

COUNTRYSIDE'S PAWPRINT PRESS

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HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020!

SMILE!



February Is
National Pet Dental
Health Month

Ready, set, BRUSH! Although caring for your furry companion's oral hygiene is a concern all year long, just like us, pets need regular dental care to feel their best and enjoy a much happier mouth. Fresh breath and pearly whites are always a bonus too!

Plaque, tartar, gingivitis, cavities and root abscesses can all cause poor dental health. Oral disease can lead

to serious consequences for pets, including infection, severe pain and organ damage while putting a strain on the animal's immune system. With regular oral health maintenance at home such as brushing, dental exams and professional dental cleanings performed by a veterinarian, many of these problems can be avoided and possibly eliminate the need for tooth extractions.



BEFORE



AFTER CLEANING

There are also supplemental products such as **DuoClenz dental chews**, **water additive** and **Royal Canin Dental diet** formulated specifically to prevent tartar buildup for our pets.

***Common signs it may be time for an oral checkup with your veterinarian include:**

- Bad breath
- Red swollen gums
- Yellow-brown tartar along the gumline
- Oral bleeding
- Pain when gums and mouth are touched
- Frequent pawing at their face and mouth
- Excessive drooling



It is important to note that a painful mouth may cause a change in your pet's eating behavior or routine as well. Your pet can experience inappetence or an unwillingness to eat hard foods due to oral soreness. Sometimes the unexpected happens too! Naturally, both dogs and cats are susceptible to tooth fractures and injuries. Teeth can be broken by chewing on a hard object or enduring blunt force trauma to the face, for example. Inflammation and infection are two common complications associated with fractured teeth.

If your pet has a fractured tooth, your veterinarian may recommend taking x-rays of your furry friend's mouth to review the full extent of the fracture and determine how to proceed. In addition to the dental care involved with fractured teeth, assessing your pet's overall oral health with a full examination is suggested in case there are other issues at hand.

Countryside Kids

In wintertime, people often stay indoors to keep warm along with their pets. It is very important to make sure your furry friend still gets plenty of **EXERCISE**. Like people, exercise for dogs and cats is a great way for them to feel better, be healthy, and have fun! Exercise also helps your pet's weight and allows them to release their energy. Here are some ideas your dog or cat may enjoy:

***Dogs:**

- Walking around the neighborhood
- Playing fetch with a ball or Frisbee
- Running around at the dog park
- Playing tug-of-war and chase

***Cats:**

- Chasing string
- Batting at toys
- Using a scratching post
- Climbing on a cat tower
- Following a laser pointer



Get to Know Your Rescue

Thinking about adopting a new furry companion from a rescue organization? Great choice! In Colorado alone, rescue organizations successfully find “forever homes” for thousands of animals in need each year. Above all, we at Countryside recommend **RESEARCH RESEARCH RESEARCH!**

You can never ask too many questions, not only about an animal you are interested in, but also the rescue’s background information and policies.



Trying to find the best fit for your family and lifestyle can certainly be fun, yet nerve-racking at times as well. In addition, foster and client feedback are wonderful resources for getting to know a rescue.

Here are several key questions to consider prior to selecting the right rescue and pet for you:

*How does the rescue organization acquire animals for adoption and do they specialize in certain breeds?

*What are the living conditions for the animals waiting to be adopted and the overall impression of the rescue’s facility?

*Is there a veterinarian and hospital staff onsite or do the animals go to a local veterinary clinic for medical services?

*Does the rescue maintain a vaccination/disease testing protocol for the animals?

*Are there specified spay/neuter policies?

*What does the adoption process entail? (Interview, fees, owner background check, meeting the animals)

*Does the rescue disclose complete medical records for the animals, as much as is known?

*If things don’t work out, what is involved in surrendering an animal back to the rescue?

Finding the right match for you is essential in animal adoption. This may involve several trips to different rescues or shelters and much consideration as to what type of animal you want. Adopting a pet from such organizations requires both commitment and patience. Most animals in rescues and shelters have been there anywhere from a few days to several months.

