

## Top Ten Pet Myths (One through Three)

1. Myth: Pets don't need yearly examinations especially when they are doing "just fine".

Truth: Pets NEED their yearly wellness examinations even more than we do! Pets age an equivalent of 15 years their first year and roughly 10 their second. After that, they average four to six years for every one of ours. A LOT can happen in that time frame. We see pets all the time with moderate to severe illnesses that appeared "just fine" to their owners at home. Let us help you keep your pet as healthy as possible for as long as possible. Wellness visits are the key. They allow us to find problems before your pet becomes seriously ill.

Preventative medicine is just that. It PREVENTS disease. No doggie should ever have to endure painful, dangerous heartworm treatments when the preventative is so inexpensive, safe and easy to give. No kitty should ever have to die of feline leukemia or distemper. Schedule your pet for their yearly (or twice yearly for senior pets) exam today. It's part of being a great pet parent! Don't be embarrassed if you've missed a year or so. What matters is that you're getting your pet in now. That's all your vet will care about - I promise!

2. Myth: Chronic vomiting in pets is normal.

Truth: By chronic, I am talking about vomiting that is occurring more frequently than once every other month. This would mean monthly, weekly or more frequent vomiting. Chronic vomiting in any species is certainly NOT normal. This is particularly true for cats who seem to have an even more sensitive gastrointestinal system than dogs. Hairballs are not a "primary" problem. They are "secondary" to a primary GI disorder. This is typically a food sensitivity or allergy. Likewise, vomiting is generally NOT caused by your pet "eating too fast". If your pet is vomiting more than once or twice a year, it's not normal! Can you imagine having to be nauseous or throw up even monthly?!?! Horrible. Please see a high quality veterinarian to discuss how your pets vomiting can be cured!

3. Myth: Pets don't feel pain. Truth: Pets have a central nervous system that is almost identical to ours in both anatomy and physiology. They FEEL pain in EXACTLY the same way that we do. But, they do not show signs of pain, especially chronic pain, in the same way. Think of this: In the wild, the animal who shows signs of pain or weakness gets eaten or driven from the group. So, our pets have developed the ability to hide signs of illness and discomfort. Luckily, there are a few ways you can tell if your pet is painful.

- If it would normally be painful for a person, it's likely to be painful for a pet. Surgery is the number one example here. Pets absolutely NEED appropriate pain medication with surgery. Keep in mind that every individual, whether human or pet, has different levels of pain tolerance. Since our pets are unable to tell us verbally what they are feeling, we should ALWAYS err on the side of keeping them as comfortable as possible.
- Limping = pain. You limp because you are painful.
- Difficulty rising or laying down. Inability to "get comfortable"
- Lack of appetite
- Withdrawal from normal activities.
- Walking with a "stiff" or "hunched" posture.
- Changes in behavior. Not wanting to be touched or wanting more touch. Aggression.
- Most obvious, but LEAST likely to be seen: Crying out/vocalizing
- Lethargy or just less "pep in the step".
- Housebreaking accidents or not using the litter box.

Call your veterinarian today if you are noticing any of these signs. She can help you get your pet back on track and free of discomfort!