

## Frequently Asked Questions

At the Healthy Paws Veterinary Clinics, we understand you may have many questions, and we are here to help! If you have any concerns not covered below, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

For our **Sheboygan Falls** Location (920) 550-2147

For our **Sheboygan** Location (920) 452-2899

### Clinic FAQs

#### **What are each of the clinic hours?**

Our **Sheboygan Falls** location: 7:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday

Our **Sheboygan** location: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday

\*Both clinics are closed on Saturday and Sunday\*

#### **What types of animals do you see?**

Healthy Paws Veterinary Clinic welcomes all breeds of cats and dogs.

#### **What forms of payment do you accept?**

For your convenience, we accept cash, check, Mastercard, Visa and CareCredit. Please note that payment is due at the time services are performed.

#### **Do I need an appointment for my pet to see a veterinarian?**

Yes, appointments are necessary!

At our **Sheboygan Falls** location we are scheduling the following appointments:

- Wellness (routine and preventative)
- Health Concern
- Medical Progress
- Urgent Care
- Puppy/Kitten appointments
- Technician & veterinary grooming

\*Emergencies during clinic hours are given priority attention over routine procedures\*

At our **Sheboygan** location we are scheduling the following appointments:

- Wellness (routine and preventative)
- Technician & veterinary grooming

#### **Is it really necessary to bring my dog and/or cat in for a yearly comprehensive exam?**

Comprehensive examinations are recommended AT LEAST annually to check for health issues that may not be apparent to owners. During a comprehensive examination, the veterinarian will examine your pet's ears, eyes, skin and hair coat, listen to the heart, check a stool sample and discuss any concerns you may have.

#### **How long is my appointment going to take?**

Routine exams and standard visits typically take no more than 30 minutes of your time. However, our goal is superior care, so we will devote whatever amount of time is needed to make sure your pet gets the exceptional treatment you expect, and they deserve.

**What paperwork should I bring with me? How do I transfer my pet's records from a previous clinic?**

Vaccine records and medical history are very important. We don't want to over, or under medicate a pet and records really help us avoid that. If you are visiting a Healthy Paws Veterinary Clinic location for the first time and can provide a medical history, please bring that and your pet's vaccine records with you. To request your pet's record from a previous clinic, simply call your previous vet clinic and have medical records faxed or emailed to our office.

**Where do I take my pet in case of an emergency?**

If there is an emergency during business hours, simply call our office ahead of time so we know what to expect when you bring your pet in. In case of emergencies occurring after our clinic hours, Healthy Paws Veterinary Clinic refers our clients to BluePearl Pet Hospital in Port Washington (262) 268.7800 and/or WVRC in Grafton (262) 564.0249. These facilities are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to aid you and your pet.

**Pet FAQs****When should I bring my new pet in?**

As soon as possible. Even if they are not currently due for vaccinations, it is important to have your new family member checked out. We can help determine if there are any health problems that might need to be addressed before being vaccinated, and what their optimum vaccine schedule should be. When deciding to get a new puppy, be sure to call ahead and make appointments for their care to ensure you keep your puppy on its vaccination schedule for optimum immunity support.

**How do I know what my pet needs?**

Basically, your pet needs to start life on the right paw. Your pet needs essential care and routine exams to stay healthy. We make it a top priority to provide high quality vaccine packages so you can see just how affordable routine care can be. In the event that your pet displays signs of some illness, we're just a phone call away so please call us. We'll help determine exactly what kind of care your pet needs for the situation at hand, or based on their previous history.

**Do I really need to have my pet vaccinated?**

Absolutely! Proper vaccination is one of the biggest reasons pets today enjoy such long, happy lives. Without regular vaccinations, your pet can contract any one of a dozen common ailments and deadly diseases (some of which can be passed on to humans) that vaccines prevent.

**When do you need fecal samples, and why?**

It is recommended a fecal sample be provided at annual/wellness visits, new puppy/kitten exams, and when GI symptoms are present. Only tapeworms and roundworms are visible to the naked eye. On some occasions, diarrhea, vomiting, and weight loss are symptoms of intestinal worms but many intestinal parasites go undetected without running intestinal parasite tests. Some intestinal parasites are transmittable to humans making routine intestinal parasite testing important to the health of pets and humans.

**When do I switch from puppy/kitten food to adult food?**

Switching a puppy or kitten to adult food too early can cause obesity and gastro-intestinal issues. We recommend switching to adult dog or cat food between 10-12 months.

