Addition to the HRAH Family!

Congratulations to Certified Veterinary Technician Emily and her husband, Matt! They are very proud new parents of a healthy baby girl named Stevie Jo, born on February 7th, 2010.

*We are proud to be an accredited member of the American Animal Hospital Association.*

