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Canine Patients

We, at the Gardner Animal Care Center, have your pet's best interest at heart. We practice preventative medicine and would like you to review our recommendations that may be discussed with you now or in upcoming appointments.

Distemper (DHP-P)

This vaccine is given to puppies at 8, 12, and 16 weeks, and boosted at their annual physical one year later. Then it is given every 3 years to adult dogs. Contrary to belief, this has nothing to do with the dog's temperament but protects against five diseases. It protects against: Canine Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Parainfluenza. These are the most common and serious diseases seen in dogs and they can cause illness and death in unvaccinated animals.

Leptospirosis

This is a bacterial disease of dogs that primarily affects the liver and kidneys. It is mainly carried by infected urine of rats, rodents and other wildlife. Dogs can become infected from contaminated water, puddles and garbage. This vaccine is given to puppies at 12 and 16 weeks of age. Then it is given annually to adult dogs.

Rabies (required by law in the state of Massachusetts)

This vaccine is given after 12 weeks of age, but before 6 months. Your pet will get a 1 year vaccine the first year. The next Rabies vaccine will be valid for 3 years. This is Massachusetts state law. You will receive a Rabies certificate from us that you will need to license your dog. We also mail a copy to your town. You need to license your dog by six (6) months of age and pets that are spayed/neutered will get a discount so be sure to bring that certificate with you as well.

Lyme

We have had a huge increase in Lyme Disease cases and we see ticks year round. The Lyme vaccine is recommended for every puppy/dog. First, it is given as a two (2) shot series (3 weeks apart) then yearly at your annual visit. If your pet has tested positive for Lyme disease in the past, we still recommend the vaccine and at home observation for lameness, lethargy, fever and pain. You may also want to follow this up with Frontline Plus, Seresto Collar, Bravecto or Nexgard to assist in flea/tick bites.

Bordetella (Canine Cough)

This is an airborne infection that is usually caused from being around other dogs. If you leave your pet at the groomer, board your pet or participate in puppy classes, we recommend this as a preventative. Check with your kennel or socialization classes as this may even be required. It is given as an oral vaccine to locally protect against Canine Cough. This is similar to a person getting strep throat. In dogs, it's highly contagious and treated with isolation, cough suppressants and sometimes antibiotics.

4DX Test (Heartworm and Tick Born Diseases)

We use a combo test that not only tests for heartworm disease which is transmitted by mosquitoes, but Lyme, Ehrlichia and Anaplasmosis that are transmitted by ticks. The test is recommended every year.

Heartworm Preventative

As a vital part of the guarantee, we recommended giving oral preventative year round. Although mosquitoes transmit heartworm May to October in the northeast, intestinal parasites can be seen at any time of the year. The preventative we have available is Heartgard Plus chewables, Sentinel flavor tabs or Interceptor chewable.

Fecal/ Stool Sample

This should be done yearly. Please bring a small sample with you to your yearly vaccination visit. Fecal testing is 80% correct. However, because of parasite cycles and the quality of the sample, we may get false results and recommend thorough deworming for your safety.

Zoonotic diseases are transferable to you and your children. The CDC has updated listing of blindness and other health problems due to worm transmission.

Spay/Neuter

We recommend this procedure be done no matter what the age of your pet, but can be done as early as 4-6 months of age. It lowers the risk of certain diseases that hormones and heat cycles can cause. Remember, there are enough homeless pets that need homes prior to bringing more lives into the world.

Flea / Tick Prevention

There are a lot of unsafe pesticides on the market today. Therefore, we recommend Nexgard chewable which is an oral pill that works for 1 month. Nexgard will still allow fleas/ ticks to get onto your pet but will die in 12-24 hours. If you don't want to have ticks attach, there is a Seresto collar. We also carry Frontline Plus topical and Bravecto (3 month) chewable for dogs and Advantage multi for cats.

Senior Diagnostic Testing

As your pet grows, their body changes rapidly- much faster than ours. As part of our preventative medicine, we would like to check your pet's body functions by performing blood work, urinalysis, x-rays, glaucoma screen and blood pressure. Screening for early detection will help your pet live a longer, healthy life.

Junior Diagnostic Testing

This is an excellent baseline test to track changes as your pet ages. This is a window into the body where we can see how the organs are functioning, something we can't do on just a physical exam.

If you have any questions regarding our recommendations, please call our veterinary nurses at (978) 632-7110. We would like you to understand your options and be involved in all of your pet's health care decisions. Thank you for your time and for visiting us at Gardner Animal Care Center.