**We just found a stray pet. What should we do?**

Check the pet for collar/tags. If none are present, feel free to stop by our office to check the pet for a microchip. If no microchip is present, it is recommended that the pet be kept safe while you look for signs in the area and check with the Humane Society of Sheboygan County.

**Dog FAQs****Should my dog be on heartworm medication? What happens if I miss a dose of heartworm medication?**

Yes. Heartworm disease is very easy to prevent but very difficult, expensive and even life threatening to treat. We recommend testing your dog for heartworm disease before starting on the preventative. If you miss a dose or doses of heartworm preventative, please consult with us immediately.

**How often do I need to bathe my dog?**

If no skin condition is present, you can bathe your dog every 4-6 weeks.

**Why is my pet scooting its rear on the ground?**

There could be several reasons that your pet is scooting on the ground. Your pet may need its anal gland expressed, need to be dewormed, groomed, or have other more serious issues. Please call the clinic to make an appointment. We can identify the cause of your dog's discomfort and provide a solution. It would be helpful if you could bring a fecal sample to your appointment to check for the presence of worm eggs.

**How do I know if my dog is overweight?**

When you look down at your dog from above, you should see a waistline between his ribcage and hips. If you do not see this, your dog may be overweight. Did you know that carrying extra weight shortens animals' lives? Helping your dog maintain her healthy weight gives him/her a chance to stay with you longer. One of our veterinarians can determine a food and feeding plan to help your dog lose weight.

**Is it OK if my dog eats my cat's food?**

If your dog only gets into cat food occasionally, it isn't cause for alarm. If your dog is frequently eating cat food, it can become a problem. There are a few simple things you can do. Feed your cat once (or twice) a day and take away the leftover food, and/or put your dog in a different room while your cat is eating. If you believe your dog has become unwell because of excessive cat food eating over time, call us!

**Do I need to worry about Lyme disease?**

Yes. Lyme disease is present in all 50 states, and we diagnose many cases each year. Lyme disease is both treatable and preventable.

**What breeds of dogs need grooming?**

All dogs need their coat and nails tended to, but some dogs require much more grooming than others. Some breeds that require frequent grooming are Poodles, Shih Tzus and Lhasa Apsos, Bichon Frises, Yorkshire Terriers, Schnauzers, and West Highland Terriers. There are many other breeds that need regular grooming so ask us if your dog's breed is not on this list!

**Cat FAQs****My cat hates going to the vet! What should I do?**

You can help your cat have a calmer trip here if you teach your cat that a travel carrier is a good thing. Did you know a cat can be trained to use a kennel just like a dog? Cats that are comfortable going into and out of a travel kennel are much less stressed when they come into the clinic. You can also place a blanket over the carrier to reduce what they see. And, do not be embarrassed if your cat is unhappy during the exam. Our staff is trained to work with stressed cats so they receive the veterinary care they need.

### **How often should I take my cat to the vet?**

A kitten needs several visits for the first series of vaccines. Once this is complete, an adult cat should have a health check once a year. If a health problem is found, your cat might require more frequent care to remain in good health.

### **How do I know if my cat is sick?**

Sometimes animals hide their illnesses or injuries, so it is important to be aware of signs and symptoms that require urgent or emergency care. Some symptoms are listed below. If you suspect your cat is unwell, please call us. Early veterinary attention can prevent serious illnesses from progressing and reduce the cost of care.

- Unexplained weight gain or loss
- Changes in appetite or drinking habits
- Repeated vomiting
- Mobility problems
- Behavioral changes

### **Is it OK to let my cat outside?**

Outdoor cats face many of the same risks as a stray dog:

- ✓ Injuries from fights with other animals (other cats, dog, fox, etc.)
- ✓ Exposure to Rabies, a disease fatal to both pets and people
- ✓ Exposure to parasites, many of which can be transmitted to people
- ✓ Getting fleas and/or ticks
- ✓ Being hit by a vehicle
- ✓ Being stolen

You can let your cat outside while minimizing risks by:

- Maintaining vaccines. When you make an appointment, remember to tell us that your cat will be outside;
- Keep identification on your cat. Many cat collars feature "breakaway" designs, so a collar and tag is not enough. Cats need permanent identification like a microchip. Microchips won't prevent a collar-less cat from being "adopted", but if your cat would end up in a shelter it is more likely your cat would be returned;
- A cat that is outdoors will need regular treatment for parasites. Parasites are on grass and soil. A cat that is outdoors - even briefly - needs parasite protection;
- A cat that gets outside needs monthly protection from fleas and ticks. Both fleas and ticks wait in grass to hop or climb onto your pet. Ask us about safe and effective flea and tick prevention;
- Restrain your cat with a harness and leash. Keeping your cat restrained protects him from interactions with animals that could hurt him, being stolen, and from being hit by a vehicle.