While many rescue animals take to their new homes and owners immediately, others may struggle and have behavioral issues at first due to overwhelming changes and their shelter experience. Even though animals may be adopted into loving and caring homes, they still might have some difficulty understanding why they have “lost” another home.

Most rescues and shelters evaluate their animals for temperament and animal interaction on an ongoing basis, giving potential new owners the most behavioral information possible in conjunction with the animal’s medical history. It can be difficult to know exactly what kind of quality of life or living conditions the animal had prior to being at the rescue or shelter.

During the beginning period of adjustment, it is important to remember the animal you have adopted doesn't know why he has come to your home or what is expected of him. Your new furry friend must learn a whole new set of rules. Being consistent with your new pet will help tremendously in terms of training and establishing routines.

Settling in during the first couple of weeks your pet may experience shyness, anxiety, restlessness, excitement, crying or barking/meowing. Excessive water drinking, frequent urination, inappetence or diarrhea can also commonly occur. If these symptoms persist, give your veterinarian a call. An overall wellness exam is always recommended after the adoption of a new pet.



Hesitant about adopting?
Fostering a rescue or shelter animal in your home can be a great first step!

Puppy and Kitten Nutrition 101

Congratulations on the addition of your new furry friend! Providing your puppy or kitten with the proper nutrition right from the start is an important step in their development. Here are some commonly asked questions regarding your little one's diet as they grow and mature.

***Do puppies and kittens need a special diet for development?**

Due to the rapid development in their bones, joints, internal organs, and immune systems, puppy and kitten diets are designed specifically to meet these nutritional needs. Special developmental diets contain more protein plus vitamins and minerals to help build a strong and healthy body.

***Can I give my adult dog/cat the same diet as my puppy/kitten?**

Ideally no. The nutritional needs for adult animals can be very different from that of a maturing puppy or kitten. There is also the potential for unnecessary weight gain due to the increased protein and fats in puppy/kitten diets. Generally, mature animals no longer need to "bulk up" with additional calories and nutrients.

***At what age should I switch my puppy/kitten to an adult diet?**

Around 1 year old is an optimal age to change to an adult diet. A diet change may be recommended sooner by your veterinarian depending on the particular needs of your pet. Gradual tapering off the old food onto the new food will help alleviate GI upset.

***Is it normal for my puppy/kitten to always want to eat?**

Rapid growth and high energy levels can definitely increase a puppy or kitten's appetite. Plus they are still learning the ropes when it comes to schedules, training and feedings. Eating may seem like a fun activity at that moment, whether they are actually hungry or not. Generally puppies and kittens need to eat smaller, more frequent meals. The recommended amount of food per day depends on each individual pet's needs and specific diet type. There should also be a breakdown of serving amounts based on your pet's ideal weight on each bag of food as a reference. Feel free to ask us any questions if you are uncertain on the amount of food your little one should be getting per day.

***Should I give dry kibble or wet food?**

Starting out, your pet's preference will determine which direction to go. Some pets prefer a combination of wet and dry food, while others favor one over the other. Veterinarians may recommend puppies primarily stick to dry kibble, while kittens may eat both wet and dry food. Finding what best suits your new furry companion can certainly be overwhelming at times with so many choices on the market. Generally speaking, the higher cost diets are made with better quality ingredients. It is recommended that pet food be purchased from a pet store instead of a grocery store or discount store.

***My puppy/kitten doesn't seem interested in eating anymore. Is it the food?**

There can be many variables as to why your young pet is experiencing inappetence. Distractions during feedings, dislike of food's taste or texture, lull in a growth spurts and separation anxiety (puppy or kitten doesn't seem to eat unless owners are home) are some of the potential reasons why your furry companion may not be chowing down. Check for any vomiting, diarrhea, lack of bowel movements or lethargy. There may be other medical causes for your pet's inappetence beyond diet.