

Vitality Pet Care Newsletter

Spring



Beauty & vitality are gifts from nature for those who live according to her laws.

~Leonardo DeVinci

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Wood Characteristics

Meridians: LV & GB

Season: Spring

Orifice: Eyes

Sense: Vision

Emotion: Anger

Climate: Wind

Flavor: Sour

Color: Green

Cartoon Character: Taz

Fruit of the Month:



In **Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine (TCVM)**, Spring is the season of the WOOD element. This element houses the Liver (LV) and Gallbladder (GB) meridians. These meridians are at the most sensitive during Spring. When the Liver Qi stagnates it is much like the Tazmanian Devil...spooling up & creating Heat (redness) & Wind (itching). This translates into

potential allergies for your pet.

The changing season translates into differing needs for each pet. In general, shifting the dietary ingredients to calm the LV, diminish the excess heat, and tonify the Blood helps to keep itching under control. Taking pets in for a seasonal recheck will help to adjust treatments for his or her changing needs.

In this issue, we will discuss techniques to help keep your pet's digestion healthier to meet the challenges of spring.

Food Therapy for Spring

Cooked Diets

Goji Berries



Cooling
Tonifies KI Yin & Jing
Replenishes LV Yin
Replenishes LV Blood
Brightens eyes
Nourishes LU Yin
Moistens Dryness

Interesting Fact:
Goji berries were found to have the highest level of antioxidants of any fruit.

ORAC values
Blueberries = 2400/100g
Goji berries = 23,500/100g

TOP 12 most contaminated foods:

Peaches
Apples
Bell Peppers
Celery
Nectarines
Strawberries
Cherries
Pears
Grapes(imported)
Spinach

MEATS:

WARMING: Occasional use of meats like chicken

NEUTRAL to **COOLING:**

Frequent use of meats like beef, bison, and turkey

COLD: Infrequent use of meats like duck.

ADD in organ meat such as heart, liver, and kidney.

Note: kidney best given raw!



VEGGIES:

Decrease root veggies to 40% or less & increase surface veggies to 60% or more

Add in squash, zucchini and a small amount of broccoli

Add spinach into leafy green rotation

Celery is great to smooth liver qi!

GRAINS:

Use NEUTRAL to COOLING grains, such as barley, brown rice, millet or amaranth

AVOID oats and quinoa

Raw Food Guidelines & Spring Raw Veggie Mash Recipe

- Overall thermal qualities will move to neutral to cooling, as we move to the warmer season of Spring. The focus is on calming LV Qi and dispelling the mild to moderate increases in Heat.

MEATS:

- Occasional use of WARMING meats like chicken
- Frequent use of NEUTRAL to COOLING formulas:
 - NV: chicken/turkey, rabbit, beef, bison
 - SC: duck duck goose, beef, surf & turf
 - PP: turkey/sardine, beef

VEGGIES:

- Add in veggie mashes in spring
- Celery use is a must, as it calms LV qi, dispels Heat, and drains Damp.
- See veggie mash recipe below.

Lettuce
Potatoes

Antibiotics, pesticides and other contaminants are also found in:

- milk
- eggs
- meat

Always select **ORGANIC** in these foods to avoid unnecessary toxicity and health issues in you and your pet.

Flea Season Reminder:

Now is the time to call out your organic pest control company to prepare for the onslaught of fleas and ticks! The companies we recommend at VPC are:

Ecological Pest Control

Richard Pierson
DFW & surrounding areas
972.390.1133
Website:
[Ecological Pest Control](#)

Rid All Pest Control

Dallas & surrounding counties:
214.340.6969
FtW & surrounding counties:
817.266.4776
Website: [Rid All](#)

Though we recommend use of the organic Parasite Dust for prevention, we recognize if an infestation occur, care-givers may need to treat with a topical flea

NO GRAINS!



Spring Raw Veggie Mash Recipe:

Using a food processor, blend the following veggies into a consistency of applesauce:

- 1-10oz bag frz green beans, semi-thawed
- 3 medium carrots
- 4-5 stalks of celery
- 1 med yellow squash
- 1 med zucchini
- 1 stalk broccoli, florets only or 1 cup asparagus
- 1 bag/bunch spinach (rinsed well) OR other leafy green*
- 1/4 c organic, Tibetan goji berries, covered in water**

Once veggie mash has been completed, divide up into containers and freeze. It is best to have a 2-3 day supply per container to maintain freshness.

*Leafy green options: Swiss chard, kale, mustard greens, collard greens, and watercress

**Include soaking water with berries in mash

Feature Product:

treatment. We recommend Frontline as a primary treatment in these instances.

Stay ahead of fleas during this season. It is easier to prevent an infestation than treat one!

Omega 3 Pet now available in LIQUID!!

The same great formula from Nordic Naturals now comes in an easy-to-administer liquid form. Omega 3 Pet is available in 16oz, 8oz and 2oz bottles to correspond the need of the pets in your household!

