



CANADA'S VETERINARY NEWSMAGAZINE

WINTER 2023 VOLUME 18, NO 1



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Canadian VET Practice



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TEAM How telehealth can improve veterinary team wellbeing

Telehealth can make a huge difference in veterinary medicine to improve wellness of the veterinary team, asserted Dr. Marie Holowaychuk in her *Reviving Vet Med* podcast, episode 26. Telehealth, she explained, is the use of digital information and communication technologies to deliver health information, education, or care remotely.

Telehealth categories

Telehealth services can be categorized based on who is involved in the exchange of information or communication. Dr. Holowaychuk shared the following categories of telehealth services:

- Telerriage: non-client to veterinarian or veterinary technician / nurse
- Teleconsulting: specialist or consultant to veterinarian
- Telesupervision: veterinary team to veterinarian
- Telemonitoring: animal to veterinarian or veterinary technician / nurse

Telehealth continues on page 2



Amy, a vet tech at The Animal Hospital of High Park, working with a patient.

Photo Credit: Marielle Gareri

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TEAM The complete guide to releasing the inner critic and creating what you want.

By Caroline Brookfield, DVM

Your inner critic can be your worst nightmare, but it's also trying to keep you safe. It wants to protect you from making mistakes, getting hurt and experiencing pain. But these negative thoughts are just the result of an outdated operating system, designed to keep us safe. At one time, we lived in small communities, which allowed us to survive. Exclusion from the group meant death, from predation, starvation, exposure. We have been programmed to fit in and look like the others in our community. Despite our advanced evolution, our instincts have not kept pace with the rapid change in the world. We still feel judgement from others as a threat to survival, even as a physical pain.

I bet we can all remember a time where we felt gut-punched after an insensitive comment or rejection. In a world perched on shifting sands, where we are in constant need of adaptation to new challenges, we need divergent thinking and new perspectives to forge a path ahead.

Yet, survival today requires the opposite approach. To

The inner critic continues on page 3

VET Jumping through the hoops: Getting owners (and patients) on board with weight loss programs

Nutrition is a topic that primary care veterinarians address every day, and obesity affects more than half of our patients – yet, getting clients (and patients) on board with weight loss programs can feel like jumping through a flaming hoop! Engaging owners to follow weight loss programs for their pets can be a daunting task, stated Madeleine Cosentino, DVM, BSc., who is a small animal veterinarian working full time in Collingwood, Ontario, and also runs a CVO accredited mobile practice focused exclusively on weight loss and hydrotherapy.

Obesity is the #1 health threat that pets face. Still, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) reports that 50 to 60 percent of Canadian pets are overweight or obese. Further, studies show

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Karen Tousignant
 Publisher,
 Director of Sales
 karen@k2publishing.ca



Jason Praskey
 Art Director
 praskeydesign@gmail.com

Other information, including change of address:
info@k2publishing.ca

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Canadian Vet Practice is honoured to have the following distinguished veterinarians and technicians as members of our Advisory Board. In addition to imparting their knowledge and expertise on animal health issues, they often review article submissions, guide editorial topic selections, and help to keep the newsmagazine useful and relevant to veterinarians in Canada.

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Telehealth *continued from page 1*

- Telemedicine: client to veterinarian
- E-prescription: pharmacy or distributor to veterinarian

These categories of telehealth use technology such as mobile devices, apps, video conferencing, email, audio or video recordings, text messages, and wearable monitoring devices to share information that enhances the care of the patient in some way.

Growth of telehealth

While still a relatively new concept in veterinary medicine, use of telehealth rose during the pandemic when face-to-face appointments were limited and the demand for veterinary care increased. Many veterinary practices took on video streaming of the veterinarian's exam while the pet owner waited outside; others adopted consultations between veterinarians and the pet owner at home.

Since then, companies such as Smart.Vet and Vetster have emerged to offer telemedicine services for routine care or non-urgent concerns when pet owners are unable to schedule a timely appointment with their regular veterinarian.

Animal HealthLink offers teletriage services whereby they respond to client calls in or outside of business hours to screen patients for life-threatening emergencies and direct them to the nearest veterinary hospital or back to their regular practice if the circumstance is not urgent. Patients are screened based on speaking with the owner, watching videos of the patient, and perhaps

listening to audio of the pet. The great thing about the teletriage service is that it alleviates a lot of incoming calls that veterinary practices would be fielding.

There are also companies such as VetTalk that use technology to automate call-backs to clients.

Finally, Vet-CT is a company of veterinary specialists who liaise with veterinarians to offer advice and support for challenging patients that require advanced level care. Many of these patients may have benefited from being seen directly by a specialist but, due to physical or financial restraints, this may not be feasible for the pet owner.

High veterinary burnout rates

Today, most veterinary practices are routinely functioning with a staffing deficit while tending to an increased caseload, stated Dr. Holowaychuk. She said the demand for veterinary care has grown as many people adopted more pets during the pandemic and people in general were at home with their pets more. The vet industry has also experienced an increase in attrition of team members and a shortage of available team members to fill those vacant spots. We've never in recent memory had so many job vacancies in veterinary practice, she exclaimed. This is likely contributing to the much higher rates of burnout we are seeing among veterinary team members.

Benefits to veterinary team wellbeing

While the obvious benefit of utilizing telehealth services in veterinary medicine is providing care for pets whose owners are unable to access timely

veterinary appointments, Dr. Holowaychuk outlined additional benefits of telehealth that relate to veterinary team wellbeing:

Veterinary team members experience less stress and exhaustion

- *Feeling as though there are patients who need help but that there is no time to fit them in the schedule creates an immense amount of stress for teams. Very often they end up over-booking appointments, which leads to additional stress and tiredness for everyone. The option to refer pet owners to telemedicine services for non-urgent concerns, use a teletriage service to field client calls, or use technology to automate client call-backs can help to alleviate some of the burden on general practices.*

Veterinarians can spend less time on-call and get a better night's sleep

- *Rural practitioners often spend a large amount of time on-call to field questions from clients or tend to emergencies outside of normal practice hours. Time spent on-call (even when calls are not received) leads to more feelings of tension and tiredness and has a negative impact on sleep. The use of a teletriage service to field overnight calls reduces the need to interrupt the veterinarian's home life or sleep thereby enabling them to show up more alert and ready for work the following day.*

Veterinarians can experience less frequent moral stress

- *Some clients whose pets would benefit from the care of a specialist cannot afford, cannot access, or choose not to be referred to a specialty veterinary hospital. The primary care veterinarian is thus left to manage a patient whose condition might be complex or challenging. The moral dilemma that ensues when a veterinarian is managing a case they feel exceeds their capabilities or expertise can lead to moral stress. The use of a teleconsulting service allows a veterinarian to share the details of the case with a board-certified specialist and receive advice and recommendations as to how to best manage its care.*

Veterinary team members who cannot work full-time in clinical practice can work remotely

- *Since the pandemic began, some veterinary team members have had to step away from clinical practice to fulfill family or personal obligations at home. This has contributed to the shortage of veterinary team members, some of*

whom could continue to provide veterinary care remotely. The employment of veterinarians and veterinary technicians / nurses by telehealth companies provides job opportunities for veterinary care providers who cannot work typical in-practice workdays, thereby staying in the profession and helping to alleviate the burden on veterinary practices.

