



EXPERTISE YOU CAN TRUST.



Sign Up For Pet Portals!

Have you visited your Pet Portal lately? Pet Portals are private, secure web pages that contain YOUR pet's health information. We provide Pet Portals as a free service to all our general practice clients so that you can request appointments, medication or food refills or update your pet's information at any time - day or night!

Don't have a Pet Portal yet? Sign up today, it's free! Just request a Pet Portal at our website, www.wheatridgeanimal.com.

Appointment Times

We have appointment times to fit your needs!

General Practice:	
Monday-Friday	9am-9pm
Saturday & Sunday	9am-5pm
Internal Medicine:	
7 days a week	9am-5pm
Surgery:	
Monday-Friday	9am-5pm



WHEAT RIDGE ANIMAL HOSPITAL'S Furry Free Press

wellness care • surgery • dentistry • senior care • 24-hour emergency hospital • nutrition • specialty services

The dog and cat days of summer are here! Inside you will find information to keep your pets happy during the hot summer months. You will also find information on how to keep your pets healthy as they grow older. Senior pets need extra attention and medical testing to help them live happier, healthier lives.

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If you prefer to receive this newsletter via email, please send your email address to mtapp@wrah.com.

Senior Pet Wellness

Thanks to advances in veterinary medicine, pets are living longer than ever before. However, with this increased lifespan comes an increase in the types of ailments that can afflict senior pets. As pets reach the golden years, there are a variety of conditions and diseases that they can face, including weight and mobility changes; osteoarthritis; kidney, heart, and liver disease; tumors and cancers; hormone disorders such as diabetes and thyroid imbalance; and many others.

Just as the health care needs of humans change as we age, the same applies to pets. It's critical for pet owners to work closely with their veterinarian to devise a health plan that is best for their senior pet. The doctors at Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital are here and ready to help you with the many decisions and choices that you will face.

So, when is a pet considered a senior? At Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital, Senior Exam reminders begin when the pet reaches eight years of age, realizing that for each pet and breed this age may vary.

When dogs and cats enter the senior years, these health examinations are more important than ever. Senior care, which starts with the regular veterinary exam, is needed to catch and delay the onset or progress of disease and for the early detection of problems.

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Announcements

Would you like to see your favorite pet picture in our newsletter? Mail your pictures to us at the address below, attention Melissa or email them to mtapp@wrah.com.

Do you know a Canine Athlete? Email us a short story about the dog that you think qualifies to be our Canine Athlete of the Month! CanineAthlete@wrah.com.



Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital and the McKeever/McReynolds family would like to thank everyone that came to the Bake Sales and have donated to Cullen McReynolds. Cullen is the son of our own Dr. Laura McKeever and was recently diagnosed with Stage 4 Neuroblastoma. 100% of all donations will go to help the family.

Tad Burger Cuttitta (above) loves to help his mom garden in the summer time.



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Appointment Hours:
Mon - Fri: 9 am to 9 pm
Sat & Sun: 9 am to 5 pm
24-hour Emergency Hospital

Senior Pet Wellness continued

AAHA and the doctors at Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital recommend that healthy senior dogs and cats visit the veterinarian every six months for a complete exam and laboratory testing. Keep in mind that every year for a dog or cat is equivalent to 5–7 human years.

During the senior health exam, your veterinarian will ask you questions regarding any changes in your pet's activity and behavior. They will also conduct a complete examination of all of your pet's body systems. Client education, laboratory testing and other diagnostic tests such as radiographs (xrays) and/or ultrasound are also key components of the senior exam. Additional tests become especially important in evaluating senior pets that show signs of sickness or are being prepared for anesthesia and surgery.

With the senior years comes a general "slowing down" in pets. As their major senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell) dull, you may find that your pet has a slower response to general external stimuli. The loss of sensory perception as well as age-related, cognitive and behavior changes often is a slow, progressive process, and it may even escape your notice.

The physical changes your pet experiences are generally easier to spot than the sensory or mental changes. As the body wears out, its ability to respond to infection is reduced, the healing process takes longer, and the effects of osteoarthritis can set in. Therefore, it is crucial to consult a veterinarian if you notice a significant change in behavior or the physical condition of your pet. Many older pets benefit from specially formulated food that is designed with older bodies in mind. Obesity in pets is often the result of reduced exercise and overfeeding and is a risk factor for developing other diseases. Because older pets often have different nutritional requirements, there are special foods that can help keep your pet's weight under control and or help to control a chronic disease they may have developed.

Exercise is yet another aspect of preventive geriatric care for your pets. You should keep them going as they get older—if they are cooped up or kept lying down, their bodies will deteriorate much more quickly. You may want to ease up on the exercise with an arthritic or debilitated cat or dog.

The best remedy is to keep your pet active—playing and training are excellent ways to keep their senses sharp and to be sure you are making regular visits to your veterinarian.

Paragraphs & excerpts were taken from an article written by AAHA & from their client friendly website <http://www.healthypet.com>

For the complete version and more specific details of this article, please visit their website mentioned above.

