



**Midnight's Mewsings**  
**Patton Veterinary Hospital**  
425 East Broadway  
Red Lion, PA 17366

# Animal Behavior

By Tara Brunner



Not knowing where to begin when we observe unwelcome behaviors in our pets can cause us to use ineffective or harmful tactics. Many owners will just give up and accept these behaviors as unchangeable.

Behavior is what an animal DOES that can be observed. We can't teach our pets what to be, but we can teach them what to do and when. There are no problem behaviors; there are problem situations in which the behavior is part of the problem. Behaviors can be influenced or changed with different techniques or changes in environment.

Some behaviors may be due to a medical problem. Discussing behaviors with your veterinarian will help to decide if these behaviors can be medical in nature or problem situations. To allow your pet to learn new skills may make your problem less likely to occur.



The following is a list of changes that may help with these problem situations:

1. Physical situation (changes in the environment)
2. Medication (discuss with your veterinarian)
3. Nutrition (scratching, licking, etc. may be due to food allergies)
4. Schedule (frequent potty breaks may help with accidents and set meal times may help with begging, overeating, etc.)
5. Training (professional training may help with frequent barking and aggressive behaviors)

Rewards (positive reinforcement rewards good behaviors)

Please feel free to speak to your veterinarian at your next appointment to discuss options regarding any problem situations you are having with your pet.



## Employee Spotlight



### Kristina Seymore

Kristina grew up in Fawn Grove, Pa, and had many animals including 2 horses, sheep, lambs and cows. She always knew she wanted to work with animals and chose the large animal path first. After numerous injuries she would find her calling in small animal. She is happily married to her husband who is in the military and serving overseas currently. She has 2 boys that keep her going. She enjoys time with her family, riding horses, fishing and the outdoor world.

### Inside this issue:

<i>Behavior</i>	1
<i>Parasites</i>	2
<i>Fleas</i>	2
<i>Feline Leukemia</i>	3
<i>Biggest Loser Update</i>	3
<i>Kids Corner</i>	4

## Parasites By: Tiffany Sipe

### Why we ask for a stool sample...

When we think of parasites, we usually think of fleas & ticks. However, there are many other parasites that live in dirt, grass and sandboxes that are not visible to the human eye. Some of these parasites are zoonotic, which means they can be transmitted to humans.



Fleas have a four stage life cycle:

1. Eggs
2. Larvae
3. Pupae
4. Adult

It takes about 3 to 4 weeks to complete the cycle but occasionally it can be prolonged for up to 6 months!

The eggs are deposited on your dog or cat but since the eggs are not sticky, they fall off into the environment, such as your carpet, couch or bed (eww, gross). An adult female flea can lay 30 - 50 eggs a day and more than 2,000(!) in her lifetime. The eggs hatch into larvae in 1 to 6 days. These larvae feed on flea excrement, also known as "dirt", among other things (again, eww). The larvae dislike light so they burrow down into your carpet, couch, pet bed, or your bed (you could be sleeping with larvae...eww,eww,eww).

Here they molt a couple of times and then form a cocoon wherein the larvae pupates or turns into the adult flea. The cocoon is sticky so it gets coated with environmental debris

There are several different ways your pet may become infected by a parasite...

1. Nursing from their mother
2. Eating wildlife
3. Walking in infected areas, then grooming themselves
4. Contaminated water

Internal parasites can cause several health problems for your pet. Some problems include, but are not limited to, vomiting & diarrhea, decreased appetite, weight loss or poor hair coat.



Here are a few tips to help lower the risk of parasites...

1. Wash your hands after contact with any animal
2. Pick up cat and dog waste daily
3. Cover sandboxes
4. Test your pet at least once a year for parasites
5. Keep on a monthly flea & heartworm prevention - all year

## Fleas are Disgusting By: Carmen Scharf

which serves as camouflage. In other words, you can't see them amongst the dust and dirt.

The length of the pupae stage is usually 7-28 days. However, it can last up to 6 months, which is why it is important to use flea products on your pets year round. The fleas emerge from the cocoons over a period of 2-4 weeks. This is called the "pupal window". Insecticides don't readily kill the pupae because of the deep locations of the cocoons. The pupal window is why, sometimes after treating an area, you will still see fleas later.

As soon as the flea hatches it climbs upward toward the light and looks for its first blood meal, a.k.a. your pet or you (gross!). Fleas feed through a long thin mouthpart called the proboscis. The tiny needle-like tip is stuck into the skin and the flea pumps in saliva to prevent the blood from clotting. (eww, flea spit!). This saliva is what can cause allergic reactions in your pet's skin (itching, red bumps, sores, hair loss). Each day a female flea can drink 15 times her weight in blood and twice her weight in

eggs, amazing but gross.

The mating of fleas occurs on your pet (diss-gusting!) and the cycle starts all over again. If the fleas are not forced off the host, as with Vectra 3D, they will stay there for 3 to 4 months, having a grand old time reproducing and causing havoc to your pet.