Veterinary team members will experience less burnout and job dissatisfaction

- *A sense of overwhelm and insufficient support are both factors that contribute to burnout and job dissatisfaction among veterinary team members. Additionally, negative emotional states resulting from perceived low standards of patient care or negative clinical outcomes lower job satisfaction and increase turnover. Telehealth services (telemedicine, teletriage and teleconsulting) all have the potential to lower the risk of burnout and increase job satisfaction among all veterinary team members.*

In conclusion, Dr. Holowaychuk stressed that she cannot overemphasize how much promise telehealth holds for meeting not just the growing increase in client demand for veterinary services, but also in creating more efficiency in the veterinary practice workflow, reducing stress and fatigue among veterinary team members, alleviating moral stress among especially general practice veterinarians, retaining veterinary team members in the profession who have to work remotely, and leading to greater long term job satisfaction. She urged everyone to consider the many different ways that telehealth can, not only enhance the care that we are delivering to our clients, but also enhance the experience that our veterinary teams have in the veterinary space. **CVP**

Dr. Marie Holowaychuk is a board-certified small animal emergency and critical care specialist and passionate advocate for veterinary team wellbeing. As a yoga and meditation teacher and wellness coach, she facilitates workshops and retreats for veterinary clinics and organizations and offers individual and group coaching and online programs for veterinary team members. She recently launched a new website (www.revivingvetmed.com) containing wellness resources for veterinary professionals and is the host of the Reviving Vet Med podcast, which offers practical tools and easily applicable tips for burnout prevention and workplace wellbeing.

The inner critic continued from page 1

survive the rapid pace of change we need to share new perspectives, find new solutions, and seek alternative approaches.

How to make friends with your inner critic.

It is important to know that you are not alone. *Everyone has an inner critic, and it is not going away anytime soon.* The inner critic is a voice that lives in our head and is often negative. It's not always easy to ignore that lurking naysayer in our subconscious; it speaks to us when we are about to take a risk or do something new. It's a voice that tries to protect us from making mistakes and from taking risks. The inner critic can be really helpful in some cases. They might point out when we make mistakes or when we need to improve on something. That's why it's important to know when to listen to them and when to put in the beats and ignore them.

Naming my inner critic has been instrumental in my ability to speak out, share my point of view and creativity with the world. His name is Todd. I don't really know why his name is Todd, how does one ever name anything? Despite his irritability, I love Todd. He's a befuddled but passionate protector and he only thinks he is doing what is best for me in the long run. He really likes lollipops. When I'm struggling with expressing myself because of Todd's hotly disapproving pizza breath down the back of my

neck, I imagine a big lollipop. Then, I imagine handing it to Todd and listing all the conditions that indicate that I am not in danger. Then, I send him off to enjoy his lollipop while I do my thing.

When we learn to assess the risk of standing out despite our inner critic's hand wringing protests, we develop self efficacy, confidence and resilience. If everyone found the courage to be vulnerable, to share a point of view, perspective or tiny piece of their creativity, we could change the world. Because you have another voice that gets drowned out by all the Todd drama. The voice of your creativity, what makes you, you. That voice comes from the unique universe inside of you, made of stars, planets, moons and asteroids.

Find the courage to express yourself.

The inner critic is a voice that tells you to not speak up, not to be recognized, and to not be ambitious. Todd's just trying to help. But it's time to stop listening if you want to experience a fulfilling life.

Isn't It time for you to speak out, get recognized, and advance in your career? The first step is acknowledging what Todd (or your now-renamed-inner-critic) is telling you. The second step is to pause and turn on your massive brain that we've grown like turfgrass over the millennia.

Is there a risk? What is the up and downside to expressing myself? What

VetLaw**The outlier claims –
Unconventional risk management planning for the animal hospital**

Douglas C. Jack, B.A., LL.B.

Over the years, we are presented with infrequent, unconventional situations in the clinic setting that can create significant “headaches” in terms of hospital risk management; while these events don’t occur often, they should be considered and strategically planned for in order to avoid legal liability. In some cases these types of incidents may not be covered by your policies of insurance

The animal escape

Under an ancient common law principle referred to as “bailment”, whenever a person is presented with the possession and custody of property belonging to another, there is a legal obligation to appropriately care for that property – the level of care that one must exercise is dependent upon whether or not the possession is in the context of a “pro bono” or “payment” context. In a veterinary context, each time an animal is delivered to your custody for professional services, there is a relatively high standard that must be met in ensuring that the animal is not lost or injured. Animal escapes are cause for concern in any clinical setting due to this bailment principle; the case where a cat bolts through an open door or the “kennel kid” loses possession of a dog who slips its clinic-issued collar and runs off are examples. In each case, the animal is often forever lost or is found deceased or injured as a result of an unfortunate event such as having been hit by a car). In such cases, the only issue that typically needs to be dealt with is the value of the claim of the pet’s owner; the current caselaw continues to slowly permit the courts to consider intangible claims beyond the animal’s fair market value. As such, the prudent practice owner or hospital manager will continue to reinforce and test the animal containment protocols to be observed by all hospital personnel.

Bylaw non-compliance

Many municipalities have adopted zoning bylaws that restrict the nature and use of properties within their jurisdiction; in a veterinary context we see rules relating to the prohibition of overnight hospitalization, boarding, waste collection and noise. Particularly in rented facilities, the clinic owner may be unaware of the applicable restrictions that are the subject matter of complaints from adjacent neighbours. Becoming familiar with the restrictive rules relating to the use of the premises as a veterinary clinic and ensuring that your personnel are familiar with such bylaws, will permit you to avoid situations that could result in fines imposed by the municipality.

Slips and falls

Another well-known common law principle relates to “occupiers’ liability”; in essence, this requires the owner of a premise to ensure that the premise and its surrounding access areas are safe and do not present hazards which could result in injury to a person or an animal attending at the clinic. Our winter climate presents particular challenges with snow and ice on parking lots and walkways; poor lighting can increase the risks of falls at all times of the year; the placement of obstacles in a pathway can create hazards that sometimes are not avoided; poorly maintained sidewalks with heaved cracks or wet flooring in the reception area can lead to injuries. Ultimately, given that the clinic is “inviting” clients

and their pets to attend at the premises, it’s absolutely necessary that the grounds and the client-facing areas of the clinic be safe and that sufficient warnings are placed during times of temporary dangers (for instance, the unloading of large bags of pet foods in the front reception area). All staff members need to be diligent in reporting unsafe conditions.

One needs to be aware of the “thin-skull rule” in connection with determining the extent of liability arising from a slip and fall case; the owner of the premises is deemed to “take the plaintiff as you find him”. This means that if a client has a pre-existing condition that leads to suffering more severe injury than a “normal” person, it does not compromise the damages awarded that might be more significant than a “normal” person. For instance, an elderly woman attending, who suffers from a compromised bone density condition and breaks her hip from only a slight fall, may require weeks of painful hospitalization as a result of the fall and thus could be entitled to a significant award of damages.

Animal restraint

Experience suggests that the practitioner should resist the notion of having the animal’s owner assist in restraint for examination or treatment purposes; inevitably, given that all animals are subject to levels of unpredictability, those not trained in appropriate restraint techniques (that is, most animal owners!) and without proper restraint equipment, are the most likely to be the victim of a bite or scratch. In cases where owners are insistent on being present, you have some options: first, you can simply elect to not proceed given the apparent dangers that you’re not willing to tolerate (of course, this would not be prudent in a situation of emergency care); second, you can clearly indicate a warning of the dangers that are present and advise the client that you will not be held responsible for any injuries that are suffered – while a formal Release is likely impractical, such a warning and exclusion of liability should be noted in the medical record.

