

**Summer  
2010**

# Capitol Illini Newsletter

**Volume 6**

**Issue 2**

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

**The silent signs of feline arthritis** 1 & 2

**Doggie Alzheimer's** 1 & 3

**Tylenol is toxic!** 2

**Staff Corner** 3

Capitol Illini Veterinary Services

1711 Wabash Ave  
Springfield, IL.. 62704  
(217) 546-1541

Capitol Illini Chatham  
1020 Jason Pl.  
Chatham, IL. 62629  
(217) 483-6830

Website  
[www.capitolillinivet.com](http://www.capitolillinivet.com)



The Standard of  
Veterinary Excellence

W. Wright, DVM  
C. Dunphy, DVM  
B. McCall, DVM  
M. Armour, DVM  
K. Myers, DVM  
C. Holbrook, DVM  
A. Wade, DVM

D. Wartenbe CVT  
K. White, CVT  
H. Logan, CVT



## The Silent signs of feline arthritis

As our dogs age we notice signs of osteoarthritis and the pain associated with it. However, cats often hide signs of pain and aging, making it more difficult to notice when they get arthritis. There are some signs to look for as our cats age: sleeping more, reduced activity, changes in temperament, difficulty with grooming, and even urinating outside of the litter box can be signs of chronic pain in cats that can be misunderstood as behavioral changes due to age or anxiety. Cats rarely show any lameness like dogs often do from pain caused by arthritis. Osteoarthritis is a chronic and progressive disease that involves deterioration and inflammation of the joints. It is a painful and debilitating disease. Treatment is necessary to improve quality of life as the disease progresses.

Osteoarthritis in the cat can be diagnosed with detailed history from the owner, a physical examination and radiographs depending on the individual pet. There are a few laboratory tests that also maybe needed to rule out other medical issues. These may include blood and urine testing.

**Continued on page 2**



## Doggie Alzheimer's

Many people know what it is like for a family member to have difficulty with memory loss or Alzheimer's, but did you know that dogs can develop a similar condition called cognitive dysfunction syndrome (CDS) as they age? Older dogs may develop changes in behavior that could actually be signs of cognitive dysfunction. Symptoms of cognitive dysfunction may include: recent onset of aggression, house-soiling when the dog has previously been house trained, pacing, separation anxiety, noise phobias, excessive vocalization, gazing, or nocturnal restlessness. Although these may be symptoms of cognitive dysfunction they may also occur with other medical conditions such as dental disease, osteoarthritis, or vision and hearing loss.

When dogs age and show these symptoms, many owners think it is a normal aging process and cannot be helped; however, this is not the case. After a veterinarian thoroughly examines your dog and rules out any underlying

**Continued on page 3**

# Tylenol is toxic!

Many products in our homes can be harmful to our pets. One that is often overlooked is Tylenol or Acetaminophen. It is harmful to both cats and dogs but cats are more severely affected.

Tylenol is processed by the liver; therefore, the liver can be damaged by ingestion. It also affects how the animals' blood carries oxygen. Symptoms of toxicity include: brown urine, difficult breathing, depression, weakness, loss of appetite, fluid accumulation in the face and paws, brown gum color, coma and death.

If you see that your pet has ingested Tylenol, immediate induction of vomiting and calling your veterinarian provides the best outcome. The sooner your pet is treated the better. The veterinarian can then provide supportive therapy to improve the pet's chances of survival.

Even with the best treatment Tylenol toxicity can be deadly. Prevention is always the best; keep medications in the bottle and away from where your pets can reach!

(source [www.pet-diseases.suite101.com](http://www.pet-diseases.suite101.com))



*Dean W. Scott*



“When I play with my cat, who knows whether she is not amusing herself with me more than I with her.” ~Montaigne

## A few fun facts about our furry friends

- ~A cat has 230 bones in it's body, a human only has 206.
- ~Obesity is the number one health problem affecting dogs.
- ~A cat sees about six times better than a human at night because of the tapetum lucidum, a layer of extra reflecting cells in the eye which absorb light.
- ~A dog can smell 44 times better than a human and can hear about 10 times better.
- ~A cat's heart beats at 110-140 beats per minute, about twice as fast as a human.



