

# UXBRIDGE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Untreated dental health problems have been linked to serious medical problems.
- Dakota Fischer celebrates her 9th birthday!
- Mosquitoes and Fleas and Ticks...Oh No!!! Keep up with your year round flea, tick and heart-worm prevention!!
- Join us on Facebook and Twitter!!

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# Tail O Gram

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2011

## Every Month is Dental Health Month...

February is known as “Dental Health Month”, but the truth is—**every month is dental health month.** Diet, chewing behavior, and preventative care (such as daily tooth brushing and oral hygiene rinses) are some of the important factors in determining your pet’s risk of getting periodontal disease.

Unchecked plaque in your pet’s mouth allows bacteria to flourish or overgrow, causing dental disease. These bacteria can enter the blood stream through lesions in a pet’s diseased gums. Once in the blood stream, the bacteria can travel throughout the body and potentially impact your pet’s organs. Because of periodontal disease’s affect on overall health, it’s more than a localized problem that leads to bad

breath and tooth loss—it’s also the beginning of more severe systemic issues.

Untreated dental problems in pets have been linked to serious



Does your pet’s mouth smell... not so sweet? A bad odor can be a sign of a serious problem.

medical problems, including heart, liver and kidney disease.

A common myth is that pets are supposed to have bad breath. The truth is an odor is not nor-

mal and is often a sign of dental disease which requires treatment.

### Signs your pet is suffering from dental disease:

- ◆ Bad Breath
- ◆ Red Gums (Healthy gums are a pink, shrimp like color.)
- ◆ Pus oozing from gums
- ◆ Facial Swelling
- ◆ Yellow or brownish buildup on teeth
- ◆ Pain (Your pet may be in pain if he backs away from the food bowl or drops food from his mouth.)

If you notice signs your pet may be suffering from dental disease schedule an appointment with your veterinarian, and remember... **Prevention is the best medicine!!**

## Stella is a Star!!



Dr. Cowan (with her son Ryan, and dog Stella) during her visit to the Northbridge Elementary School.

Dr. Jocelyn Cowan, a veterinarian at Uxbridge Animal Hospital, and her mastiff Stella visited the preschool children at Northbridge Elementary School

on January 11th to talk about dog safety. Students had an opportunity to pet Stella, listen to her heartbeat with a stethoscope, and reward her with a treat. Dr. Cowan talked about how one should approach dogs, emphasizing to ask the owner first. She also gave an overview on what she does when she sees animals at the hospital.

The teaching staff and students

were thrilled to have Dr. Cowan and Stella visit the schools in support of their Animal/Veterinarian thematic unit. (*TheDailyNorthbridge.com*)



# Something to Celebrate...



**Dakota and Dr. Kucia**  
 “Great picture of two  
 specials souls!!  
 ~ Carolyn Fischer

*“Although we are  
 dealing with a rarely  
 curable disease, the  
 animal can be  
 treated in such a  
 way that a high  
 quality of life is  
 achieved following  
 diagnosis.”*

Dakota Fischer recently celebrated her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday!! Ordinarily this might not be considered late breaking, reportable news however; there’s more to the story worth sharing...

In October 2009, golden retriever Dakota Fischer, was diagnosed with Lymphoma. Lymphoma, a disease seen in many species of animals as well as in humans, involves the abnormal proliferation of a white blood cell called lymphocyte (a component of the immune system). Lymphoma is caused by a variety of potential factors such as viruses, genetic components, exposure to carcinogens as well as other unknowns. As in most cases, Dakotas’s enlarged lymph nodes prompted her owner to bring her in for a physical exam. A lymphoma diagnosis is based on tests such as lymph node biopsy, fine needle aspirates, bone marrow evaluation, chest and abdominal x-rays, along with standard blood tests and urinalysis.

Soon after her diagnosis, and under the exceptional care of Dr. Vicki Kucia, Dakota began her chemotherapy treatments. Dr. Kucia, one of the three veterinarians at Uxbridge Animal Hospital, possesses a special interest in oncology--the study and treatment of cancer. Cancer is a major health concern among pet owners as well as the leading cause of natural death in older pets. The three most commonly treated cancers at Uxbridge Animal Hospital are lymphoma, mast cell tumors, and leukemia. **Dakota is one of a handful of UAH’s very special cancer patients.**

Chemotherapy treatment involves the use of several anti-cancer causing agent used

in a set format known as a “protocol”. There are several different phases of chemotherapy in the treatment of lymphoma: the induction phase, consolidation phase, maintenance phase, and the rescue phase. The goal of chemotherapy is to achieve a “complete clinical remission” (to make the animal as normal as possible with no evidence of clinical disease). Although we are dealing with a rarely curable disease, the animal can be treated in such a way that a high quality of life is achieved following diagnosis. Perhaps the most significant factor influencing a pet’s quality of life and remission time are the interest and dedication of the pet owner and veterinarian.

For lymphoma in dogs and cats the prognosis varies greatly and is dependent on a number of factors including: the stage of the disease, “histologic” grading, response to therapy, tumor associated syndromes, and veterinary/owner care. Cancer control, early detection, and prevention are the primary goals of an oncology program, while maintaining an excellent quality of life for the patient and their family.