The heating pad

The cases of a recovering pet suffering a burn post-operatively are frequent; this may result from a malfunctioning heating pad or be caused by a lack of proper observation by hospital staff. In all cases, burns give rise to painful conditions for the animal and often even scarring. The devices used to provide thermal support to animals should be checked routinely to ensure that they are functioning safely and they should be used only for short periods.

Risk management is an ever-present element of the successful operation of the animal hospital – these types of cases need to be brought to the attention of and be considered by all personnel.

Mr. Jack is counsel at the law firm of Borden Ladner Gervais, LLP (“BLG”) with a mandate to serve the needs of the veterinary community and enhance it on a national basis. Mr. Jack chairs a focus group relating to veterinary legal matters within the firm’s Healthcare Group. He can be reached by email at dcjack@blg.com or by telephone at 1-800-563-2595.



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The inner critic *continued from page 1*

has happened to other people when they have done something similar? Who is in the room? If you think you might get fired (and you don't want to), is this a legitimate fear?

Finally, take a deep breath and share your thoughts. Incrementally, at first, if you wish.

Have you ever admired those people who felt that they could share their thoughts, their weird hobby with bravado, or questioned the status quo? They didn't start overnight. Finding your voice and building the skill to communicate your ideas clearly and succinctly takes practice.

You can find the courage to express yourself at home or at work.

Walk your own path to recognition and happiness, with Todd at your side.

“I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.”

– #1 Regret in *The Top 5 regrets of the dying*, Bronnie Ware

In life, we all have different paths that we take. Not every path will end in a flower filled meadow smelling of lavender. Some paths will be dark and cold, and the only way out is through. Sometimes, the only way to the meadow is through the dark, scary woods.

Expressing what truly matters to us, especially if it is a bit unconventional, can feel like walking through a dark path. But, I guarantee, that if you keep showing up in a generous way that honors your unique point of view, your values, and your hope for the world, you will make a difference.

The world has enough robots, find what makes you uniquely human and spread it around.

Your inner critic is holding you back...

You'll quickly notice a herd of Todds sitting in a corner eating lollipops, while the rest of you start changing the world. One wonderfully weird idea at a time.

Dr. Caroline Brookfield is a Reluctant Creative. She is a veterinarian, author, speaker, stand-up comic, and mom. Faced with a false ultimatum of

art or science, she chose science. Does that sound familiar?

If you're a “left brainer” like Caroline, you might share the belief that creativity is for artists, kids and grandmas, and somewhat ancillary to more important goals. Feeling snubbed, eventually Caroline's creativity demanded attention like a cat at dinnertime. She learned how to integrate her creative and scientific sides, realizing the importance of both, and that you don't have to choose. Caroline is passionate about helping you to identify your own barriers to individual, everyday creativity, so that you can speak up, stand out, and build a uniquely

satisfying future for yourself. Caroline presents balanced evidence, with easy to understand and actionable takeaways, kind of like a keynote mullet: Fun up front and data in the back. You can also learn how to balance rigor with creative expression to survive the gusting winds of change, with a smile on your face.

Caroline received honors for her veterinary degree from the Ontario Veterinary College, is a certified level 2 Creative Problem Solving facilitator, and holds a Certificate of Professional Management from the University of Calgary. She is always up for a challenge, like learning guitar, rock climbing, getting her kids to eat vegetables, surfing, meditation retreats with sniper rifles. You know, the usual stuff. Caroline lives in Calgary, Alberta, where her lectures go unheeded by her family. The dog listens, sometimes.

Weight loss programs *continued from page 1*

that 9/10 of owners of overweight pets mistakenly identify their pets' weight as normal; about 30% of owners never check their pet's weight; and 68% of pet owners do not follow guidelines when deciding on portion sizes.

Nutritional assessment at every appointment

Veterinarians need to ask about every pet's nutrition at EVERY appointment, stressed Dr. Cosentino. What the pet is eating impacts so many other systems, what diseases it is at risk of, and general health status, she explained. WSAVA provides a nutritional assessment form that is free, simple to complete, and can be filled out by the pet owner prior to their pet's examination by the veterinarian.

The routine screening evaluation should include temperature, pulse, respiration, pain assessment + *nutritional assessment*. Key questions to ask the pet owner include:

What does the pet eat?

How much does the pet eat?

What treats are given?

What human food is given?

What type of foods does the pet prefer?

What specific brands (to determine caloric intake)?

Body condition scoring can help determine whether the dog or cat is too thin, too heavy, or ideal. Ideal would be a score of 4 or 5 on the 9-point BCS scale. Muscle condition scoring is also helpful, to determine if there is any muscle wasting in the pet.

It's important to provide *specific nutritional advice* to owners, advised Dr. Cosentino. She said the nutritional recommendation should include the brand name of the diet and the amount to feed the specific patient, plus follow up call to ensure that it is being followed properly.

Patient obstacles

Nobody said putting a pet on a weight loss program would be easy; there are many challenges that may occur. Dr. Cosentino shared the following list of common patient obstacles:

- Palatability
 - What does the pet like?

- Most prescription diets have a palatability guarantee.
- Slow transition to new food.
- Form of diet (dry, canned, stew)
 - What is the pet used to?
 - Is mixed feeding being done?
- Other health conditions
 - Multifunction diets may be needed if the patient has another health issue.
- Feeding style at home
 - Owners ideally need to teach meal feeding.
 - Automatic feeders may be helpful.
- Other pets at home (huge obstacle)
 - Do the pets all eat together?
 - Do the pets share food?
 - Microchip feeders!

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure...

Ideally, we need to prevent pet obesity in the first place stressed Dr. Cosentino. Encourage owners to teach meal feeding from the start (no free feeding)! Kittens and puppies should be exposed to different types of food when they are young. This makes it easier to switch their diet to an appropriate food, if needed. For example, a star shaped kibble may slow down the pet's feeding compared to a round kibble.

For pets of all ages, encourage weighing of food portions, stressed Dr. Cosentino. Measuring cups are not accurate, she said. She also suggested replacing the traditional food bowl with puzzle feeders or snuffle mats, to keep pets engaged mentally and burning some calories while feeding. These tools slow down their eating; they will feel full eating less.

Veterinarians should make *specific feeding recommendations* for healthy patients to prevent obesity. The recommended diet may be a prescription diet or a suitable pet store diet.

Client obstacles

Clients need to recognize the problem!

Communication issues often cause obstacles in getting clients on board with a weight loss program for their pet. First and foremost, clients need to

recognize the problem! Owners may be in denial that their pet is overweight and may resent the veterinarian telling them this. Regardless, *honesty is the best policy*, stressed Dr. Cosentino. She shared the following tips for dealing more effectively with clients:

- We need to be honest with our clients about their pet's weight.
- Evaluate the pet's Body Condition Score (BCS) at EVERY appointment!
- Show clients their pet's weight chart if it is trending upwards.
- Use BCS charts to show them visually where their pet is at.

It's important to convey to owners why weight loss is important to their pet by outlining the health risks of obesity and how extra weight may have a negative impact on their pet's quality of life, explained Dr. Cosentino. She noted that overweight and obese dogs have an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, breathing problems, osteoarthritis pain, a shortened life expectancy, hypertension, kidney disease, urinary disease, and cancer.

