

WHAT'S THE SCOOP?



Murabella and Shores Animal Hospitals

Preventative Care Medicine

“We do what’s right, not what’s easy.”

Written by Dr. Zachery Drilingas

Preventative Care Medicine is THE single most important thing you can provide to your furry family member to ensure they live the healthiest life possible. Medicine is always more effective when done preventatively versus reactively. This is why our mission is to provide the best veterinary medicine available and the highest level of care to our pet owner community. To this effect we have created our VIP Plans which includes the yearly recommended healthcare, from annual bloodwork to monthly preventions, rolled into affordable monthly payments to help ease the expense veterinary care can accrue. At your next visit a team member would be more than happy to explain our program and the cost involved. This quarters newsletter will focus on Preventative Care Medicine and why we find it so important to ensuring out pets life happy healthy lives.

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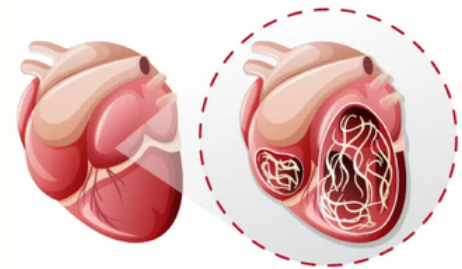
Which Vaccinations are Core - And Which ones are Recommended?

Our recommendations are based on the updates provided by AAHA, or The American Animal Hospital Association, as we are one of the few accredited. All dogs should have the following **core** vaccines: Distemper, Adenovirus, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza, and Rabies. In addition to these, other vaccines are just as essential for some dogs based on their **lifestyle risks**. These include: Leptospira, Lyme disease, Bordetella, and Canine influenza. All cats should have the following **core** vaccines: Herpesvirus, Calicivirus, Panleukopenia virus, Leukemia, and Rabies. In addition to these, other vaccines are just as essential for some dogs based on their lifestyle risks. These include: Chlamydia and Bordetella. Core for an individual patient means they get the vaccines required for ALL pets PLUS vaccines required based on the pet's lifestyle and risk factors.

[HTTPS://WWW.AAHA.ORG/GLOBALASSETS/02-GUIDELINES/2022-AAHA-CANINE-VACCINATION-GUIDELINES/RESOURCES/CANINEVACCINEGL_321SHEET_DIGITAL.PDF](https://www.aaaha.org/globalassets/02-guidelines/2022-aaaha-canine-vaccination-guidelines/resources/caninevaccinegl_321sheet_digital.pdf)

Heartworm Resistance - a Major Problem

Terrifying statistics are coming out showing an increased prevalence of **resistance** in the parasite responsible for causing Heartworm disease. This means that even pets who are on a monthly preventative are still prone to the possibility of contracting this deadly disease. Yes, even if your pet is strictly indoors, because mosquitoes find their way inside too. Heartworm disease canines and felines in all 50 states. Although the disease can be fatal, preventatives are widely available and largely effective. The American Heartworm Society (AHS) recommends that dogs receive year-round heartworm prevention regardless of where they reside. All available FDA-approved heartworm prevention products are members of the macrocyclic lactone (ML) drug class. MLs are safe for all breeds, even those with MDR mutations, at prescribed doses. These drugs are highly effective in non-resistant strains of heartworm. The ML that has been found to be most effective even with resistant strains of heartworm is **Moxidectin**. It is absolutely **crucial** that our pets do not miss even one dose as this can put them at risk. The reason prevention is so important is because the effects of heartworm disease can happen very quickly and if left untreated results in death. Treatment while typically effective does come at quite a bit of risk and financial burden.



PRACTICE MANAGER'S MESSAGE MELISSA TAIT

"With our focus on keeping patients in the best health possible, we recommend preventative labwork at least annually. The purpose of this initially is to have baselines while our patients are healthy to allow us to compare when going through an illness. Remember that our furry family members age a lot faster than we do and can be pretty tough, many do not show symptoms until it is far along. Our panels are specifically designed to include what our doctor team feels best encompasses your pet's health. We have also worked with the laboratory to get special pricing on our panels with your budget in mind. Our goal is to ensure the health of your pet and catch issues early, to keep them with us as long as possible."