Omega 3 Fatty Acids are essential in supporting:

- Cellular health
- Joint health
- Heart health
- Skin & coat
- Brain Development & maintenance
- Eye Development & maintenance
- Energy Production



Remember, most commercial pet foods have ample sources of omega 6 fatty acids. The ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 is critical for optimal function, thus supplementing omega-3 fatty acids is of paramount importance in veterinary patients.

Coconut Oil: A Real Superfood!

by Pam Montgomery-Fittz, DVM

Coconut oil is one of the most interesting Superfoods of our time! Once thought to be unhealthy, coconut oil has shed the stigma of a saturated fat and is now lauded for its numerous health benefits. The majority of the fatty acids in this oil are a particularly healthy class called, medium-chain triglycerides, or MCTs. Such MCTs include lauric acid, capric acid and caprylic acid among others. These specific fatty acids have potent *antibacterial*, *antiviral*, *antifungal* and *antioxidant* properties, which help to eliminate various infections and bolster the immune system. In addition, MCTs are more easily assimilated and are used for energy in the body rather than fat storage. Imagine - instant energy without fear of weight gain!



From a medicinal perspective, coconut oil is often used in a variety of disease issues to boost function, boost immunity and eliminate pathogens. There are many bacteria and two dozen pathogenic viruses inactivated by lauric acid in coconut oil. While the "bad" bacteria are neutralized, the "friendly" intestinal bacteria needed for digestion remain unharmed. In fact, these amazing fatty acids have been found to neutralize Candida and other fungi in the intestinal tract as well. Look out leaky gut, there's a new white hat in town!

At VPC, we incorporate coconut oil in cases with specific disease processes such as

kidney disease, liver disease, diabetes, pancreatitis and more. Dosages vary with pet and disease process. If your pet has a specific disease, please contact your holistic practitioner for guidance on the use of coconut oil. While it is used with great success in disease processes, it can also be use in healthy pets for prevention as well as their care-givers too!!

When purchasing coconut oil, please select the organic, extra-virgin for optimal benefits. The oil remains solid white below 73F, but will become clear oil above that temperature. It has a high smoke-point and can be used in cooking for humans and pets. Care-givers can enjoy a teaspoon in their morning oatmeal for a daily dose of antioxidants! It is important to remember that the health benefits of coconut oil are completely different than those of fish oil. Thus it is best to use in conjunction with a fish oil regimen.

For more information and research articles on coconut oil, please see [Coconut Research Center](#)

The Leptospirosis Dilemma

by Pam Montgomery-Fittz, DVM

It is spring again and concerns about Leptospirosis re-surface as do the debates on whether or not to vaccinate. On one side we have those who believe vaccination is the only option to choose. On the other side are those who believe the vaccination risks outweigh the risk of contracting Leptospirosis.

The truth is that Leptospirosis vaccination is a hotly debated issue in the veterinary profession. The obligation of care-givers is to become more informed with both sides of the debate and make a decision based upon what is right for their pet. Most busy Americans simply want someone to tell them what to do, so often the decision is dependent upon the belief system of the vaccinating veterinarian. Certainly it would be easier to let a third party decide, but the care-giver is then left with the aftermath of that decision.

In this article series, we will provide pathophysiology of Leptospirosis and then review the concerns with vaccination. We encourage pursuing additional information and guidelines on risk-assessment to help with this decision. With more information, care-givers can be a part of a decision-making process rather than allow another person to make a vital decision on the health of their pet.

Part II: Pathophysiology of Leptospirosis

by Dawn Strong, Veterinary Nurse

The organism that causes Leptospirosis belongs to a group of organisms known as spirochetes. There are currently over 200 serovars or strains of leptospira that have been identified; eight of these are known to cause disease in dogs and rarely cats. The most common infecting dogs are: *Leptospira icterohaemorrhagiae*, *L. canicola*, *L. grippityphosa*, and *L. pomona*. These organisms are always present in the environment because it is perpetuated via vermin, wildlife and livestock and these animals do not appear ill. They shed the organism intermittently and contaminate the environment by voiding urine, which then passes leptospirosis from animal to



animal, most commonly via standing water and swampy areas. In Texas the warmer spring and fall months can be the most common time for increased possibility of leptospirosis exposure, as the organism does not do well in colder or severely hot temperatures.

Dogs become infected by leptospire when abraded skin or mucous membranes come into contact with the infected urine, water contaminated with infected urine, direct contact via bite wounds or consumption of tissue. With the correct diagnosis leptospirosis is not only treatable, but treatment can be very successful. As a dog owner, recognizing possible symptoms that can lead to a correct diagnosis and being informed about treatment and prevention can be lifesaving for your companion.

Some common symptoms include: Fever (103-105 degrees), depression, loss of appetite, joint pain, nausea, excessive drinking, increased urination, jaundice, excess bleeding brought on by anemia. Any combination of symptoms may be present depending on the infecting serovar. As no two cases proceed exactly alike, all signs are unlikely to be present in one pet. Some strains primarily cause liver damage, while others may concentrate in the kidneys or prevent the blood from clotting normally. The sooner diagnosis and treatment can begin the better the possible long- and short-term outcome for the pet.