Another disgusting note:

Fleas also transmit tapeworms! The fleas eat tapeworm eggs and then when your pet grooms, it ingests the fleas (with the tapeworm eggs inside) and presto, now your pet is infected with tapeworms. So, if your pet has tapeworms, chances are they have fleas too.

So, check for fleas often and use that Vectra 3D!

How to check for fleas:

- Look for adult fleas/flea bites
- Use a flea comb, especially around the neck and hind quarters- it will trap fleas or flea dirt. Moisten a paper towel and wipe the comb on it. The flea dirt will turn a red-brown color from the digested blood.

## *Feline Leukemia* By: Tabitha Clark

Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus



Did you know that Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) are the leading causes of illness and death in cats? FeLV and FIV are found in every region of the United States. FeLV is an infectious disease in cats that attacks and weakens a cat's immune system. It's spread from cat

to cat via direct contact such as sharing food bowls, through feces and during lactation. Symptoms may include lethargy, fever, and discharge from the eyes and nose. FIV is a virus that attacks a cat's immune system, similar to HIV in humans. (FIV cannot be transmitted to humans.) It is spread mainly through bite wounds. Cats that are FIV positive may not show any signs of illness for a long period of time. All cats should be tested for both FeLV and FIV to prevent the spread of these diseases. Early detection of infection can help the doctor treat the cat properly.

Prevention:

- Neuter/spay cats to prevent roaming and fighting
- Keep cats indoors
- Avoid contact with stray/unknown cats
- Vaccinate for FeLV

By taking these simple steps, you can help your cat live a long healthy life and stop the spread of these deadly diseases.

## UPDATE

Pet Obesity and "Patton's Biggest Loser Contest"

Our pets are a large part of our lives and, of course, we want to keep them happy and healthy for as long as possible. Pet obesity can reduce the length of happy years you may have to spend with your pet. It is our job as pet owners to protect and love our animals; helping them to stay a healthy weight is one of the best things we can do for them. At Patton Veterinary Hospital, we are dedicated to client education and have recently focused in on pet obesity by initiating the first ever, "Biggest Loser" program for cats and dogs. The program, modeled after the popular TV show "The Biggest Loser", gives owners the information necessary to make healthy food choices for their pets. "Patton's Biggest Loser" contest consisted of four dogs struggling with their

## *'Biggest Loser'* By: Carley Love and Krista Harbold

weight. Each dog, under different circumstances, was moderately overweight. The "Biggest Loser" team designed a specific diet and exercise program for each pet, restricting their calorie intake and increasing their exercise. The program tracked each pet's success over a 12-week period using bi-weekly weigh-ins as well as owner input on how they thought their pet was doing. Each dog received a consolation prize and the winner of the contest will receive a supply of free dog food. But of course the biggest prize is having a healthy pet to be your best friend for a few more years. Just because the contest is over doesn't mean you and your pet can't be winners, too - ask us about our pet weight loss programs!



# Kids Corner

Add and subtract letters to form the words. Place the words in the correct spaces below to find out what pets need.

1. carrot – rot + ear – ar =

2. uncle – unle + check – c + cups – c =

3. i + dog – og + cat – ca + bags – b =

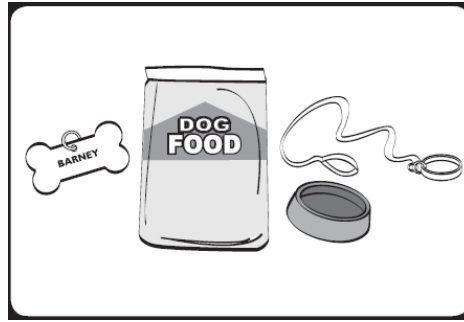
4. yes – ye + helicopter – icopter + it – i + ear – a =

5. Fast – ast + look – lk + hand – han =

6. leash – eash + toy – ty + glove – glo =

7. exit – it + germ – gm + pencil – penl + nose – no =

8. sweater – seter + stress – srss + are – ae =



## Local Shelters

York County SPCA

(717)764-6109

[www.ycspca.org](http://www.ycspca.org)

October 2011 Petfest/ Annual Pet Walk

Animal Rescue Inc.

(717)9933232

[www.animalrescueinc.org](http://www.animalrescueinc.org)

August 27, 28

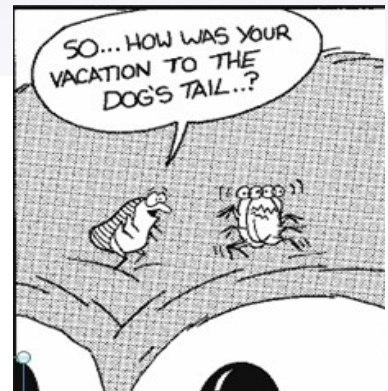
Yorkfest Arts Festival

See websites for wish lists

Animal Poison Control

1-888-426-4435

[www.petpoisonhelpline.com](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com)



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