Also important is to understand what concerns THE CLIENT has; the veterinarian should listen to their fears and allow the client to ask questions.

Impacts to THEIR pet – the Human Animal Bond

Veterinarians can really drive it home in terms of the emotional connection that people have with their pets, noted Dr. Cosentino. They want to feel that their pet is happy; it likes food...and they don't want to take this away from their pet. They want to love their pet by giving it treats whenever it wants! It's important to change their thinking about this by asking the client, "What are the impacts on your pet?"

- What are their favourite activities with their pet? Can they still do them?
 - Do they like going for hikes with their dog, and now their dog can't do this?
- Is their pet slowing down on walks?
 - This is not just an age thing; is often a weight thing as well.
- Can the pet run and jump and play like it wants to do?
 - How engaged is this pet with their owners?

- Have they noticed the pet not playing as much as they used to be?
 - Do they like playing with their cat but the cat doesn't want to play anymore?
- Is the pet having trouble grooming themselves?
 - Cats and dogs can't groom themselves if they're too fat.
- Does the pet have other health conditions that are related to obesity?
 - An endocrine disease such as diabetes, skin issues, osteoarthritis, urinary tract infections.
 - All of these diseases impact the human-animal bond. They are not fun to deal with on an everyday basis or to treat. They are hard work. They are expensive.
- Have they noticed the pet seems more irritable or grumpy?
 - May be due to inflammation, pain, anxiety.

Financial impacts

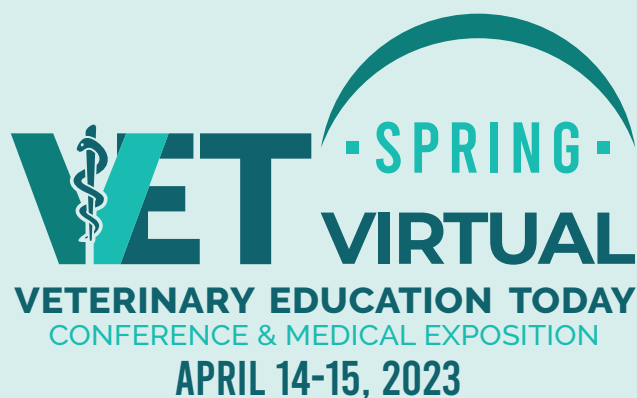
Owners care about money; what is the financial impact of having a fat pet? Owners of obese pets spend more on average than owners of healthy weight pets, asserted Dr. Cosentino. She shared research that showed owners of obese cats spend, on average, 36% more on diagnostic procedures and 53% more on surgical services. Owners of obese dogs spend 17% more on healthcare costs and 25% more on medications.

Understanding why we are recommending a specific diet

When making a diet recommendation, Dr. Cosentino said it helps to explain the ways that an Rx diet is different from an OTC diet, as well as what benefits the specific diet has for their pet. Key points include:

- AAHA Weight Management Guidelines for Dogs and Cats (2014) indicate therapeutic diets are more likely to provide adequate nutrition intake when fed in calorically restricted amounts, when compared to OTC diets.
- Therapeutic foods are generally lower in fat, higher in fiber, and/or higher in moisture to decrease caloric density.

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Both programs are being submitted to the AAVSB, but not yet approved

- Therapeutic weight loss diets are formulated to contain more protein, vitamins and minerals/calorie that OTC foods, ensuring adequate nutrient intake during caloric restriction. High protein may preserve muscle mass during weight loss and may improve satiety.
- Restricting the amount of OTC maintenance food that is fed, especially diets with high caloric density, generally fails to provide satiety for most pets, contributing to poor adherence and client frustration. Hungry pets will beg for food and treats.
- Restricting amounts of an OTC maintenance diet fed could lead to deficiency of one or more essential nutrients.

Teamwork is key to success

Dr. Cosentino stressed that the veterinary team needs to let the client know that they are here to help them achieve weight loss success with their pet! Ongoing communication is important, she said, and make sure the client can come to you with concerns such as the pet won't eat the food, or the higher cost of the new diet. Check in regularly on progress so that problems get solved quickly and be flexible with the needs of the patient and client, she advised. *Do not say to the client here is your weight loss plan, go home, adhere to it, and make sure your pet loses weight*, stressed Dr. Cosentino.

Why don't clients want to switch to your weight loss plan?

Dr. Cosentino shared several client objections to putting their pet on a prescription weight loss diet, as well as some effective ways to handle them.

- Distrust of veterinary brands.
 - Offer a variety of prescription diet options.
 - Show them the research behind the diet.
 - Pet owner education resources are key.
- Cost of prescription food.
 - Need to do a cost breakdown – cost per cup or meal, cost per month.
 - Compare cost with their current diet.
 - Many boutique brands are just as expensive as prescription diets.
- Resistance to having to switch to a new food.
 - Palatability guarantee offered by prescription pet food companies.
 - Start with a small bag in case the pet won't eat the new food.
- Needing to change how they feed at home.
 - Are they currently free feeding?
 - Offer solutions like microchip feeders and automatic feeders.
- Staying compliant with the diet.
 - Factor in treats!
 - Set up auto-order on food shipments.
 - Check in with client regularly to help keep them on track.
- Finding time for weight checks.
 - Set a realistic schedule for the owner and pet.
 - Can they weigh the pet at home?

Veterinary team obstacles

So how do we make a feeding recommendation?

When calculating a pet's ideal body weight, it's important to know that if you are using an over the counter or other maintenance diet, you must use the pet's CURRENT weight. However, if you are using a prescription weight loss diet, you should use the pet's IDEAL weight for the feeding calculation. *This is a big distinction*, stressed Dr. Cosentino. If you use the pet's ideal weight you risk underfeeding the pet, and then not getting sufficient nutrients. This is why we really need a prescription weight loss diet for effective safe weight loss, she said.

Effective weight loss diet options are available from Royal Canin, Hill's, Purina, and Rayne Nutrition. Royal Canin has the broadest range of products, said Dr. Cosentino, and Rayne offers a more whole food ingredient approach.

What about treats?

Treats should make up no more than 10% of daily intake – so remember to take that % out before calculating how much food a pet should eat. Dr. Cosentino emphasized that “It's not 10% on top, it's 10% OF the daily amount of food”.

Work smarter not harder!

Both Royal Canin and Hill's have FREE online diet calculation programs

that make formulating a weight loss plan easy, shared Dr. Cosentino. Just enter the pet details, select a diet, and print out a personalized feeding plan for the client!

Royal Canin Slim Fit/Value Calculator via Royal Canin Vet

<https://vet-royalcanin-ca.force.com/>

Hill's Quick recommendation via Hill's Vet

<https://www.hellsvet.ca/en-ca/dashboard>

These calculations also work for non-weight-loss diet feeding plans. You can use them for a recommended feeding plan for a maintenance diet for a pet with a current ideal body condition. Dr. Cosentino said she uses these ALL THE TIME! You can even add a URL link to your online store on the printed handout, she noted.

Weight loss schedule

Follow-ups will make a critical difference in owner compliance with the pet's weight loss program. Make sure to:

- Plan follow up appointments in advance.
- Recheck body weight using the same scale and body condition score every 2-4 weeks.
- Assess diet compliance at each visit while addressing client concerns.
- The desired rate of weight loss in dogs is 1-2%/week and in cats is 0.5-2%/week.
- Adjust feeding amounts, as needed, until the desired rate of loss is achieved and stay within safe limits.

