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Mission

To inspire receptionists, credentialed technicians, practice managers and veterinary assistants to build strong relationships with coworkers, improve their communication skills and educate clients with confidence in order to enhance their contributions to a veterinary practice and maximize every patient's well-being.



Give a cheer for the 2015 California RVT of the Year: Being a veterinary technician is like being a cheerleader in this respect: there's no halftime for veterinary technicians or cheerleaders. And to highlight a leader in the profession, the California Registered Veterinary Technician Association recognized Harold Davis, RVT, VTS (ECC & Anes.) with the California RVT of the Year Award. Read all about it at dvm360.com/CaliforniaRVT.

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ASK the experts

ASK SHAWN:

Help us **hire right**



Q We're looking to hire a new team member, and we want someone who fits our practice. What questions are we allowed to ask that will help us identify team players—and help us avoid toxic team members?

Your core values are supposed to define the characteristics of people working in your organization. So take your core values and develop two or three interview questions that are about asking around those values. For example, if you have a core value of communication, you might ask the candidate: "Tell me about a time you were forced to engage in a difficult conversation. How did you do that and what was the outcome?" We want to ask open-ended questions that talk to candidates about their experiences relative to the quality that we want in them.

Watch the rest of Shawn's answer at dvm360.com/hiringhelp.

Got a question? Ask Shawn.

Maybe you're tired of babysitting your team members. Perhaps you're looking for strategies to beat a bully. Shawn can help.

Shawn McVey, MA, MSW, is a member of the *Firstline* and *Veterinary Economics* Editorial Advisory boards and CEO of McVey Management Solutions in Austin, Texas. Email your questions for him to firstline@advanstar.com, then visit dvm360.com/mcvey to read McVey's advice on other hot topics.



Scan the QR code to watch now.

FRONT DESK DISASTERS:

A series of unfortunate events

In a classic client mix up, Rhonda confuses a pet owner who just had his cat euthanized for someone who just adopted a new puppy. Check it out at dvm360.com/unfortunate. Then email your solutions to Help Me, Rhonda at firstline@advanstar.com.



Scan the QR code above to watch it now.



CLIENT HANDOUT:

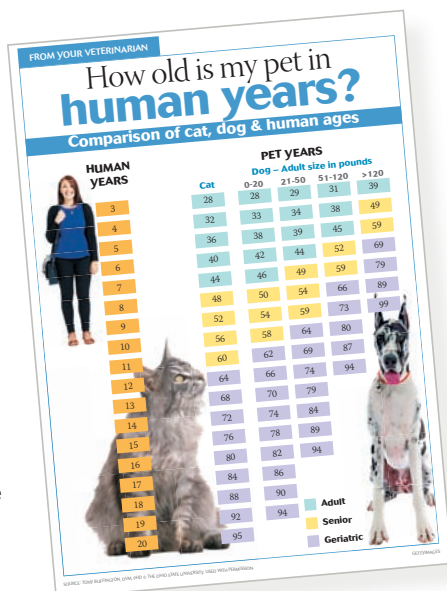
How old is my pet in human years?

Use this form to answer this client question and prepare pet owners to offer a lifetime of care.

Start a conversation about the care pets need as puppies and kittens and on through adulthood and as seniors with this handout that helps clients understand their pet's age and stage of life at dvm360.com/AgeAndStage.



Scan the QR code above for the free form.



Celebrate World Rabies Day

By Ciera Miller, CVT



STEP 1: EDUCATE

Are you ready? September 28 is World Rabies Day. The Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC) offers tips and tools to help you prepare to talk to pet owners:

- > Set out the handouts from **dvm360.com/rabiestools** in the reception area and exam rooms.
- > Give a handout to pet owners with each invoice.
- > Feature the “End Rabies Together” theme on your bulletin board using handouts, the World Rabies Day logo and testimonials from people who’ve been affected by rabies.



STEP 2: CELEBRATE

To encourage pet owners to participate, consider these tips:

- > Post articles about rabies throughout the world on your practice’s web page and Facebook page or in other social media channels.
- > Use your hospital’s website and social media to share pictures of your team and clients with their pets.
- > Ask pet owners to share any personal experience or their views on rabies and how they actively prevent it.
- > Host a rabies vaccination clinic, where pet owners can take advantage of protecting their pets at a lower cost.

Community teamwork *keeps stray pets current on vaccinations*

Our veterinary hospital works with the city to improve the health of loose pets and vaccinate them before they’re released to their owners—or a new forever home. *By Julie Steinbeck*

Lost pets and strays are heartbreaking, and it’s made worse when these pets aren’t healthy and up-to-date on their vaccinations. But our practice has found a solution to work with our local government to improve the lives of pets and protect our community’s health.

We have a contract with the city that makes sure all pets are current on vaccinations and healthy before releasing the pet to the owner. Read how we make it work for our practice—and the community—at **dvm360.com/straypets**.

*Julie Steinbeck is practice manager at New Haven Veterinary Clinic in New Haven, Missouri, and one of the 10 finalists for the Veterinary Economics Practice Manager of the Year award, sponsored by Nationwide. Read more about past Practice Manager of the Year nominees and winners at **dvm360.com/PMOY**.*



NexGard® (afoxolaner) Chewables

CAUTION: Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Description:

NexGard® (afoxolaner) is available in four sizes of beef-flavored, soft chewables for oral administration to dogs and puppies according to their weight. Each chewable is formulated to provide a minimum afoxolaner dosage of 1.14 mg/lb (2.5 mg/kg). Afoxolaner has the chemical composition 1-Naphthalenecarboxamide, 4-[5-[3-chloro-5-(trifluoromethyl)-phenyl]-4,5-dihydro-5-(trifluoromethyl)-3-isoxazolyl]-N-[2-oxo-2-[(2,2,2-trifluoroethyl)amino]ethyl].