Our Available Preventions



Due to the growing concerns of Heartworm resistance, particularly in the South, our clinics are adamant that Moxidectin products are the best choice for our clients. For this reason we have begun to transition away from HeartgardPlus and Nexgard. In its place we will be focusing more on the Proheart injection and Nexgard Plus for dogs and Nexgard Combo for cats. Proheart come in 6 month and 12 month versions which is our preferred prevention so that no lapse in coverage occurs by removing the need to remember the monthly tablet. With this we typically recommend Nexgard for flea and tick coverage. For those who prefer the monthly dosing; we recommend Nexgard Plus, which combines Moxidectin with Nexgard to have coverage for fleas, ticks, and heartworms combined. Preventions for cats is a little different, as is heartworm disease in general. Our prevention of choice is Nexgard Combo which combines heartworm, flea, tick and even tapeworm prevention. If you have a preferred prevention, please discuss this with your veterinary team and we would be happy to give you a written script to fill externally.

Why is Annual Labwork Important - And Why is it so Expensive?

Because our furry loved ones cannot communicate with us in words, we often have to wait for our pets to display symptoms of illness before we are able to do anything about it. The good news is that with only a simple blood draw we are able to determine a multitude of different diseases that commonly occur in our pets. Paired with a urine and fecal sample we can get a very good look at the overall health. This is why Annual Labwork screens are so vital. It is an unfortunate reality that disease can affect our pets at **any** age although it is more commonly seen in our senior pets. For this reason we recommend beginning yearly screens at your pet's **first** annual exam. This allows us to establish good base lines that will allow us to track the values over time looking for elevations which can signal disease. In addition our yearly screens also check that your pet is heartworm negative, has no signs of a urinary tract infection, and the fecal returned without any parasites being seen. The reason Annual Labwork is so costly is due to the sheer amount of information that can be gleaned from just this one panel, as well as the laboratory cost involved for running the tests. Our **junior** panels include a complete blood count, an internal organ function and electrolyte check, a heartworm and tick borne disease panel, a urine review, and a fecal check. Our **senior** panels include the same testing, but includes a more extensive organ and electrolyte check, thyroid testing, and a pancreatitis check. The costs for these labs can be significant, and while pet insurance is increasing in popularity, few options exist still for preventative medicine. This is why our **VIP Plans** were created, to help spread out the cost of your pet's yearly recommended preventative care including yearly labwork checks.



Puppy Package - The New One



Adding a new member to the family is an exciting time, but it can cause financial hardships and that is why we are here to help. Our **Puppy Package** has been newly reimagined. One thing we heard repeatedly from our clients is that they wish the preventions were included until the first annual. Well, now it does! On our puppy package, your fur baby will receive the recommended core vaccines, monthly preventions, deworming, fecal checks and exams all at reduced pricing. In addition, we have included nail trims (regularly \$25) until 20 weeks of age and unlimited exams (regularly \$59). This means if your puppy does become ill during the first 18 months, you are able to bring them in to have the doctor **examined** at no charge. Additional recommendations and cost will then be discussed for your approval. Further benefits include \$200 off your spay or neuter when done with us as well as waiving the sign up fee if you choose to put your pet on one of our **VIP Plans** upon finishing the Puppy Package. All in, a saving of over \$550 can be expected. One of our team members would be glad to discuss the package details further with you either by calling us or at your puppy's establishing exam with us.

Employee Spotlight - Brittney Povlich (nurse)

Brittney was born in St. Augustine, FL but raised about an hour away in Pomona Park, FL. Brittney has always loved taking care of animals, she spent every summer growing up at her grandparent's ranch helping out and has always had animals at home. Brittney has worked in customer service for 8 years and loves helping people. Outside of work, she loves spending time with her son and family.



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