



Blum Animal Hospital



Paws for Some News

SUMMER 2010

Keeping Chicago's Pets Healthy Since 1952

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Hours of Operation:
Monday - Friday: 7:30 AM-7:30 PM
Saturday: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
After Hours Emergency: (773) 281-7110



Meet Dr. Shule

Dr. Chris Shule grew up in a rural farm community in Walnut, IL, and attended the University of Illinois for both undergraduate and veterinary school. After graduating with high honors, he joined the Blum Animal Hospital team as an Associate Veterinarian.

In addition to treating many of Blum Animal Hospital's patients, Dr. Shule has spent the last several years doing relief work at a local emergency clinic. Outside of the animal world, his philanthropic efforts focus on volunteering with brain injury survivors.

When he is not busy working, Dr. Shule enjoys spending time with his wife, 11-year-old son and pets, Frankie, a rat terrier mix, and Roby, his cat. He also

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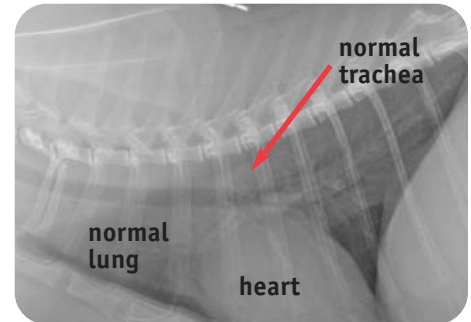
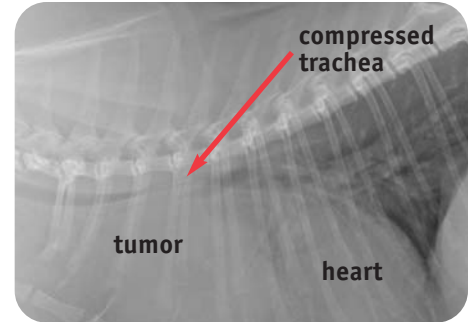


Happy Tails

This past February, Linda B. noticed that Lucky, her one-year-old tabby cat, was having increasing difficulty breathing. With each intake of breath, Lucky made a loud noise and his breathing had become very labored. Linda astutely recognized Lucky was in real trouble and brought him to Blum Animal Hospital for emergency treatment.

By the time Lucky arrived at the hospital he was gasping for air, and we immediately placed him in the oxygen cage of our intensive care station. After Lucky's breathing had stabilized, diagnostic tests were performed to find the reason for his shortness of breath. The tests, unfortunately, revealed Lucky had developed a large tumor (lymphoma) in his chest caused by the Feline Leukemia Virus with which he had been infected. The tumor had gotten so large it was constricting Lucky's trachea, preventing air from getting to his lungs.

Thankfully, lymphoma is a cancer condition that often responds quickly to therapy. After discussing with Linda the options available to treat Lucky's cancer, she opted to have our staff begin treating the lymphoma with a protocol known as combination chemotherapy. The painless treatments intended to save Lucky's life



X-rays show the before (top) and after (bottom).

were started immediately.

The loud breathing noises associated with Lucky's obstructed airway disappeared the day after his first chemotherapy treatment. Two days later, a follow-up chest X-ray revealed the large mass in Lucky's chest had disappeared completely! Lucky had quickly entered the state known as clinical remission.

By early May, three months after his original diagnosis, Lucky was thriving as he continued to receive his chemo treatments. Linda reported that Lucky was playful, running around like there was no tomorrow and eating her out of house and home! All of us at Blum feel delighted to partner with Linda in the care of her beloved kitty.

PARASITE ALERT: With one of the warmest Aprils in Chicago history, the conditions are right for a severe and early flea season. Please contact us for recommendations in keeping your pet free of fleas and ticks.



Fleas & Ticks

According to data from the Centers for Disease Control, tick-borne diseases are on the increase across the country. Ticks can carry and transmit a wide variety of pathogens, including bacteria, viruses and toxins. In fact, a single tick bite can transmit multiple pathogens, which sometimes leads to confusing symptoms of illness.



Symptoms of tick-borne diseases range from quite subtle to severe, and vary by disease. They can include lameness, lethargy, loss of appetite, fever, rashes, depression, and neurological signs such as dizziness or seizures. Some of the more common tick-borne diseases include Lyme Disease, Babesia, Ehrlichiosis and Anaplasmosis.

Fleas are the most common external parasite in pets. They can cause skin problems ranging from mild irritations to severe dermatitis. They can also carry tapeworms and serve as vectors for other diseases that can be passed to pets and humans. Sometimes you'll see fleas, but often you'll only find evidence of their existence in the form of scabs or dark specks of "flea dirt" on their skin.

If you discover fleas, you must treat both the animal and its environment. Indoors, vacuuming helps control flea populations in all stages of life, from eggs to adults. Your yard can be a haven for fleas, especially if it is shady and moist. Nematodes are one way to battle outdoor fleas; they are microscopic worms that kill flea larvae and cocoons, and are harmless to your pets. Look for them in your local garden supply store.