Indications:

NexGard kills adult fleas and is indicated for the treatment and prevention of flea infestations (*Ctenocephalides felis*), and the treatment and control of Black-legged tick (*Ixodes scapularis*), American Dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*), Lone Star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*), and Brown dog tick (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*) infestations in dogs and puppies 8 weeks of age and older, weighing 4 pounds of body weight or greater, for one month.

Dosage and Administration:

NexGard is given orally once a month, at the minimum dosage of 1.14 mg/lb (2.5 mg/kg).

Dosing Schedule:

Body Weight	Afoxolaner Per Chewable (mg)	Chewables Administered
4.0 to 10.0 lbs.	11.3	One
10.1 to 24.0 lbs.	28.3	One
24.1 to 60.0 lbs.	68	One
60.1 to 121.0 lbs.	136	One
Over 121.0 lbs.	Administer the appropriate combination of chewables	

NexGard can be administered with or without food. Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or refused. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost or if vomiting occurs within two hours of administration, redose with another full dose. If a dose is missed, administer NexGard and resume a monthly dosing schedule.

Flea Treatment and Prevention:

Treatment with NexGard may begin at any time of the year. In areas where fleas are common year-round, monthly treatment with NexGard should continue the entire year without interruption.

To minimize the likelihood of flea reinfestation, it is important to treat all animals within a household with an approved flea control product.

Tick Treatment and Control:

Treatment with NexGard may begin at any time of the year (see **Effectiveness**).

Contraindications:

There are no known contraindications for the use of NexGard.

Warnings:

Not for use in humans. Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children. In case of accidental ingestion, contact a physician immediately.

Precautions:

The safe use of NexGard in breeding, pregnant or lactating dogs has not been evaluated. Use with caution in dogs with a history of seizures (see **Adverse Reactions**).

Adverse Reactions:

In a well-controlled US field study, which included a total of 333 households and 615 treated dogs (415 administered afoxolaner, 200 administered active control), no serious adverse reactions were observed with NexGard.

Over the 30-day study period, all observations of potential adverse reactions were recorded. The most frequent reactions reported at an incidence of > 1% within any of the three months of observations are presented in the following table. The most frequently reported adverse reaction was vomiting. The occurrence of vomiting was generally self-limiting and of short duration and tended to decrease with subsequent doses in both groups. Five treated dogs experienced anorexia during the study, and two of those dogs experienced anorexia with the first dose but not subsequent doses.

Table 1: Dogs With Adverse Reactions.

	Treatment Group			
	Afoxolaner		Oral active control	
	N ¹	% (n=415)	N ²	% (n=200)
Vomiting (with and without blood)	17	4.1	25	12.5
Dry/Flaky Skin	13	3.1	2	1.0
Diarrhea (with and without blood)	13	3.1	7	3.5
Lethargy	7	1.7	4	2.0
Anorexia	5	1.2	9	4.5

¹Number of dogs in the afoxolaner treatment group with the identified abnormality.

²Number of dogs in the control group with the identified abnormality.

In the US field study, one dog with a history of seizures experienced a seizure on the same day after receiving the first dose and on the same day after receiving the second dose of NexGard. This dog experienced a third seizure one week after receiving the third dose. The dog remained enrolled and completed the study. Another dog with a history of seizures had a seizure 19 days after the third dose of NexGard. The dog remained enrolled and completed the study. A third dog with a history of seizures received NexGard and experienced no seizures throughout the study.

To report suspected adverse events, for technical assistance or to obtain a copy of the MSDS, contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251 or www.merial.com/NexGard. For additional information about adverse drug experience reporting for animal drugs, contact FDA at 1-888-FDA-VETS or online at <http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/SafetyHealth>.

Mode of Action:

Afoxolaner is a member of the isoxazoline family, shown to bind at a binding site to inhibit insect and acarine ligand-gated chloride channels, in particular those gated by the neurotransmitter gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), thereby blocking pre- and post-synaptic transfer of chloride ions across cell membranes. Prolonged afoxolaner-induced hyperexcitation results in uncontrolled activity of the central nervous system and death of insects and acarines. The selective toxicity of afoxolaner between insects and acarines and mammals may be inferred by the differential sensitivity of the insects and acarines' GABA receptors versus mammalian GABA receptors.

Effectiveness:

In a well-controlled laboratory study, NexGard began to kill fleas four hours after initial administration and demonstrated >99% effectiveness at eight hours. In a separate well-controlled laboratory study, NexGard demonstrated 100% effectiveness against adult fleas 24 hours post-infestation for 35 days, and was > 93% effective at 12 hours post-infestation through Day 21, and on Day 35. On Day 28, NexGard was 81.1% effective 12 hours post-infestation. Dogs in both the treated and control groups that were infested with fleas on Day -1 generated flea eggs at 12- and 24-hours post-treatment (0-11 eggs and 1-17 eggs in the NexGard treated dogs, and 4-90 eggs and 0-118 eggs in the control dogs, at 12- and 24-hours, respectively). At subsequent evaluations post-infestation, fleas from dogs in the treated group were essentially unable to produce any eggs (0-1 eggs) while fleas from dogs in the control group continued to produce eggs (1-141 eggs).