A cat can live a happy, full life without being outdoors. Playing with your cat gives your cat exercise and mental stimulation. When you're not home to play with your cat, there are many toys to choose from to help to keep your cat active.

### **Why should an indoor cat be spayed or neutered?**

Spaying or neutering your cat, along with other health care choices, can prolong the life of your cat by reducing the risk of certain diseases and cancers. Female cats can come into heat as often as every 2 weeks, and this may be accompanied by aggression and constant attempts to get loose. Both male and female cats are known to make escape attempts during breeding cycles. Some have broken screens, climbed out of high open windows, or bolted out a door. When cats do escape the house to breed, they'll be exposed to any disease the other cat carries, like feline leukemia, rabies, feline herpes, infectious peritonitis, and feline AIDS. In addition, the cat will be exposed to all of the dangers listed in answer of the question, "Is it OK to let my cat outside?"

### **How can I tell if my cat is overweight?**

When you look down at your cat from above, you should see a waistline between his ribcage and hips. If you do not see this, your cat may be overweight. Did you know that carrying extra weight shortens animals' lives? Helping your cat maintain a healthy weight gives him/her a chance to stay with you longer. One of our veterinarians can determine a food and feeding plan to help your cat lose weight.

### **Is it OK if my cat eats some of my dog's food?**

If your cat only sneaks a nibble of kibble occasionally, it isn't cause for alarm. If your cat is frequently eating dog food, it can become a problem. There are a few simple things you can do. Feed your dog once (or twice) a day and take away the leftover food, and/or put your cat in a different room while your dog is eating. If you believe your cat has become unwell because of excessive dog food eating over time, call us!

### **Are flea collars good for cats?**

Flea collars are possibly the least expensive method of flea control, but they are also the least effective. Flea collars are impregnated with chemicals to kill fleas. The chemical stays within the collar. Flea collars are effective at killing fleas next to the collar, but have no protection for the remainder of your cat. We can help you prevent or control fleas with a treatment that covers your cat's body, coating each of its hairs. We'll show you how to apply it at home, once a month. You'll still need to treat the environment if your cat "has fleas", but this treatment provides your cat with much more protection than any flea collar can give.

### **Surgery FAQs**

#### **My animal is having surgery tomorrow. Can it have food and water?**

Please take their food away by 8:00 PM the night before surgery. We will feed them once they fully recover from anesthesia. There is no need to limit their access to water at any time.

#### **How old does my puppy or kitten have to be to have them spayed or neutered?**

We generally recommend waiting until your animal is approximately 4-6 months of age to try to avoid any urinary incontinence issues from spaying or neutering them too young. We also try to spay animals before they have their first heat cycle because doing so greatly reduces their risk of developing mammary tumors.

#### **What are the benefits of having my pet spayed or neutered?**

Spaying or neutering your pets can greatly reduce their risk of developing many types of cancer later in life. Spaying your animals will also reduce/eliminate the chances of your pets developing a uterine

infection called a pyometra which can be a life threatening condition. It may also decrease or even eliminate unwanted behaviors such as aggression or running off.

Spaying or neutering your pets is also the only way to do away with unwanted litters of puppies or kittens without placing an extra burden on animal shelters.

### **How do I know when my pet needs a dental performed?**

Bad breath, inflamed gums, plaque and tartar buildup, and loose teeth are all of great concern when it comes to the health of your animal's mouth. If you notice any of these signs, please bring your pet in for a dental checkup or schedule a dental cleaning. If your pet's teeth are not in need of a cleaning at the time of the checkup, we can give you recommendations to help maintain your pet's overall mouth health such as helpful treats/toys, teeth brushing, and other pet safe dental products. If your animal is at greater risk of complications during anesthesia, we have products that can help improve mouth health and remove plaque and tartar buildup without performing a dental cleaning.

### **How often should my pets be vaccinated?**

Dogs and cats should be vaccinated annually with a 5-way or 4-way vaccine during a visit with a thorough physical exam to ensure they are adequately protected against the more common canine/feline pathogens. We currently recommend that cats should be vaccinated against Rabies starting at 16 weeks of age, and then annually. Dogs should be vaccinated against Rabies starting at 16 weeks of age, then boosted within one year of the first vaccination, and then triennially as long as the vaccination does not lapse.