Meet Our Veterinarians



Steven W. Petersen, DVM, DACVS Board-Certified in Surgery

Dr. Petersen joined Wheat Ridge Veterinary Specialists in July 2003. He is a Colorado native who attended both undergraduate and veterinary medical school at Colorado State University. After graduation, he completed a two-year internship in emergency medicine and critical care followed by a three-year small animal surgical residency program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Dr. Petersen is board-certified in small animal veterinary surgery and a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. His primary clinical interests are orthopedic surgery, trauma surgery, neurosurgery and reconstructive surgery for traumatic wounds. Dr. Petersen was one of the first veterinary orthopedic surgeons in the country to use arthroscopy to diagnose and treat canine joint problems and he has over ten years of clinical experience with this specialty.

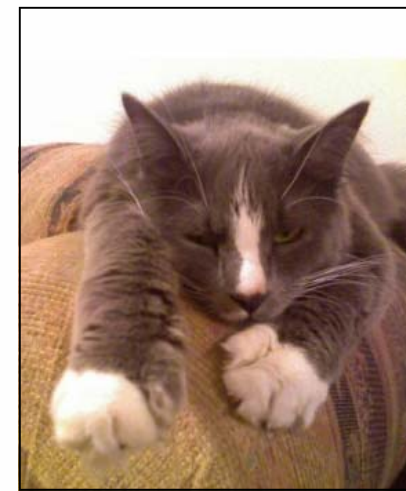
Dr. Petersen lectures locally and nationally to numerous veterinary associations and veterinary surgical organizations. Outside of his hospital responsibilities, Dr. Petersen devotes his free time to his family, and enjoys skiing, wind-surfing, cycling and trail running with the family dogs.



Katherine Tucker-Mohl, VMD Associate Emergency Veterinarian

Dr. Tucker-Mohl was born in Boston, Massachusetts and raised in Durham, New Hampshire. She attended Emory University where she received her bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry. Dr. Tucker-Mohl received her Veterinary Medical Doctor degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and upon graduation accepted an internship at Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital and has stayed on as one of our Emergency Veterinarians. During veterinary school, Dr. Tucker-Mohl studied avian malaria in native Hawaiian forest birds and participated in many spay/neuter/vaccination clinics on US Indian Reservations and in Mexico and Palau.

Dr. Tucker-Mohl's professional interests include internal medicine, shelter medicine and infectious diseases. In her spare time she enjoys backpacking, scuba diving and competitive swimming. She lives in Denver with her cat, Momma.



If you are ever driving around Arvada, you may see Nikolai. He loves going on rides with his dad in his sidecar.

Remy, adopted from Wheat Ridge Animal Hospital, loves his new home with his housemates, a cat named Roxy and Great Danes Tank and Taylor.

The Plague

Plague is a bacterial disease caused by *Yersinia Pestis*. It is widespread in the western United States because the wild rodents we have (prairie dogs, rock squirrels, ground squirrels) harbor fleas that transmit the bacteria when they bite and feed. Dogs are generally resistant to plague, but are capable of carrying home fleas that are infected. Cats and humans are susceptible to plague. Infected cats may be febrile, anorexic, lethargic, and have swollen lymph nodes. People may have a fever or chills, headache, nausea, swollen lymph nodes, or a cough. Humans are susceptible to infection from a sick cat. Symptoms are seen 2-7 days after exposure. Plague can be treated with antibiotics, but if not caught early can have severe consequences. It is important to use flea control on your pets and around your house, rodent proof homes and outside storage, and keep pets from roaming.

For more information about the Plague and cases that have been report, please visit www.co.jefferson.co.us/news/news_item_T3_R1441.htm

The Dog Days of Summer!

Heat-induced illness is unfortunately a common occurrence during the summer months. Heat stroke occurs when heat gain exceeds the body's ability to dissipate heat. Common causes of heat stroke are exposure to high temperatures and humidity, and from exertion or exercise. Breeds like Pugs, Pekingese, Boston Terriers, and Bulldogs are predisposed to heat-induced illness due to inherent airway abnormalities that increase the work of breathing. Do not allow these types of dog to be excessively active during the warmest part of the day. Other predisposing factors include obesity, previous history of having heat stroke, and an inability of the upper airway to open sufficiently during breathing.

Signs of heat stroke include excessive panting, vomiting, difficulty walking, excessive salivation, diarrhea, vomiting, and collapse. In its most severe form, heatstroke can be manifested as muscle tremors, dilated pupils, vocalizing, bloody urine and nosebleed, seizures, and coma. Without early and rapid recognition and treatment, it can be fatal.

If you think that your dog is developing signs of heat stroke, move them to a cool shady area or indoors with access to cool water. Put a towel soaked in room temperature water on the dog, and put him or her in front of a fan to expedite cooling. It is very important to not shock the system by soaking the animal in cold water or ice, as this can lead to over-cooling and shivering, both of which have been associated with a less favorable outcome.

Next, bring your dog to the nearest veterinarian for diagnosis and treatment. Diagnostic tests and treatment may include

If your dog is overweight, or has respiratory problems, walk them during the coolest times of the day, then keep them indoors in air conditioning, whenever possible.

bloodwork, intravenous fluids, antibiotics, plasma transfusions, and hospitalization for monitoring. With aggressive treatment, many animals can survive heat stroke; however, the best treatment is prevention. Slowly acclimatize your dog to exercise during the early spring, and never exercise them for more than 30 minutes without taking a rest. Provide plenty of cool water and shade at all times. If your dog is overweight, or has respiratory problems, walk them during the coolest times of the day, then keep them indoors in air conditioning, whenever possible. With these guidelines, both you and your furry companion can enjoy the beautiful outdoors.