In a 90-day US field study conducted in households with existing flea infestations of varying severity, the effectiveness of NexGard against fleas on the Day 30, 60 and 90 visits compared with baseline was 98.0%, 99.7%, and 99.9%, respectively. Collectively, the data from the three studies (two laboratory and one field) demonstrate that NexGard kills fleas before they can lay eggs, thus preventing subsequent flea infestations after the start of treatment of existing flea infestations.

In well-controlled laboratory studies, NexGard demonstrated >97% effectiveness against *Dermacentor variabilis*, >94% effectiveness against *Ixodes scapularis*, and >93% effectiveness against *Rhipicephalus sanguineus*, 48 hours post-infestation for 30 days. At 72 hours post-infestation, NexGard demonstrated >97% effectiveness against *Amblyomma americanum* for 30 days.

Animal Safety:

In a margin of safety study, NexGard was administered orally to 8 to 9-week-old Beagle puppies at 1, 3, and 5 times the maximum exposure dose (6.3 mg/kg) for three treatments every 28 days, followed by three treatments every 14 days, for a total of six treatments. Dogs in the control group were sham-dosed. There were no clinically-relevant effects related to treatment on physical examination, body weight, food consumption, clinical pathology (hematology, clinical chemistry, or coagulation tests), gross pathology, histopathology or organ weights. Vomiting occurred throughout the study, with a similar incidence in the treated and control groups, including one dog in the 5x group that vomited four hours after treatment.

In a well-controlled field study, NexGard was used concomitantly with other medications, such as vaccines, antihelmintics, antibiotics (including topicals), steroids, NSAIDs, anesthetics, and antihistamines. No adverse reactions were observed from the concomitant use of NexGard with other medications.

Storage Information:

Store at or below 30°C (86°F) with excursions permitted up to 40°C (104°F).

How Supplied:

NexGard is available in four sizes of beef-flavored soft chewables: 11.3, 28.3, 68 or 136 mg afoxolaner. Each chewable size is available in color-coded packages of 1, 3 or 6 beef-flavored chewables.

NADA 141-406, Approved by FDA

Marketed by: Frontline Vet Labs™, a Division of Merial, Inc.
Duluth, GA 30096-4640 USA

Made in Brazil.

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1050-4493-03
Rev. 1/2015

FRONTLINE VET LABS

PEARLS of practice

5

Nutrition Nuggets

Slim down portly pooches and fat cats with these tips for pet owners.



Measure up

Send pet owners home with a measuring cup, and mark the fill line. Demonstrate what a full cup looks like. It shouldn't be overflowing!

1



Get high

For cats, try placing their food dishes on elevated surfaces. For healthy, mobile cats, you can also recommend pet owners play the "who moved my food" game, where you move the food dish and let the cat "hunt" for the dish at mealtimes.

2



Use a puzzling solution

Treat puzzles offer pet owners a way to play with their pets for a rewarding mealtime.

3



Weigh in

Open your practice doors to pet owners so they can visit for regular weigh ins every one to three months until the pets reach their weight loss goals.

4



Get automated

Automatic feeders reduce the chances of overfeeding. A bonus: for pets who get the nighttime munchies, pet owners can set the dispenser to release a small amount of kibble for midnight cravings.

5



Killing fleas and ticks can be just **this easy.**

With NexGard® (afoxolaner), flea and tick control is convenient for pet owners since dogs love taking the soft, beef-flavored chew.¹

POWERFUL flea and tick killing all month long

CONVENIENT monthly dosing owners are used to

EASY for owners to give¹ and for veterinarians to dispense



Prescription only with anti-diversion technology

See brief summary on page 06

¹Data on File at Merial.



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IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: For use in dogs only. The most common adverse reaction is vomiting. Other adverse reactions reported are dry/flaky skin, diarrhea, lethargy, and anorexia. The safe use of NexGard in pregnant, breeding, or lactating dogs has not been evaluated. Use with caution in dogs with a history of seizures.

Your mood matters to pets



To manage an animal's behavior, you must first start by managing your own behavior. Use these eight steps to manage your mood. *By Mikkel Becker, CPDT*

You're five minutes late—again—your car's making that rattling sound and you just know you're going to need to have a conversation with the practice owner about the way inventory's being handled. You are, in a word, stressed. You may not realize it, but your body language and movements are sending out signals—waves of frustration and anxiety that the keen observer will notice. And those observers include your patients. Dogs or cats already in a high state of arousal and hyper vigilance are especially sensitive to shifts in moods of those around them. Here's how you can adjust your mood—and improve pets' experience at your veterinary practice.

As an animal trainer, I've been shaped to read emotional state and behaviors in animals. But at the same time I'm watching them, I'm checking myself as well, because I know how my mood can influence animals. Sure, sometimes I might miss signs of my own mounting stress. During these times, it's not uncommon for the animal to give me subtle reminders, such as tensing, that cue me to check into how I'm feeling.

1 Connect with animals. In the animal care profession, we have one of the best combatants for stress right next to us: animals. Dogs and cats have a calming effect on us and are actually good for the mind and body. Simply sitting with a friendly dog or cat and petting them can be mutually beneficial for the person and animal, with feel-good chemicals rising while stress hormones decrease. Or, for an extra boost, go out on a walk with a dog to further combat stress. Exercise helps boost a positive mindset and reduce stress.