After a yearlong remission, Dakota relapsed in October 2010, but we are happy to report that she is currently in her second remission

**Dakota’s  
 very  
 special  
 birthday  
 cake,  
 which she  
 shared with the  
 UAH Staff.**



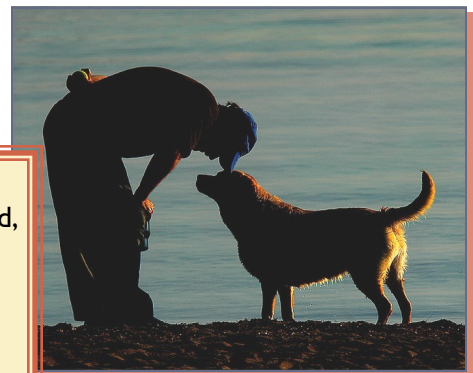
making her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday all the more special! Happy Birthday

Dakota! You are a very special girl who is loved by many!

## Quote of the Month...

An earthly dog of the carriage breed;  
 Who, having failed of the modern speed,  
 Now asked asylum and I was stirred  
 To be the one so dog preferred

~Robert Frost



# H

## heartworms...

- ◆ Mosquitoes can transmit heartworm by biting an infected animal, then passing the infection to another animal.
- ◆ Heartworms, which develop in the skin then migrate to the heart, can grow to more than 12 inches long and can be fatal to cats and dogs.
- ◆ Heartworms impair blood circulation, resulting in damage to the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys. Serious damage can occur before outward signs are detected by the owner.
- ◆ The average lifespan of heartworms in untreated pets is 5-7 years in dogs and 2-3 years in cats.
- ◆ A study performed at North Carolina State University indicated that 25% of cats infected with heartworms were solely indoor cats.

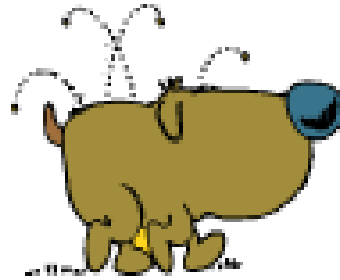


Spring is here...and summer is just around the corner. Be sure to keep up with your year round flea, tick and heartworm prevention!!!

# T

## icks...

- ◆ Ticks have harpoon-like barbs on their mouths to attach to the host for feeding and a sticky secretion to help them hold on.
- ◆ Lyme disease, which can be transmitted to both pets and humans by the bite of infected deer ticks, affects more than 16,000 Americans each year.
- ◆ Some species of ticks lay 3,000 to 6,000 eggs per batch.
- ◆ Ticks are not insects, they are arachnids like spiders, chiggers and mites.
- ◆ Adult ticks live for several years, and in the absence of a blood meal can survive several years of starvation.
- ◆ Ticks must feed for > 36 hours before they can begin transmitting Lyme disease. However, once a tick begins transmitting, it can drop off and reattach to another host and begin spreading the disease immediately!!



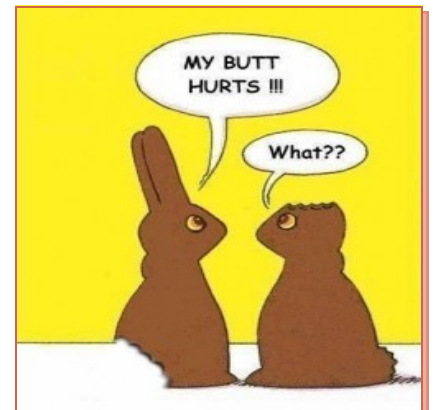
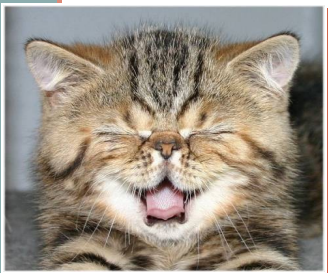
# F

## leas...

- ◆ Fleas are small wingless parasitic insects that live off the blood of mammals and birds.
- ◆ Fleas can transmit tapeworms and can cause severe skin irritation in pets.
- ◆ A female flea sucks up to 15 times her weight in blood and excretes six times her weight in flea baby food: blood-rich, nutrient-packed feces.
- ◆ A flea can jump more than eight inches high - the equivalent of a human jumping over the Statue of Liberty.
- ◆ One female flea can lay 25 to 50 eggs on a cat or dog each day.
- ◆ If you happen to see one flea, there may be more than 100 offspring or adults looming in nearby furniture, carpeting or on your pet.

*If you happen to see one flea, there may be more than 100 offspring or adults looming in nearby furniture, carpeting or on your pet.*

Take  
Time  
to  
SMILE...





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<b>Monday - Wednesday</b>	<b>8:00 am - 8:00 pm</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>8:00 am - 6:00 pm</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>8:00 am - 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>8:00 am - 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>closed</b>

#### Emergency Information

508.278.5869 - During Hours  
401.886.6787 - Ocean State Veterinary Specialists  
508.839.5395 - Tufts  
888.426.4435 - ASPCA Poison Control

**OUR MISSION:**  
To provide the highest quality veterinary  
medical care in a comfortable,  
personal setting.

#### Services Provided:

Preventative Medicine  
Digital Radiography  
Surgery  
In-House Laboratory  
Dentistry



## Join us... on Facebook and Twitter!!

Uxbridge Animal Hospital is on Facebook and Twitter! Stop by and visit our pages for all the latest and greatest Uxbridge Animal Hospital news and information. We look forward to hearing from all our friends!!



### Top 10... Places to Walk Your Dog

*Do you have a favorite place to walk your canine companion? Drop us a note, message or post sharing your pet preferred places. In addition to the location, feel free to include other pertinent details such a terrain type, leashed vs. unleashed etc... So we can compile your feedback to share with other local pet owners!!*

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