## Con't from page 1, The silent signs of feline arthritis

Treatment of osteoarthritis in cats is more limited than treatment in dogs; however, there are options to help your feline be more comfortable. Unfortunately, the primary treatment for dogs and people with osteoarthritis are NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) pain relievers, which are not licensed in the U.S. for long term use in cats. In fact, many over the counter pain medications are highly toxic in cats (see article on Tylenol toxicity). Treatment options in cats include: nutraceuticals, special diets, and few prescription pain medications. Nutraceutical products or supplements, include a high quality veterinary brand of glucosamine hydrochloride with chondroitin and MSM ( we like Dasuquin), as well as high potency fatty acid, such as Welactin or feline j/d diet. Lifestyle changes can also be helpful. Keeping the cat inside, getting a litter box that is easier for the cat to get in and out of, and getting overweight cats to lose weight, are all recommended changes to help cats with osteoarthritis. Passive range of motion and massage therapy or acupuncture may also be helpful.

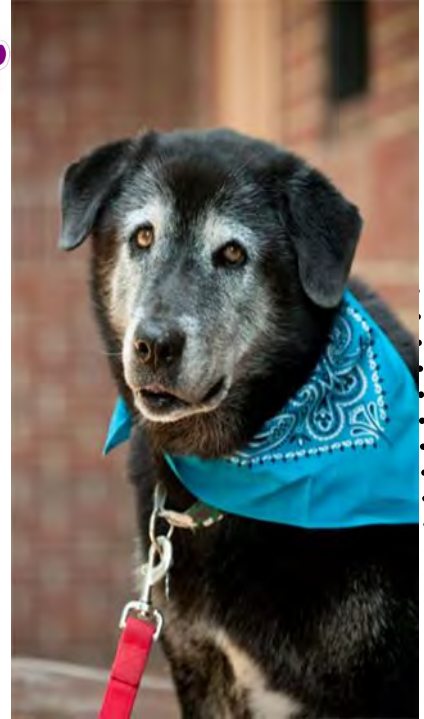
(source NAVC Clinician's Brief magazine Jan. 2010)

# Doggie Alzheimer's, con't from page 1

medical conditions, there may be treatments available to improve the quality of life for your dog in it's golden years.

Some treatments include medication, diet change, and environmental enrichment. A fairly new product called Anipryl can be prescribed to help alter dopamine levels in the dog's brain and slow neurodegeneration. A diet rich in specific vitamins and antioxidants, such as Hills B/D diet (brain diet) has been research proven to slow cognitive decline. Environmental enrichment such as increased walks outside, teaching new tricks, and any increase in mental stimulation has been shown to improve the mental status of a dog with cognitive dysfunction. When combined, these treatments are most effective for increasing your dog's quality of life. The sooner this progressive disease is recognized, the better your dog will respond to treatment.

(Source NAVC Clinician's brief Jan. 2010)



## Capitol Illini is Online!

### Find us at:

- **Capitol Illini Vet on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)**
- **Capitol Illini Vet at [www.capitolillinivet.com](http://www.capitolillinivet.com)**



"The greatest pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself, too."  
~Samuel Butler

## Staff corner

Kari joined the Capitol Illini team in February 2009. She is a recent graduate of the Certified Veterinary Technician program of Sanford-Brown College in Fenton, Missouri where she graduated with honors and received the award for "Most Outstanding Student." Her specific goals in the veterinary field include: 1) promoting quality dental health, and 2) improving compliance through client education. She feels these goals will better the quality of life for our companion animal friends. Kari and her husband Kyle have a variety of pets, including: a ferret (Tiger), 2 horses (Bo and Britney), and 2 dogs (Oxley and Jasmine) both are young rapid growing Great Danes (a breed she absolutely adores). She loves spending time with her family and friends and can always be found outside enjoying anything involving animals or nature. Currently she is preparing for the newest addition to her family (a baby girl) to arrive in July 2010, this takes up every spare minute. We at Capitol Illini are very excited that Kari is on board and appreciate the positive attitude and teamwork she displays each and every day!