2 Just breathe! Regularly practice deep breathing to reduce anxiety and stress hormones while increasing feelings of alertness and calm. In stressful situations, taking deep breaths stimulates the body's parasympathetic system, which in turn can lower heart rate and blood pressure while promoting relaxation.

Read the case for deep breathing—and learn how to practice more effective breathing—at dvm360.com/justbreathe.

3 Consider a form of meditation, like mindfulness. Mindfulness has been shown to significantly reduce negative stress and mood disturbance while also boosting a person's quality of life and ability to think clearly. Prayer is another type of meditation that has shown in brain scans to activate parts of the brain associated with language, with the brain responding neurologically similar to prayer as to an actual observable conversation.

There's an app for that! Tools like the Buddify and Headspace apps give you a quick breather in your day to adjust your perspective.

Sound matters—to people and pets. Audit your practice's noise with the list at dvm360.com/hospitalnoise.

4 Surround yourself with music that's calming for you and for pets—classical music, for example—rather than overstimulating music. Playing calming music throughout the hospital can relax people and animals and block out excess background noise that's potentially upsetting or distracting. Music has various positive effects, including lowering emotional distress, lowering burnout rate, reducing stress, elevating mood and improving quality of life.

5 Take breaks. Even a few minutes every hour to stand up, walk around and center yourself is essential. A few ideas for a quick break:

- > Go outside for a quick walk to soak up a little sun and vitamin D
- > Read part of a devotional or inspirational book
- > Listen to uplifting music
- > Talk to someone who's encouraging
- > Write out thoughts in a journal

Along with daily breaks, it's important for emotional and physical health to take vacation days. Vacation time has been shown to improve productivity, decrease burnout, boost mental prowess and lead to improved mental and physical health.

I know what you're thinking: Who has time for a break? Breaks actually make you more effective. Need to convince your boss? Visit dvm360.com/break for data to support breaks and ideas to create a healthy break space.

For me, I find value in helping animals and people in need and fulfill this desire by volunteering my services doing behavior counseling at a shelter to keep dogs and cats in the home. I also fulfill my desire to help children by pledging to an organization that provides care for those in need.

6 Find meaningful activities or purposes you can devote yourself to, such as volunteering, mentoring or financially providing for a cause. Other activities of meaning include finding a community of people who offer support and acceptance, such as a church or small study group, a support group or a common interest group.



Dogs should be tested for heartworm prior to use. Mild hypersensitivity reactions have been noted in some dogs carrying a high number of circulating microfilariae. Treatment with fewer than 6 monthly doses after the last exposure to mosquitoes may not provide complete heartworm prevention. Please see full product label for more information, or visit www.virbacvet.com.



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* *A. caninum*.

† Prevents flea eggs from hatching;
is not an adulticide.

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7/15 15724

sentinel[®] spectrum[®] (milbemycin oxime·lufenuron·praziquantel)

Caution
Federal (USA) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

Indications
SENTINEL[®] SPECTRUM[®] (milbemycin oxime/lufenuron/praziquantel) is indicated for the prevention of heartworm disease caused by *Dirofilaria immitis*, for the prevention and control of flea populations (*Ctenocephalides felis*); and for the treatment and control of adult roundworm (*Toxocara canis*, *Toxascaris leonina*), adult hookworm (*Ancylostoma caninum*), adult whipworm (*Trichuris vulpis*), and adult tapeworm (*Taenia pisiformis*, *Echinococcus multilocularis* and *Echinococcus granulosus*) infections in dogs and puppies two pounds of body weight or greater and six weeks of age and older.

Dosage and Administration
SENTINEL SPECTRUM should be administered orally, once every month, at the minimum dosage of 0.23 mg/lb (0.5 mg/kg) milbemycin oxime, 4.55 mg/lb (10 mg/kg) lufenuron, and 2.28 mg/lb (5 mg/kg) praziquantel. For heartworm prevention, give once monthly for at least 6 months after exposure to mosquitoes.

Dosage Schedule				
Body Weight	Milbemycin Oxime per chewable	Lufenuron per chewable	Praziquantel per chewable	Number of chewables
2 to 8 lbs.	2.3 mg	46 mg	22.8 mg	One
8.1 to 25 lbs.	5.75 mg	115 mg	57 mg	One
25.1 to 50 lbs.	11.5 mg	230 mg	114 mg	One
50.1 to 100 lbs.	23.0 mg	460 mg	228 mg	One
Over 100 lbs.	Administer the appropriate combination of chewables			

To ensure adequate absorption, always administer SENTINEL SPECTRUM to dogs immediately after or in conjunction with a normal meal.

SENTINEL SPECTRUM may be offered to the dog by hand or added to a small amount of dog food. The chewables should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole. Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed a few minutes after administration to ensure that no part of the dose is lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

Contraindications
There are no known contraindications to the use of SENTINEL SPECTRUM.

Warnings
Not for use in humans. Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children.

Precautions
Treatment with fewer than 6 monthly doses after the last exposure to mosquitoes may not provide complete heartworm prevention.

Prior to administration of SENTINEL SPECTRUM, dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infections. At the discretion of the veterinarian, infected dogs should be treated to remove adult heartworms. SENTINEL SPECTRUM is not effective against adult *D. immitis*.

