

doggy daycare and spa

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March 2008 Newsletter

With “Spring Forward” and the Easter Holiday earlier than normal this year, we have high hopes for an early spring which means we get to spend more time OUTSIDE! Yippee! As we begin to spend more time enjoying the weather, you may notice your dog being more tired than usual. If you have a water lover, you may also notice that he/she goes home a bit damp when it gets really warm! We love having the pools and sprinklers out.

If you haven't already done so, we would love for you to bring in a framed 3x5 or 4x6 photo of your dog for us to display in our Reception Area. Since the re-arrangement of the photos after our new paint job, we have more room than ever to display dog smiles!

Important Reminders:

Heartworm season is right around the corner. We require yearly heartworm tests and year-round preventative. Heartworm is contracted by your dog being bitten by a mosquito. While heartworm is treatable, the treatment itself is not pleasant. Please keep your dog safe and healthy by providing him/her with monthly preventative.

We also require a minimum of yearly fecal testing. Many intestinal parasites can be passed from dog to dog exposure. If you have been putting off this important test, please take a stool sample into your Veterinarian right away. We require everyone have a “clean” stool to be able to come and play.

Don't forget... our policy of PRESCRIBED year round flea preventative is for YOUR protection. While it is unlikely that your dog will get fleas from coming to daycare, any time your dog is exposed to other dogs (ie. the dog park, pet store, friend's house) there is always the possibility of passing transmitting the pesky pests. Dogs can also pick up fleas from tall grasses, wooded areas, and wild animals.

Confused about all of the different preventative options? Talk to your Veterinarian about which one is most suitable for your pet.

Dog Food 101

One of our favorite subjects to cover in our newsletter has to do with diet and nutrition. At Doggy Daycare and Spa, we believe that we are all what we eat. (Lately, we've all been a bunch of Tootsie Pops ☺). We believe in the importance of researching dog food and providing high quality diets for our beloved pets. Many foods on the market today are gluten with fillers, sugars, by-products and other things we thought you would prefer we not mention. Many of the most popular, highly advertised brands are the worst when it comes to the quality of their kibble. Just because the advertising and packaging is pretty, the ingredients and process in making the food many times are not.

It wasn't long ago that dogs ate what we ate. If we had stew, they had stew along with the stew bone. If we had pot, pie, so did they. Their diets were balanced, like ours. In today's convenience oriented society where "time is money" it is near impossible to fix ourselves an "at home meal", let alone cook for our dogs! Just as we thrive on Subway on the run, the convenience of kibble and canned food is important for our dogs in ensuring they receive the proper nutrition.

What we think every dog owner should know when buying dog food:

1. Read the label. We believe that if you think to yourself "I would NEVER eat that" then you shouldn't feed it to your dog.
 - A. A popular dog food has beef by-products, pork by-products and poultry by-products on their list of ingredients, PLUS the food also includes "meat by-products." What is the meat? We'll be honest... you do not want to know.
 - B. What actually are by-products? Animal by-products may contain intestines, lungs, spleen, livers, kidneys, brains, blood, bone, stomachs, beaks, feathers, and feet. They can come from "4D" animals... Dead, Dying, Disabled, or Diseased.
2. Be aware of the amount of artificial coloring added to food. The more color, the lesser the quality, we believe. Just because it is round and green, don't be fooled, it isn't a pea.
3. Know that corn has no nutritional value and is used only as a filler. Many dogs have allergies to corn, wheat & wheat by-products, soy, and other common ingredients in commercial food. If your dog is excessively licking their feet, prone to chronic ear infections and/or having skin issues, look at their diet. Some brands carry Allergy formulas with unique proteins and minimal ingredients to help control food allergies.
4. The first ingredient on the label is the most dominate ingredient in the recipe. However, if a food lists several different kinds of rice, or wheat, or potato in the top 5 ingredients, please know that the food is mostly carbs, even when the protein is the first listed ingredient.
5. Don't forget treats! If you wouldn't eat Twinkies for a snack, then why would you want to feed the equivalent to your dog? Once again, read the ingredients. Just because it looks like bacon doesn't mean it is really bacon. At Doggy Daycare and Spa, we only use high quality biscuits for our going-home time treats.
6. Look at the expiration date on the Bag. Many pet stores do not rotate stock as often as they should, so many times we will go home with a bag of food and/or treats that is close to their expiration date. Pet foods are particularly prone to stored product pest such as Indian meal worms. If you notice a cobwebby type substance, excessive breaking, or insects of any kind in your dog's food or treats, discard it right away.
7. At home, do not store dry food in plastic bins or containers unless you will be washing them out thoroughly with hot soapy water between re-fills. Most foods contain animal fats which are absorbed into the plastic and will go rancid, spoiling fresh food that is put into the container. Food should be stored in its original bag inside whatever container you wish.

Still confused? Do research online. Talk to other pet owners. Discuss food with the team at Soldan's. And of course, consult your dog's Veterinarian.