Both the Royal Canin and Hill's online calculators let you track the pet's weight loss.

Setting the client up for success

Dr. Cosentino shared a series of tips for setting our clients up for the best outcome:

- Provide a written feeding plan.
 - Owners don't remember most of what we tell them verbally.
 - Gives them something to stick on the fridge.
 - Online calculations make this super easy!
 - If you're good at Excel can make your own.
 - Attach to the pet's file for reference.
- Encourage weighing food vs measuring.
 - Explain the difference in accuracy.
 - Have small weight scales to sell/give away.
- Set a schedule for weight checks.
 - What is realistic for the client? Once weekly? Bi-monthly? Monthly?
 - Email and phone call reminders.
- Encourage the client!
 - Reception should let them know how much weight their pet has lost.
 - Print out weight charts.
 - Have a weight loss success board.
 - Run a weight loss client challenge.
 - Post success stories on social media

Getting the whole team on board

Techs can do:

- Calculating feeding plans or using online calculations.
- Assessing body condition score and weight progress. (Same scale, ideally same tech)
- Educating owners on pet obesity and weight loss.

Receptionists, client service reps can do:

- Printing weight charts for clients.
- Sending reminders for weight checks.
- Educational social media posts.

All clinic team members should:

- Share the stats on pet obesity.
- Educate owners on weight loss.
- Know what weight loss diets are available.
- Share personal stories of their own pet's weight journey.
- Encourage owners.

- Applaud owner success.
- Share tips and tricks with owners.
- Celebrate owner success in the clinic.

What to do when things go wrong?

- Recheck diet history
 - Has the owner deviated from the feeding plan?
 - Are new people involved in feeding the pet?
 - Is the pet getting food or treats outside the feeding plan?
- Recheck patient
 - Baseline database to screen for medical issues. (Especially in older pets)
 - Has the owner noticed clinical signs of disease? (Drinking a lot more, peeing a lot more)
 - What is the patient's body and muscle condition score?
- Recheck feeding plan
 - How is the food being measured.? (Gram scale is best)
 - Reduce calories 5-10%, then recheck weight.

Other Factors

Successful weight loss is not just nutrition: exercise is also important. Encourage owners to walk and be more active with their pets. Some suggestions presented by Dr. Cosentino included hosting a dog walking

group at your clinic; recommending use of cat wheels and treadmills; and providing hydrotherapy to make it easier for obese pets to move. She also reminded us that pain reduces a pet's willingness to exercise so drugs such as Metacam can be helpful, and that osteoarthritis is inherently linked to obesity. Concurrent disease, such as diabetes, hyperadrenocorticism or hypothyroidism can also be a factor, she said, noting that many pets with hypothyroidism are overweight. [CVP](#)

Dr. Madeleine Cosentino is a small animal primary care veterinarian working in a rapidly growing urban centre in southern Ontario. In addition to primary care she works in veterinary telemedicine, and in 2021 opened her own accredited mobile veterinary clinic focused exclusively on weight loss and hydrotherapy. She graduated with a BSC Honours in Animal Biology at the University of Guelph and completed her DVM at the OVC in 2016.

Madeleine's passions in practice are wellness care, client education, nutrition, behaviour, geriatric and palliative care, rehabilitation, exotic animal care (special interest but not a certified specialist), wildlife medicine and rehabilitation, dermatology, internal medicine, and animal welfare. She practices compassionate care that focuses on the wellbeing of the patient using resources available to the client.

Dr. Cosentino has professional memberships with the OVMA, AAFP, CAVD, CAVCM, HABA, AVSAB and the ABS.

Weighty conversations – discussing a pet's weight with your client



Assessing weight and nutrition during veterinary appointments are recommended best practices,¹ and the ability to clearly communicate

weight- and nutrition-related information to clients is important for making recommendations and engaging clients as partners in their pets' healthcare. However, pet weight may be difficult for veterinary professionals to address with clients, particularly when pets are overweight or obese.

Learning more about veterinarian-client communication around pet weight may help to address increasing concerns about the growing prevalence of pet obesity. A study was designed by a team of researchers at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC)² to characterize the communication process and content of weight-related conversations. Audio-video recordings of 917 veterinarian-client-patient interactions involving a random sample of 60 veterinarians working at 55 different practices in southern Ontario were analyzed using a researcher-generated coding framework to provide a comprehensive assessment of communication specific to weight-related interactions.

Results of the OVC study showed that³:

- Only about half, or 50.5% of the 917 veterinary-client-patient interactions contained an exchange involving the mention of a single patient's (dog or cat) weight.
- Of the interactions where an exchange about weight occurred, 32.4% of these involved a discussion of obesity for a single patient.
- Of the interactions that involved a discussion of obesity, 43.3% included a weight management recommendation from the veterinary team and 28% provided the client with a reason for pursuing weight management.

Findings of the study suggest that, in general, weight-related conversations in companion animal practice are brief, with limited information elicited from or communicated to clients about their pets' weight. Specifically, nutritional histories were found to be limited and frequently collected entirely through closed-ended questions. Specific to obesity-related interactions, many did not include any information for the client about steps they could take to manage their pet's weight or a reason for why weight management was important for their pet's health and wellbeing. Taken together, these results indicate that *there are important opportunities for veterinary professionals to continue expanding their nutrition- and weight-related communication, particularly when overweight or obese pets are presented to a veterinary practice.*

Promoting owner understanding of the benefits of a healthy pet weight

Although most of the weight-related interactions occurred when the veterinarian recorded a healthy BCS for the pet, the overall short duration of these conversations suggests that there may be opportunities to have more in-depth preventive conversations with clients about their pets' weight. A proactive approach that emphasizes maintaining a healthy weight from early on in a pet's life may reduce the risk of multiple obesity-associated chronic diseases,⁴ and there is evidence that maintaining optimal body composition is associated with increased longevity in dogs.⁵

Prevention of pet obesity by monitoring trends in pet health parameters

Monitoring trends in pet health parameters is an important aspect of preventive veterinary care,⁶ yet research involving the sample of veterinarians and clients involved in this weight-related research found that participating veterinarians' use of trends to communicate with clients was very limited.⁷ Increased use of trends within veterinarian-client interactions may help identify the need for early intervention to maintain a healthy pet weight. Increased monitoring and use of weight trends can be used to facilitate weight conversations and normalize the discussion of weight during every veterinary care appointment.

Time constraints may limit weight-related communication

The brevity of most weight conversations observed in this study may reflect time constraints often experienced in veterinary practice.^{8,9} An approximate average of 1 minute spent discussing pet weight during an appointment is a very limited window for information gathering or client education, which likely poses a challenge to veterinary professionals' gaining useful insights into a client's perceptions of their pet's weight and suggests very little cumulative time may be spent discussing weight over a pet's lifetime.