Mild, transient hypersensitivity reactions, such as labored breathing, vomiting, hypersalivation, and lethargy, have been noted in some dogs treated with milbemycin oxime carrying a high number of circulating microfilariae. These reactions are presumably caused by release of protein from dead or dying microfilariae.

Do not use in puppies less than six weeks of age.

Do not use in dogs or puppies less than two pounds of body weight.

The safety of SENTINEL SPECTRUM has not been evaluated in dogs used for breeding or in lactating females. Studies have been performed with milbemycin oxime and lufenuron alone.

Adverse Reactions
The following adverse reactions have been reported in dogs after administration of milbemycin oxime, lufenuron, or praziquantel: vomiting, depression/lethargy, pruritus, urticaria, diarrhea, anorexia, skin congestion, ataxia, convulsions, salivation, and weakness.

To report suspected adverse drug events, contact Virbac at 1-800-338-3659 or the FDA at 1-888-FDA-VETS.

Information for Owner or Person Treating Animal

Echinococcus multilocularis and *Echinococcus granulosus* are tapeworms found in wild canids and domestic dogs. *E. multilocularis* and *E. granulosus* can infect humans and cause serious disease (alveolar hydatid disease and hydatid disease, respectively). Owners of dogs living in areas where *E. multilocularis* or *E. granulosus* are endemic should be instructed on how to minimize their risk of exposure to these parasites, as well as their dog's risk of exposure. Although SENTINEL SPECTRUM was 100% effective in laboratory studies in dogs against *E. multilocularis* and *E. granulosus*, no studies have been conducted to show that the use of this product will decrease the incidence of alveolar hydatid disease or hydatid disease in humans. Because the prepatent period for *E. multilocularis* may be as short as 26 days, dogs treated at the labeled monthly intervals may become reinfected and shed eggs between treatments.

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02/15

FEAR-FREE veterinary visits

As an adult diagnosed with ADHD, I felt empowered by my diagnosis because it helped me help myself, including taking medication and creating routines for regular exercise and sleep.

er it's investing in key friendships, family, core community groups or finding ways to connect with others who will offer such support, the investment pays off with improved emotional health.

8 Seek support and help from trusted resources when you are suffering and can't cope. Opening up about emotional issues and strongholds is frightening and humbling. It can leave us feeling vulnerable and open to rejection and criticism. But, beyond any doubt, the gift of getting help is well worth the risk, whether it starts by opening up to someone trusted or getting help from a medical care provider. The decision to power through it often doesn't work. Sometimes we need various avenues of help, from counseling to medication.

My dad, Dr. Marty Becker, has bravely shared his story of living with depression. He had a low season where his emotions were bottomed out and he felt little hope for his future or enjoyment of the present. He opened up to our family about his feelings and got help, including re-dedicating himself to his faith, seeking supportive friends and narrowing his work to focus on issues he's passionate



Mikkel Becker, CPDT, works with veterinarians and veterinary behaviorists to address behavior issues in dogs and cats. Find more self-care tips at dvm360.com/burdenofcare.

7 Develop strong relationships with others, as loneliness is a major contributor to depression. It's important to find ways to connect with others in a valuable manner. Meeting face-to-face is shown to be far more valuable and fulfilling than meeting in less personal ways, such as over the Internet or on the phone. Whether

My grandfather took his own life after battling for years with bipolar disorder and depression. I wonder how different his battle would have been if he'd had the treatment options available today for mental illness.

about—such as Fear-Free veterinary visits. Even though my dad felt vulnerable opening up about his struggle, he did so in the hopes of helping others who may be suffering in silence.

Let's never misplace the importance of caring for our emotional and mental health. It has the power to influence our quality of life and our ability to positively impact the world and those around us. **FL**

meet *The* ESSENTIALS

We're curating our most informative clinical content so you can find what you need now.



A special monthly package designed to help boost client compliance and make it easy for your team to educate pet owners about regular pet wellness care.

TOOLS:

Obesity in pets

- >> Monitoring pet weight loss: A shared responsibility
- >> Video: A veterinarian's view on exercising with pets
- >> Client handout: How can I tell if my pet is overweight?
- >> Client handout: How to get your dog in shape

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Diabetes

- >> Making life easier for the owners of diabetic pets
- >> Client handout: My pet has diabetes! Now what?

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Atopic dermatitis

- >> Helpful hints for canine atopy: Immunotherapy pointers
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Separation anxiety

- >> Using clonidine and trazodone for anxiety-based behavior disorders in dogs
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The ESSENTIALS

We're curating our own veterinary clinical content so you can find what you need now. By Mindy Valcarcel, Editor, Medicine Channel Director

Your patient in the next exam room has diabetes. Later today you'll see a patient with atopic dermatitis. Plus you know it's obese and serious problems are looming because this client balks on the topic of weight loss. And tomorrow's emergency visit may lead you to seek pointers on handling a patient you suspect has GDV. You've come to dvm360 to determine what the best next steps are.

You start by typing "diabetes" in the search, and, voila, almost 800 results. You don't have time to sort through all those results for what you need. So we've done it for you.

Meet *The Essentials* (find them online at dvm360.com/essentials). Each Essential

covers the elements of what you are looking for—diagnostic steps, treatment plan guidance and the latest updates, plus resources to share with your entire veterinary team and your clients. It's an essential package on a specific condition, curated by the *Veterinary Medicine* content team.