Both fleas and ticks pose a health threat to humans and pets, so it is important to keep these parasites in check. Talk to your veterinarian about the best methods of flea and tick control for your pet. Some products are safe for dogs but not for cats, and almost all products can be toxic if used incorrectly.

A New Method of Care

A blistering nightmare ravages the soldier with images of a horrific explosion in Iraq, until his dog turns on the bedroom light and wakes him, reminding him that he is safe at home. This is not an introduction from a fictional novel; it is the real job of a specially trained psychiatric service dog.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, is an anxiety disorder that can occur after a terrifying event. Symptoms include flashbacks, nightmares, hyper-vigilance and detachment from family, friends and society. The U.S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs (VA) estimates PTSD occurs in about 11%-20% of veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.



Photo courtesy NEADS. ©2009 Winthrop Handy

The VA has recently started a three-year study to "assess the benefits, feasibility, and advisability of using service dogs for the treatment or rehabilitation of veterans with physical or mental injuries or disabilities, including post-traumatic stress disorder." The intent is to pair enough service dogs with soldiers to produce scientifically valid results. According to Fred Barnes of the VA, "We are laying the groundwork for what will possibly be a new method of care, and the VA will be the vanguard of that care."

Separate from the government studies, several non-profit organizations have already started pairing service dogs with soldiers diagnosed with PTSD, including NEADS (www.NEADS.org), whose Canines for Combat Veterans program has matched dogs with veterans with dual diagnoses of a physical disability and PTSD, and *Puppies Behind Bars* (www.puppiesbehindbars.com). In some initial surveys of veterans paired with service dogs, they report reduced PTSD symptoms and a reduction in the daily medicines needed to help control the condition.

Dogs can be trained to remind a soldier to take medication, recognize the onset of PTSD symptoms and provide tactile stimulation to help the soldier become aware of those symptoms, retrieve a portable phone or call 911, and even to act as a "block" from strangers in public, where the dog holds his ground, preventing people from making body contact with his partner while in line, on a bus or other crowded space. A trusted canine companion can also help an individual to overcome the social isolation that often results from PTSD, drawing them outdoors for daily walks and helping them transition back into society.

Bastet

Egyptian officials recently announced that archaeologists have discovered the ruins of an ancient temple that may have been dedicated to the cat goddess, Bastet. The temple is estimated to be more than 2,000 years old.

Cats were revered by the ancient Egyptians, as they kept the royal granaries vermin-free, thus helping to protect the food supply. It was a crime to harm a cat. Among other things, Bastet was the goddess and protector of the home and pregnant women.





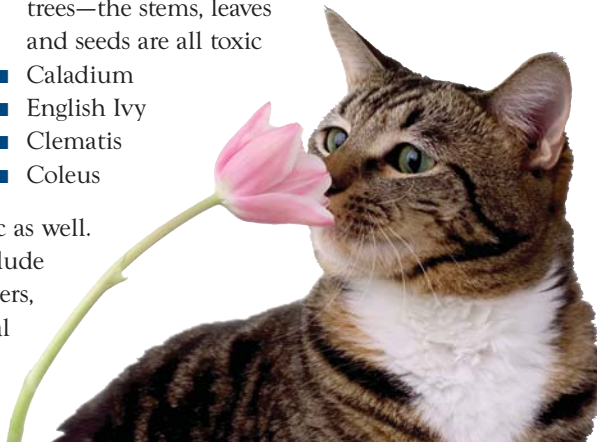
Backyard Hazards

Summertime lures us outdoors, and what could be better than relaxing in the safety of your own backyard with your pets? Unfortunately, there are a surprising number of toxins lurking in the average yard. It's important to monitor your pet, and be familiar with the potential dangers of ingesting certain plants or other items. Depending on the toxin, ingestion may cause irritation of the tongue, mouth and esophagus, digestive upset, seizures, coma, kidney or liver failure, cardiac arrhythmias or death. Symptoms of poisoning could include drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, depression, anorexia, tremors, seizures and lethargy.

The ASPCA currently lists 444 toxic plants, some of which are listed below. For the complete list, look at the ASPCA website at www.asPCA.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/

- Many lilies, such as Asiatic lilies, day lilies and Lily of the Valley (more toxic to cats than dogs)
- American Holly
- Gladiola
- Hosta
- Apple, apricot, plum, peach and cherry trees—the stems, leaves and seeds are all toxic
- Caladium
- English Ivy
- Clematis
- Coleus
- Rhododendron
- Yucca

Many indoor plants are toxic as well. Other hazards in your yard include pesticides, fungicides, weed killers, fertilizers (including blood meal and bone meal), plant foods and cocoa bean shell mulch.