Nutritional history gathering implications

Eighty-two of the 463 (17.7%) weight-related conversations reviewed for this study contained no nutritional history gathering, despite a nutritional assessment being promoted as the fifth vital assessment that should be conducted as part of every examination of a cat or dog.¹⁰ Additionally, veterinarians have previously been found to employ primarily close-ended questions when gathering information,¹¹ including information related to nutritional history,¹² although clients provide significantly more dietary information when open-ended questions are used.¹³ The very limited

use of open-ended inquiry that was observed in this study suggests a clear opportunity for veterinary professionals to more frequently employ this method when gathering a nutritional history. If veterinary professionals do not have a comprehensive understanding of a pet's current nutrition, including environment- and human-related factors, there is a risk that recommendations may not be appropriate for the pet or the owner's lifestyle or take into consideration owner preferences, including dietary "non-negotiables".¹⁴

Open-ended inquiry may also encourage owners to share information about their pet's diet other than the primary food. Underreporting of diet items apart from a primary commercial diet (e.g., dry or canned), such as alternative diets (e.g., homemade diets), treats, human foods, and supplements, poses concerns not only for unidentified obesity risk factors, but also nutritional imbalances that can have substantial effects on a pet's health. As the practice of feeding alternative diets alongside dry and canned diets appears to be growing,¹⁵ understanding this and providing options to clients may help veterinary professionals increase client adherence. Promoting veterinary team members' engagement with pet owners about nutrition and supporting them with the communication skills needed for this engagement should be a priority for the profession.

Engaging and counseling clients through the weight-management process

Consistent integration of nutritional and weight-related counseling into every visit is essential to successful, sustainable weight management.¹⁶ Study results suggest that there may be missed opportunities for the entire veterinary team to be involved in engaging and counseling clients throughout the weight-management process.

Missed opportunities to provide weight-management recommendations

A surprising study finding was the number of missed opportunities identified for a clear weight-management recommendation to be provided to clients who were informed their pet was overweight, as well as the low incidence of discussions around the health impacts of obesity and the importance of maintaining a healthy body weight for the patients involved.

It is possible the veterinarian may not feel compelled to spend substantial time on weight as a recurring topic at every visit. However, not providing this information to a pet owner could be considered a failure to meet a professional obligation.¹⁷ Even if a client is not yet ready to address the issue, bringing attention to the weight concern is necessary to establish the topic as one of importance and to assess a client's current thoughts and readiness for change in relation to their pet's weight, since these can change over time.

Effectively communicating the value of pet weight loss and nutritional changes

When providing weight-management recommendations, it is important to effectively communicate the value of weight loss and any nutritional changes being proposed. Very limited explanations of the benefits of weight

management for the pet or owner were observed in the study. Previous research has found the odds of client adherence to a veterinarian's recommendation when the client receives a clear recommendation are 7 times that of when a client receives an ambiguous recommendation.¹⁸ This underscores the importance of both a clear weight management or nutrition recommendation and effectively communicating the reasons behind that recommendation.

Summary

The study helps to establish a baseline for the current nature of veterinary-client interactions relating to pet weight and nutrition in companion animal practice, with a specific focus on conversations involving an overweight or obese pet. Findings suggest there are several opportunities to improve and expand on these conversations. Increased time spent gathering a comprehensive nutritional history and discussing pet weight may benefit both preventive and obesity-related weight conversations for cats and dogs. Veterinary professionals frequently initiated weight conversations with their clients, although the veterinary team did not often provide actionable information or recommendations to owners of overweight or obese pets; future research should explore potential barriers that may be impeding veterinary professionals from engaging in more thorough weight-related interactions with clients. **CVP**

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Do we need “animal only” antibiotics?

By Scott Weese, DVM, DVSc, DACVIM

The antibiotic development pipeline is drying up. More companies are abandoning the area because antibiotics are expensive to develop and license, but they are low profit drugs that we try to use as little as possible. This is a big issue for human medicine, and was the focus of a lot of discussion at the recent Global Leaders Group on Antimicrobial Resistance meeting.

It's a complex issue, but there are initiatives to support getting X number of new human antimicrobial products to market by year Y. That leads to the question of how many antimicrobial products we should be aiming to develop for animals, and whether we should aim for completely new “animal only” drugs.

At first glance, having antimicrobials that are only used in animals would be ideal, so that they are distinct from those used in humans, and therefore any resistance that developed in bacteria from use in animals would not impact resistance to the unrelated antimicrobials used in people.

Unfortunately, as with most things about antimicrobial resistance (AMR),

it's not that straightforward. It's not “drugs” we need to think about, it's “drug classes.” A new drug that's just a slightly different version of (and works the same way as) drugs we currently use in people isn't what we want. We need new drug classes that are different in how they work and how bacteria become resistant to them. That's a much tougher order.

If I had to characterize a “*great animal-only antimicrobial class*,” I'd say it should be:

- Effective against a range of bacteria that cause disease (in animals)
- Able to be given orally (vs injectable)
- Low cost
- Safe (in the target species, or ideally in multiple species)
- Not persist in the body for long after treatment (to shorten withdrawal times for meat and milk)
- Not excreted into the environment in urine or feces

And the big one: *if resistance develops to our animal-only drug, it doesn't also confer resistance to human drugs.*

Veterinary Business Today

Should the veterinary profession fear ChatGPT?

Should veterinarians worry about ChatGPT? Since it went live in November 2022, nearly every day another use for ChatGPT is shouted from news headlines; it will write papers for students, replace journalists, write code for software and put artists and graphic designers out of work. It is considered by many to be the latest technological advance that threatens to upend entire industries and put millions of workers out of work.

But what about the veterinary profession? Are veterinarians at risk of being replaced by a superior intellect that will diagnose all that ails our patients? Can a chatbot that uses artificial intelligence to answer queries in a conversational manner be that transformative to our profession? Not likely.

There are two main reasons that ChatGPT, or any other artificial intelligence (AI) interfaces, are not to be feared in the veterinary profession. The first, is the reality that a less than solid foundation supports AI; the second is that while AI may herald a change in the profession, this will make veterinarians even more essential than we are now to the health care of animals.

Artificial intelligence is only as good as the data it uses for analysis. We have been promised for years that AI will sift through all of the data on a subject and will return results that are more accurate than what a person can do on their own. We are warned that human radiologists will be redundant in just a matter of years as AI systems scour data sets all over the world to come up with more accurate diagnoses. Watson, the IBM supercomputer, was going to revolutionize medicine but instead it was literally sold for parts to investors over the past couple of years¹. What happened? There are many fingers pointing at various culprits, but the reality was that the problems it was trying to solve were a lot harder than anyone expected. If Watson couldn't find solutions based upon the larger and broader research results in human medicine, then one would have to think that veterinary medicine is much further behind. Who would have thought that medicine isn't black and white but rather it is very nuanced with many shades of grey? Nobody reading this, I'm certain.

Now, imagine a time far in the future. All of the bugs have been resolved with AI and a pet owner can wave a Star Trek Tricorder like gadget over their pet and get an instant answer to what ails Fluffy. What is the use of a veterinarian then? I would think that the future world version of a veterinarian would largely look as it does today. We might be able to diagnose things more easily or quicker, but that would just be a continuation of what has happened over the past several decades. Technology improves, but veterinarians are needed more than ever for physical examinations, to perform diagnostic tests, to explore treatment options, and to decipher all of the information we receive from our own examinations and also of specialists.

The other night my wife, a fellow veterinarian, and I were watching the latest season of *All Creatures Great and Small*. We pondered about how hard it must have been to diagnose and treat animals without mobile imaging solutions, or in-house blood machines, and antibiotics. The veterinarians' black bag was pretty limited in those days. If they had been able to look into the future, they would have thought that we were aliens, considering our diagnostics capabilities and therapeutic options.

Yet, much like it is today, James, Tristan and Siegfried spent much of their time managing their clients. It seems that no matter how much technology advances, veterinarians spend a lot of our time explaining procedures and expected outcomes.

Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, based a lot of what Amazon became on the premise of looking at what would not change in the future. Rather than look for a revolutionary new groundbreaking technique to sell retail goods, he looked at what would remain consistent over the next 10 or 20 years. In the world of retail, he knew that consumers will always want to pay less and receive their purchased items faster.

What won't change in veterinary medicine no matter how advanced our diagnostic and therapeutic capabilities become? It is that pet owners want someone who can guide them through the various diagnostic and/or treatment options in a straightforward and compassionate manner. They want to be assured that the decision they make about the healthcare of their pet is the best option, under the circumstances. Can you imagine that these client needs will ever change?

What might change is the type of person whom wants to become a veterinarian or is accepted into veterinary college. An emphasis on communication will become even more important than it is now. It may become more important than having great diagnostic skills.

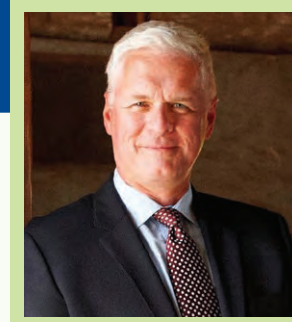
In the meantime, ChatGPT or whatever great miraculous technology comes next, will be very similar to what we have now with "Dr. Google". The outputs, or responses, are limited by the quality of the enquiry and the data used as the foundation for the answers. In other words, veterinarians will continue to explain to pet owners why "Dr. Google" isn't always right and educate them on the value of proper workups to get the most accurate diagnosis and design an appropriate therapeutic plan. The more things change the more they remain the same.

1. <https://qz.com/2129025/where-did-ibm-go-wrong-with-watson-health>

You can visit Dr. Pownall's website at www.veterinarybusinessmatters.com, on twitter @dvmbusiness, and the Veterinary Business Matters Facebook page. The website for McKee-Pownall Equine Services is www.mpequine.com and for Oculus Insights is www.oculusinsights.net.

Prior to becoming a veterinarian, Dr. Mike Pownall worked as a farrier. His interest in equine lameness led him to attend the Ontario Veterinary College, graduating in 2001. In 2002 he and his wife, Dr. Melissa McKee, started McKee-Pownall Equine Services, an organization represented by three equine veterinary clinics with 11 vets and 20 support staff spread across the Greater Toronto Area. He is also a partner with Oculus Insights, offering business education to veterinarians throughout the world.

Dr. Pownall received his MBA from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario, and was the class valedictorian. He presents internationally on business strategy, pricing, digital marketing, and technology for veterinarians. He also contributes to numerous journals on business management topics.



By Mike Pownall, DVM, MBA

That would be great.

However, what else did I just describe? A perfect ‘human-only’ drug. I’d rather use that drug in people than launch it for use in animals.

So, unless we have a new drug class that fulfills those properties and is *toxic* in people but not animals OR *only* works on a pathogen that’s of relevance in animals, we’re not likely to get a completely new useful animal-only drug class that would not impact resistance in people.

That doesn’t mean we shouldn’t keep it in mind and explore new drug classes that have been rejected for use in humans (which is already a prime source of many animal drugs). However, it means our main focus should

be saving the drugs we have so we don’t need to worry about finding new drug classes. That’s why we need to focus on better animal health systems to reduce the need for antimicrobials, better education and support systems to optimize antimicrobial use, and more study about what situations contribute to more or less resistance risk. That’s antibiotic stewardship.

Source: Worms and Germs blog,
www.wormsandgermsblog.com
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Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) news

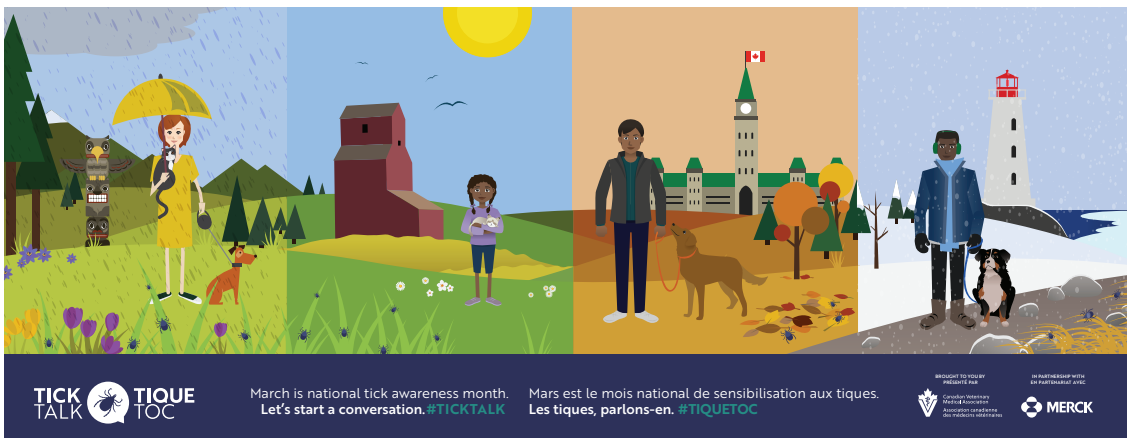
By Lori Ahronson, Manager, Communications and Public Relations

We’re with you every step of your way. Please see the information below for updates on the CVMA’s recent activities and resources across Canada.

March is National Tick Awareness Month

OUTSMART TICKS ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

DÉJOUONS LES TIQUES, PARTOUT ET EN TOUT TEMPS



National Tick Awareness Month (NTAM) is a client-education initiative introduced in 2016 by the CVMA in partnership with Merck Animal Health. Thanks to the enthusiastic Canadian veterinary community, a growing number of pet owners across the country are now aware of tick exposure risks and are taking measures to protect their pets and families. While the veterinary community may not be able to stop tick expansion, there is a great deal we can do to help change public perceptions and behaviours when it comes to tick control. The 2023 Tick Awareness Month theme is, “**Outsmart Ticks. Anytime, Anywhere.**” Visit canadianveterinarians.net and TickTalkCanada.com to access resources, graphics, and tools you can use to educate your clients and find information about our March 1 webinar.

The CVMA Presents the Following Position Statements:

- **New: Role of the Canadian Veterinary Profession in Addressing the Challenges of Climate change**
The CVMA recognizes that the Canadian veterinary profession must play an active and prominent role in supporting society’s efforts to mitigate, prepare for, and adapt to the effects of a changing climate in accordance with the profession’s involvement in applying the concepts of One Health and One Welfare.
- **Revised: Importation of Dogs into Canada**
The CVMA holds that importation of dogs into Canada should occur only after careful identification, assessment, and mitigation of individual and population-level risks to animal health, safety, and welfare; human health and safety; and ecosystem and wildlife health.
- The CVMA holds that all dental procedures performed on animals are part of the practice of veterinary medicine and should only be performed by a licensed veterinarian within the scope of their education, training, and experience or delegated by a licensed veterinarian to an appropriately

trained individual in accordance with regulations of the relevant jurisdiction. The CVMA considers anesthesia-free or sedation-free dentistry, including non-professional dental scaling, to be inappropriate since these practices are associated with animal welfare concerns while offering only minimal health benefits for the animal

View all position statements under the *Policy and Outreach* page of canadianveterinarians.net.