Although things have changed a bit since 1905—when *Veterinary Medicine* was first published—we've amassed an extensive depth and breadth of content. In these next pages you'll find the package highlights. And we'll continue to add more conditions so you'll be fully armed to help that patient waiting for you in the next room, no matter what the problem is. We have just what you are looking for, and we're helping you find it.

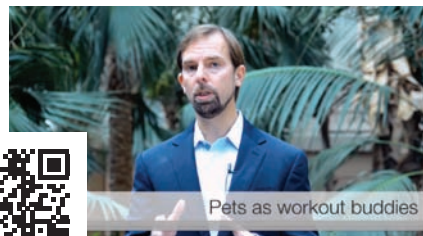
Obesity *in* pets:

An estimated **54%** of dogs and cats in the United States are overweight or obese, but clients don't always recognize that Parker has gone portly. We have curated our most informative articles to help you diagnose and treat it most efficiently and effectively. And we will keep you on top of new developments as they arise.

A veterinarian's view on exercising *with* pets



With the rise of Fitbit and other exercise tracking apps, getting healthy has become more visible than ever. But is it advisable to include pets in such activities? Dr. Ernie Ward, a bona fide fitness freak, explains why now is a better time than ever to enlist furry workout buddies.



Scan the codes below to get these tools instantly. No scanner? No problem. Visit dvm360.com/obesityessentials.



ESSENTIALS: OBESITY

Monitoring weight loss in obese pets: *A shared responsibility*

Monitoring is an important part of a successful weight loss program—and it requires the pet owner's cooperation, says Jane Armstrong, DVM, MS, MBA, DACVIM. To increase the chances of the program's success, owners need to be accountable, she says.

When starting a patient's weight loss program, Dr. Armstrong advises that you schedule recheck appointments every two weeks until a weight loss trend is achieved, then monthly for the next six to 12 months.

Warn owners at the beginning of the program that weight loss isn't linear. There will be plateaus when weight loss levels off, and you may need to make adjustments in the feeding program.

A pet may have not reached its target weight when you and the owner decide to transition the weight loss program to the maintenance phase. The goal for weight reduction is rarely to achieve some cosmetic "ideal" body condition score, but rather to reduce the morbidity associated with obesity and improve the quality of the animal's life. Rechecks are recommended every three months for one year to help support patients through the maintenance phase.

Much about implementing

weight loss programs has less to do with the pets and more to do with supporting owners and helping them change their behaviors. And don't forget: veterinary technicians can play an important role in helping set up a weight loss program, in monitoring at recheck visits and by phone, and in coaching and supporting owners to change their behaviors.

Getting in shape

It's common to think dogs that lie around are just lazy, making it easy to overlook the lethargy that results from being overweight or obese. Give clients these tips to get dogs in shape—scan the codes below to download.



The top 3 ways you can make life *easier* for the owners of diabetic pets

Caring for a diabetic cat is a formidable job—even for endocrinology expert Ellen N. Behrend, VMD, MS, PhD, DACVIM. Owning a diabetic cat gave her insights into how best to manage diabetic cats at home.

1 The quicker diabetes is controlled, the more likely remission will occur.

In a study evaluating remission in diabetic cats initially treated with insulin, 55 diabetic cats were included whose own-

ers followed a highly intensive monitoring and blood glucose regulation protocol using insulin glargine and a low carbohydrate diet.¹ Remission was achieved in 35 cats (64%). Cats that had received glucocorticoid treatment within six months prior to a diagnosis of diabetes mellitus, that required a lower maximum insulin dose, or that were intensively managed using glargine within six months of diagnosis were more likely to achieve remission, while cats with a peripheral neuropathy present at diagnosis (such as difficulty climbing stairs or a plantigrade stance) were less likely to do so.

2 Diet is important, and canned food is preferred.

Veterinary low carbohydrate-high protein thera-

peutic diets such as Purina Veterinary Diets DM (Nestlé Purina) or Prescription Diet m/d (Hill's Pet Nutrition) are the first-choice dietary recommendation in most cats with diabetes mellitus.²⁻⁴ However, a carefully selected over-the-counter high protein-low carbohydrate diet can provide the same degree of effective glycemic control as therapeutic diets do when financial constraints are present or when a cat will not readily eat a veterinary therapeutic diet.⁵ Many canned over-the-counter diets are relatively low in carbohydrate content (< 5 g/100 kcal), but information must be obtained from the manufacturer on specific brands and flavors to ensure that the goal nutrient composition is being met. Most dry over-the-counter diets are higher in carbohydrate con-



Everything you need...

We've gathered our best content on diagnosing and managing your patients with diabetes mellitus. You'll find tips on which insulin to use, how to best monitor glucose control, and how best to discuss diabetes with pet owners at dvm360.com/diabetesessentials.

ESSENTIALS: DIABETES

tent. Thus, if a therapeutic dry veterinary low carbohydrate-high protein diet is not an option, it may, unfortunately, be more difficult to identify a good-quality dry food with low carbohydrate content.

3 Make giving insulin part of a pleasant experience for the cat—and the owner.

Insulin syringes, are essential partly because of the small needle size, but a needle prick can still be an unpleasant sensation. A good practice is to make the injections part of a good experience. For diabetic pets that are meal-fed and enjoy their food, inject them as they are eating and when they are close to finishing the

meal. For others, owners can give the injections while doing a pleasurable activity. My cat Madison loved getting brushed every day. When he became diabetic, I started brushing him twice daily, and I gave him the injection midway through each brushing.