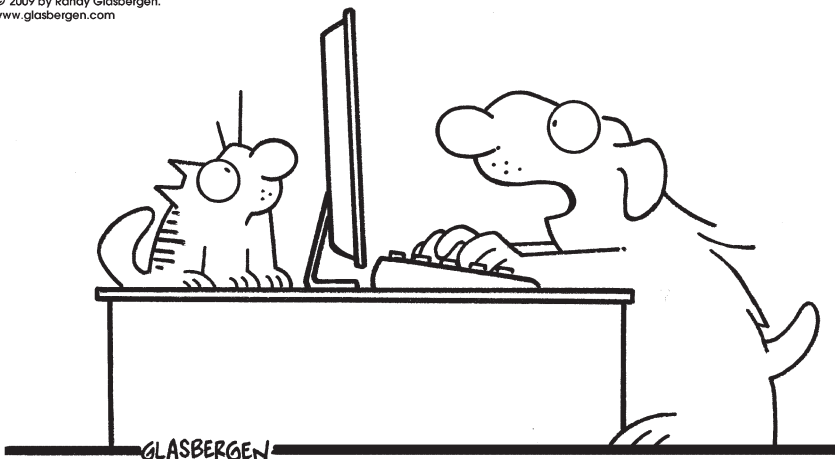
What's on the Menu?

Your barbecue is underway, and your pets are enjoying the attention your guests lavish upon them. All the fixings for a feast are laid out on a picnic table, and when you turn your back to flip some burgers, your dog jumps on the table and starts to sample the food. This indiscretion is an inconvenience for the party, but it may be fatal for your pet — there are a number of foods that are perfectly safe for humans to eat that are not safe for pets. As with plants, the effects of toxic foods on pets vary. Some foods cause minor gastrointestinal distress, and others may damage the heart, liver, kidney or spleen, and cause seizures and death. The ASPCA provides the following list of foods that are potentially toxic to pets:

- Alcoholic beverages
- Avocado
- Onions, onion powder (cooked and raw)
- Chocolate (all forms)
- Coffee (all forms)
- Fatty foods
- Macadamia nuts
- Moldy or spoiled foods
- Raisins and grapes
- Salt
- Yeast dough
- Garlic
- Products sweetened with Xylitol (such as sugar-free gum)

POISON CONTROL HOTLINE: Be aware of the plants and foods that are toxic to pets. If your pet has ingested something suspicious, contact your veterinarian, or the ASPCA 24-hour emergency poison control hotline directly at **1-888-426-4435**. Note that there may be a fee for this call.

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"I can't believe what my fleas are saying about me on their blog!"

"Dogs have a way of finding the people who need them, filling an emptiness we don't even know we have."

– Thom Jones



MEET DR. SHULE *continued from pg. 1*

spends time barbecuing, listening to music and performing minor computer rehabilitation.

Dr. Shule has always been very active in sports. He started golfing at age 5, and also played baseball, football and basketball. He is currently an avid volleyball player, both indoor and beach. A huge Bears and Cubs fan, Dr. Shule can occasionally be seen "ballhawking" with his son outside the confines of Wrigley Field.

If you and your furry family member have not yet had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Shule, be sure to look for him during your next visit.

Dog Friendly Areas

Chicago Park District and City of Chicago ordinances require dogs to be on leashes in public areas, for the protection of residents and the dogs themselves. Some safe, fenced-in "Dog Friendly Areas" (DFAs) have been created to enable dogs to exercise, play and socialize legally off-leash. A list of DFAs can be found at www.chicagoparkdistrict.com. Many are in close proximity to Blum Animal Hospital.

It is important to know that you cannot simply show up at a DFA without some advance planning. To make the DFAs safe and accessible for everyone, regulations require the owner or other responsible person to have a permit and tag issued by a participating veterinarian for each dog entering a DFA. Blum Animal Hospital is proud to be an active participant in this program and will issue a permit for any dog in compliance with the program regulations, which require proof of vaccinations, a fecal test for parasites and a current Chicago dog license. The annual fee is only \$5.00 per dog and the permit is valid from January 1 through December 31. **Violators will face fines of up to \$500 per offense.**

If you have any questions about obtaining a Dog Friendly Area permit, please call Blum Animal Hospital and we will be happy to assist you.

Beat the Odds

Did you know that one out of every three pets becomes lost during its lifetime? According to the American Humane Association, only about 15% of lost dogs and 2% of lost cats ever find their way back home. By giving your pet proper identification, you can help beat these odds. Collars and tags are important identification tools, however, they can easily come off.

A microchip gives you the peace-of-mind that your pet has permanent identification. About the size of a grain of rice (12mm), a microchip is simply injected beneath the surface of your pet's skin between the shoulder blades. The process is similar to a routine injection and takes only a few seconds. No anesthetic is required.

The microchip has a unique ID code that can be read by passing a scanner over the pet's shoulder blades. With over 50,000 microchip scanners in circulation in the United States, virtually all shelters and veterinarians are equipped to read your pet's ID number and contact you.

Since there are many different microchip manufacturers, it was once difficult to figure out which company should be contacted with the found pet's microchip number. However, the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) solved this problem by creating the *AAHA Universal Pet Microchip Lookup Tool*—a free, Internet-based resource that assists with microchip identification; helping reunite pets and owners by checking participating pet recovery services' registries to determine which registry should be contacted.

If you have already protected your pet with a microchip, make sure you have registered your contact information in the national database and that the information is current. Not sure how to update your information? Call Blum Animal Hospital today and one of our staff members will be happy to help you.



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