A positive diagnosis can be made through a blood test with your veterinarian. This test shows individual strains and the level of antibody (titer) present against these strains. Be aware that titers may be negative the first 10 days after initial infection so many times additional samples may need to be tested. In addition, previous vaccination can falsely affect the titer. Thus, it is often best to begin treatment and confirm the diagnosis a week or two later.

Treatment often begins with intravenous fluid and antibiotic therapy. Fortunately, leptospira are sensitive to penicillin and doxycycline. Though long-term prognosis is dependent upon the extent of organ damage, it is greatly enhanced with early detection and treatment. It is here that care-givers can have the greatest role.

Part III: Leptospirosis - To Vaccinate or Not to Vaccinate

by Pam Montgomery-Fiitz, DVM



The American Animal Hospital (AAHA) Canine Vaccine Guidelines and Recommendations consider the Leptospirosis Vaccine to be an optional or "non-core" vaccine. The AAHA guidelines indicate that such a vaccine is one "that the committee believes should be considered only in special circumstances because their use is more dependent on the exposure risk of the individual animal." What this translates into is that the exposure risk and geography play a larger role in determining necessity of the vaccine.

Unlike the Distemper and Parvovirus vaccines, the Leptospirosis vaccine is a bacterial vaccine. While the viral vaccines provide a longer duration of immunity, the bacterial vaccines are more unpredictable and require frequent re-vaccination. The AAHA guidelines state, "Bacterial vaccines, especially killed whole organism products...are much more likely to cause adverse reactions...Thus their presence in a combination vaccine product may enhance the or suppress the immune response or may cause an undesired response." The Leptospirosis vaccine is both a "killed" and "bacterial" vaccine, and consequently it is

considered one of the two most reactive vaccines for dogs.

Vaccine reactions encompass two types of hypersensitivity reactions:

- **Type I**, occur within 24-48 hours following vaccination, i.e. anaphylaxis (facial swelling, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) Traditional veterinarians often treat these hypersensitivity reactions, though homeopathic treatment yields a better response.
- **Type II**, or delayed-onset hypersensitivities, occur from day 7-49 following vaccination. Also known as Vaccinosis, this "vaccine fallout" is routinely treated by holistic veterinarians due to the nature of their practices.

Though pre-treating with Benadryl and corticosteroids can prevent the visible adverse symptoms, the hypersensitivity nevertheless occurs at the cellular level and the health of the pet is increasingly impacted with each subsequent vaccination.

Currently, the most comprehensive Leptospirosis vaccine on the market offers protection for 4 of the 8 strains that commonly affect dogs. The protection for those 4 strains is not 100% and there is little to no crossover immunity provided for strains not included in the vaccine. Thus a pet, which has been vaccinated, may nonetheless become infected with Leptospirosis. Thus Leptospirosis MUST always be considered as a possibility when a vaccinated pet demonstrates symptoms. In addition, the vaccine does not prevent shedding of the organism in a "carrier" animal, meaning a dog can be infected but not show signs of illness and still shed the infective organism in its urine. The AAHA guidelines report "Immunity is a ill-defined term for *Leptospira* spp. products. If immunity is defined as protection from infection or prevention of bacterial-shedding, then there is little or no enduring immunity."

Current literature indicates the prognosis for recovering from leptospirosis is approximately 90%. Fatalities that do occur generally do so 5-10 days after initial onset of the disease. Hence, recognizing and treating symptoms early, as referenced in the *Pathophysiology of Leptospirosis* above, can greatly increase the chances of a good outcome.

In conclusion, you as a pet owner must weigh the risk of possible infection against known and unknown vaccine reactions and fallout. Thus risk assessment is not just risk of disease but also risk of vaccination, as both can also affect your pet's health for a lifetime.

- For more information please use the following links:
- [Duration of Immunity](#)
- [AAHA 2003 Canine Vaccine Guidelines & Recommendations](#)
- [Canine Vaccine Protocol](#)

RECIPE CORRECTION

Ground Meat and Quinoa Meatballs



3/4 c cooked quinoa was inadvertently omitted from Recipe in Winter 2010. The complete recipe is as follows:

- 1 pound ground meat (turkey, chicken, beef or bison)
- **3/4 cup cooked quinoa**
- 1/4 cup shredded carrots *
- 1/4 cup shredded zucchini *

- 1/4 cup shredded green beans *
- 1 egg
- 1/2 tsp SEA salt
- 1 tsp bone meal (or 1/2 tsp ground eggshells)

Preheat oven to 425

Mix all ingredients & divide into 16 meatballs.
Cover cookie sheet with foil & spray with cooking spray.

Place evenly on cookie sheet & bake for 10-12 minutes or until brown.

Cool before feeding.

*3/4 cup Veggie Mash may be used in place of these veggies



Nix the noodles!