The site of insulin injection is important. An appropriate location must be chosen, as absorption of insulin from various sites in the body differs. In dogs and cats, the dorsal neck, or the scruff, has commonly been used as an injection site, but this location may not be ideal because of low blood flow and increased fibrosis caused by repeated injections. A better option may be to administer the insulin

along the lateral abdomen and thorax. The chosen area should be rotated daily to prevent fibrosis at an injection site.⁶

What are the best insulin options to control diabetes in dogs?

David Bruyette, DVM, DACVIM, discusses insulin products and offers his recommendations on how best to use each one. Hear his thoughts in this video—scan to watch now.



My pet has diabetes—now what?!

Diabetes doesn't mean a pet can't have a good quality of life. Here are two free handouts developed by Dr. David Bruyette, a board-certified veterinary internal medicine specialist, that will help pet owners learn more a diabetes diagnosis in their pet. Scan the code to download now.



Helpful hints for canine atopy: Immunotherapy

Dr. Alice Jeromin, pharmacist and veterinary dermatologist, on how to alleviate the itch in your patients.

Allergy problems are never easy, and in most cases they are there for the long term. Establishing a safe, long-term method of treating these atopic patients is essential in order to provide them with a good quality of life. As mentioned above, topicals such as shampoos and ceramide replacers, diet changes and good communication are small ways of enhancing a pet's response to a long-term therapy.

If you are using immuno-

therapy, either injectable or sublingual, remember that flare-ups are not unusual. Owners must be made aware of this as they often have high expectations that the immunotherapy will take care of everything.

Sublingual immunotherapy for atopic dogs has recently become available. It has a similar success rate to injectable immunotherapy (60 percent to 75 percent) and offers ad-

vantages in that it is available as oral drops, can be effective in three to six months, does not need refrigeration, and anaphylaxis is not commonly seen (it is reported in 1 percent or fewer

Itching for more?

The itch. The scratch. The irritation. Atopic dermatitis is likely one of the most common dermatologic problems you see in veterinary practice. We at dvm360 have curated our best, most informative articles about this topic to help you diagnose and treat it efficiently and effectively. And we'll keep you on top of new developments as they arise.

Find more tools ...

No scanner? No worries. Get these tools and more by visiting dvm360.com/atopyessentials.



ESSENTIALS: ATOPIC DERMATITIS

pointers

of injectable immunotherapy patients).

My clinic has been using sublingual immunotherapy in patients for more than a year with good results. But as with any type of immunotherapy, nothing is “cookie cutter.”

Individual patients will vary with their response, ranging from the initial vial being too strong (causing more pruritus) to some patients being maintained on the lower-strength vials and not having to proceed according to schedule.

Just keep in mind that once

immunotherapy is dispensed, individual monitoring is essential, and the owner should be checking in routinely or notifying you of any increase in pruritus or flare-up of otitis or bacterial pyoderma. Clients often mention to me that immunotherapy solutions are dispensed to them without any follow-up or reactions to watch for. Even though instructions are available with the immunotherapy, it is essential for you or a member of your staff to sit down and go over instructions—what to watch for and how often or when to contact your office.

For more from this article, visit dvm360.com/atopyessentials.

Key history findings that point to atopy



Gathering a good history is a vital part of diagnosis when it comes to itchy pets. (You can download a comprehensive dermatology history form at dvm360.com/dermhistory.) In this audio clip, veterinary dermatologist Dr. Douglas DeBoer pinpoints the clues you'll gather from a pet's dermatologic history that should set off red flags for this atopic dermatitis.



Trippingly under the tongue: Sublingual immunotherapy



Veterinary dermatologist Dr. Tom Lewis recounts his own struggles with injectable immunotherapy for his dog with atopic dermatitis and how the sublingual option is not only beneficial in that there are no longer painful needlesticks, but because it works faster, some patients respond better and much more—all in the video below.





Home alone

Frantic dogs. Frazzled owners.

Short of recommending that your veterinary clients stay home 24/7 or take their dog everywhere, how can you help prevent or manage separation anxiety? Try these tools.

Treatment of separation anxiety is rarely easy; it requires patience, persistence, and dedication on the owner's part. It is a condition that can often be managed even when it cannot be completely cured. And it is likely to be more easily treated if help is sought as soon after the appearance of clinical signs as possible, since the condition is likely to worsen with time.

In-depth: Using clonidine and trazodone for anxiety-based behavior disorders in dogs

For some behavior patients, the anti-anxiety effects of a single drug might not be enough. In cases in which monotherapy is insufficient, consider adding one of these drugs to your treatment plan. *Veterinary Medicine* goes in-depth with the latest research—for more, head over to dvm360.com/anxietyessentials.

Audio: Differential diagnoses for separation anxiety in dogs



Suspect that one of your canine patients is suffering from separation anxiety? Veterinary behaviorist Dr. John Ciribassi discusses the various medical and alternative behavioral diagnoses that might also result in separation anxiety. Scan the code, right, or go to dvm360.com/anxietyessentials for more on this topic.



Client handout: Signs of separation anxiety in dogs

John Ciribassi, DVM, DACVB, says that the goal of treating separation anxiety is to reduce a dog's dependence on its owners, and this greater sense of independence can be accomplished with a variety of

behavior modification activities often in conjunction with antianxiety drugs. To get the conversation started, try using this free handout. Scan the QR code, below, to download the handout instantly.