2023 CVMA Convention — July 6 to 9 Joie de Vivre in Quebec City

The CVMA is excited to celebrate our 75th anniversary in historic Quebec City during our 2023 Convention. The CVMA Professional Development Committee has developed a stellar program offering over 100 hours of continuing education (CE) including business management, companion animal, equine, ruminant, professional wellness, animal welfare, One Health topics, and more.

The Convention features several signature events including the CVMA Summit facilitated by CVMA’s President-Elect, **Dr. Trevor Lawson**; the CVMA National Issues Forum; and the CVMA Awards Gala. These signature events offer unique networking, engagement, and learning opportunities. The CVMA looks forward to hosting you in Quebec City this summer. Please visit our website for more information on the scientific program, speaker lineup, registration, and tourism.

The Working Mind Program

The Working Mind (TWM) program is a must for all veterinary staff as it addresses workplace mental health issues caused by inherent workplace stresses such as day-to-day workflow pressures, interpersonal relationships, conflicts, and some unique to veterinary medicine like ethical and moral distress. The Employee and Manager courses use trained facilitators, workshop manuals, contact-based videos that present actual employees and managers dealing with issues related to the program’s content, discussion exercises, and personal goal setting to enact the coping skills within the program. Employees and Managers who take this training have shown an increase in resiliency skills, a decrease in stigmatizing attitudes, and an increase in mental health wellbeing. Visit the *Veterinary Health and Wellness* section on our website to learn more and register.

Learn How to Use Togetherall, the CVMA’s Online Peer-To-Peer Mental Health Resource

Togetherall is an online peer-to-peer community supported by integrated services and safety nets offering the opportunity to improve mental wellness by receiving and providing support—including anonymous interactions and supervision by licensed mental health practitioners—that empowers members to openly share their innermost thoughts and feelings in an inclusive environment. Watch the Togetherall introductory webinar under the *Health and Wellness of Veterinarians* section of canadianveterinarians.net to learn more and to register.

Industry News

Supporting pet cancer patients, one toy at a time

A Canadian organization aimed at supporting pets and their owners after a pet cancer diagnosis and during treatment was created in memory of Kali, a dog who passed away after her cancer diagnosis in 2003. Kali's Wish is a hub where you can go to get information and talk to people who've dealt with pet cancer.

Pet Planet, a Canadian franchise that promotes a health-minded approach to pet ownership, partnered with Kali's Wish to seek donations in support of a program that provides KONG toys for dogs fighting cancer. For every \$8 donated to Kali's Wish, Pet Planet contributes one KONG toy to a dog fighting cancer.

On Feb. 3, Gratton's Pet Planet store donated about 200 KONG toys to the veterinary oncology clinical service at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) Veterinary Medical Centre (VMC). The veterinary oncology team will distribute the toys to their canine cancer patients over the coming year.

Visit the *Kali's Wish website* at www.kaliswish.org to learn more about the KONG toy giving program.

RVT Career Navigator one year later

The Registered Veterinary Technologists and Technicians of Canada (RVTTC) launched the RVT Career Navigator™ in December 2021. This innovative, bilingual national career planning and advancement website is dedicated to

Registered Veterinary Technologists/Technicians. There is no other source in Canada that provides this comprehensive knowledge base and wealth of information and connection to the veterinary technology profession.

Since its launch in December, 2021, RVT Career Navigator has attracted 5,600 users, with 18,712 page views, 54,000 website events, 594 files downloaded, and 366 registered users who logged in and used the Chart Your Career tool. Additionally, social media, advertising and exhibiting efforts have reached hundreds of thousands of people.

In the summer of 2022, RVT Career Navigator was awarded the Veterinary Medical Association Executives (VMAE) Best in Business Award, projects under \$750,000 in 2022 along with the Award of Excellence from the Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE) during their 2022 Awards of Distinction Program. The success of RVT Career Navigator has helped to motivate veterinary medical associations to promote the site to employees and stakeholders, helping them to investigate, explore, and create their own career pathway based on their skills, experience, education, interests and professional goals. Veterinary practice owners and managers have also used the website as a retention tool to help initiate career discussions with their team and find ways to expand their RVT careers within their veterinary practice.

We invite you to explore www.rvtcareernavigator.ca

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Video Seminars

Some of the Edmonton Association of Small Animal Veterinarians' popular past seminars are now available for streaming from the comfort of home! Full CE Credits will be given upon receipt of a CE Quiz.

Video prices: 1-2 hr videos: EASAV/CAVM: free Others: \$25 3 hr videos: EASAV/CAVM: \$25 RVTs: \$32 Other vets: \$62

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Available until	Seminar Title	Speaker	Seminar Abstract and information
October 31, 2022	"Oh Behave!" A clinical approach to everyone's FAVOURITE topic: Behaviour! (6 hrs)	Terry Marie Curtis, DVM, MS, DACVB	Part 1: Learning & Communication, Departure/Separation/Confinement Anxiety & Feline House Soiling Part 2: Inter-Dog Aggression, Human-Directed Aggression & Top 10 Behaviour Myths
Feb 28, 2023	Forensic Files (2 hrs)	Margaret Doyle, DVM, BSc, MVB, MSc, MRCVS	Dr. Doyle shares cases from Alberta outlining the process of an investigation from the veterinary perspective; from initial presentation through court proceedings with a view to demystifying the process and encouraging the veterinary team to feel comfortable with involvement.
March 31, 2023	Cytology Hacks and Case Studies (2 hrs)	Kate Baker, DVM, DACVP (Clin Path)	What Am I Looking At? Simplify your life by using the cytologic algorithm & Cytology Charcuterie: Amazing cases from the trenches
April 30, 2023	All About the Abdomen (3 hrs)	Audrey Remedios, DVM, DACVS & Lindsey Kurach, DVM, DACVS-SA	Exploratory laparotomy: systemic assessment of the abdomen, biopsy of the liver, stomach, intestines, lymph nodes & bladder; GI Surgery: gastrotomy, enterotomy & intestinal resection & anastomosis; GDV; prophylactic incisional gastropexy/incisional gastropexy for treatment of GDV; Splenectomy.
May 31, 2023	Practical Management of Anesthesia for Geriatric Patients with Co-existing Disease & Capnography - how to get started (5 hrs)	Craig Mosley, DVM, MSC, DACVAA	See case-based examples highlighting the principles of anesthetic management in geriatric animals with co-existing renal & cardiac diseases, hypotension & poor recoveries; Learn practical skills to address client anesthetic concerns & discuss the use of CRIs; Learn how to manage aggressive patients & use capnography to assess patient ventilation.
Live: Sept 25, 2022	Communication: The Language of Success (6 hrs)	Jayne Takahashi, DVM, MBA	Topics: 1. We need to talk 2. Why don't we see eye to eye 3. Bark! Meow! 4. You are the client!
Live: Nov 3, 2022	Crucial Procedures for the Veterinary Emergency Team (1.5 hrs)	Marie Holowaychuk, DVM, DACVECC, CYT	Lecture: Learn to care for emergent/critical patients and stabilize patients with shock, gastric dilation volvulus (GDV) or respiratory distress and manage patients with feeding tubes.
Live: Dec 7, 2022	URINE for a treat! (2 hrs)	Angelica Galezowski & Cathy Wagg, DVM, DACVP	Review how to perform and interpret in-house SA U/A cases & perform wet mount/direct smear preps using an interactive presentation

To find upcoming events, go to www.easav.ca and click on upcoming CE & events > Upcoming events.
To find seminar recordings, click on our Video Library! You must have a user profile (it is free) to access the library.

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