The
ESSENTIALS

We curated our best content to help you diagnose and treat common conditions most efficiently and effectively. And we'll keep you on top of new developments as they arise. Go to dvm360.com/essentials.



Back to **Work** *after baby*

Knock, knock. Your job's at the door. It's been missing you. Can your veterinary life still work after a baby rocks your world? *By Ori D. Scislowicz, BS, LVT*

As women, one of the most emotional, beautiful and mentally traumatic experiences

apart from baby.

I had it easier than most. Unfortunately, breastfeeding only worked for us for a few weeks.

I loved being a part of.

Still, my first day back, what did I do? I wept the minute I walked in the door ... for quite a while. I took breaks throughout the day to cry some more in the bathroom. It was an emotional roller coaster for a few months. I can remember rocking my son to sleep, tearing up because I barely saw him as I left for work and I got home too late to do anything but catch him as we were putting him to bed.

It didn't have to be that way though. Now I see there were opportunities for me to make life easier. But I was so wrapped up in my emotions, I didn't make those attempts.

Still, my first day back, what did I do? I wept the minute I walked in the door ... for quite a while.

we can have is having a baby. From the moment your child is born, you're swamped with thoughts of how good you are at this whole mothering thing, how you will balance it all and how you'll cope with time

So I didn't have the worry of finding time to pump as a technician on the floor. Also, the first few weeks while I was back at work, my family alternated watching my son. And it helped that I worked with a great team



Embrace other caregivers

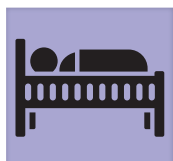
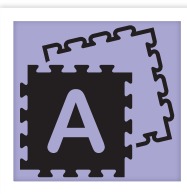
Yes, we all want to be supermom and be with our babies every waking moment and hold down a career we love. We need to remember it's perfectly OK for others to get time with the baby too. It's actually great for babies as well. They need to be comfortable with other caregivers, not just mom. Eventually, instead of feeling guilty that I had to leave my son to speak at a conference out of town, I saw it as an opportunity for solo dad-and-son time.

Ditch day care blues

You're not warehousing your child. If you've chosen a good provider (and you will! You're an awesome mom, remember?) embrace the fact you're exposing your children to other loving adults and peers.

You'll find peace of mind with your provider when you're sure your child is well taken care of, enjoying his or herself and safe in another's hands. These steps will help evaluate your caregiver:

- > Pop in unexpectedly and see how things are going. (If your provider has a problem with this, you've got your answer.)
- > Call now and then to see what your child is up to and how he or she is doing. Avoid the fussy portions of the day, like right before lunch or near nap times. Chances are your child will sound or look upset during those times whether he or she is with you or with someone else. So don't put yourself in a situation where you generate second thoughts unnecessarily.



Get plenty of rest (I know ... funny, right?)

I'm not gonna preach about getting more sleep. I know that sounds like a joke to all parents with small children. I remember my neurologist scolding me for only getting five to six hours a night, as it was probably making my migraines worse. And I just thought, "You clearly don't have kids, buddy." But you can go to bed a bit earlier when it's possible, and nap when the baby naps on your days off. Don't feel guilty. Do it.

Take care of yourself

Whether it's taking time to read, or getting a pedicure or massage, make time for you. Find something you enjoy and work it into your week.



Connect with mommies

Reach out to other mothers via meetup.com, on online support forums or through local library and baby gym classes. It's nice to hear from others struggling through the mommy experience and learning to let go of the guilt, along with learning to manage raging hormones.



Dump the judgers

I distinctly remember an old friend on Facebook posting something like this when she had her child:

facebook



Jane Doe

About an hour ago • 🌐

Big news! I'm leaving my job because I realized being a mom is a way more important job.—feeling superior 😊



Like



Comment



Jen Deer Well, good for you! Here's your cookie, along with your mom-of-the-year award, and maybe if I'm just lucky enough I can be half the mother you are one day. 🙄

Like • Reply • 4 minutes ago



Write a comment...

How we handle motherhood is a very personal decision, and no view is right or wrong as long as you take care of your children. Some women crave the mental stimulation of the work they love, and they feel they're better mothers by having a career. And financially, it may be difficult for many mothers to stop working. Others may take a break and return renewed when their little ones grow older.

The take-away: Do what's right for you and your family, and block out any negativity from naysayers. Remember, when women judge other mothers their snark reveals their insecurities.



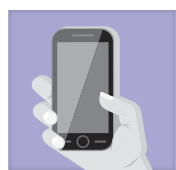
Explore the (veterinary) field

If you have a tough schedule, specialty medicine can sometimes offer more reliable weekday hours. Pet poison hotlines, food and lab companies, teaching positions and government and agriculture jobs can also offer better schedules for new moms. Also remember the pros of almost any schedule. For example, you may be bummed that you work most weekends or late nights. The flip side: You have more time off during the week. That means more family time and less day care for baby—and potentially one-on-one time with baby if your partner is at work.



Mommy-and-me time

Delegate times of the week exclusively for fun kid activities. For example, my day off during the week is spent all day long doing fun activities with my son. While during the weekends, we may run errands and clean, that day during the week is all about baby.



Take pics to work

Most of us aren't sitting at a desk all day. But you can tuck away a photo or piece of artwork in your scrub pocket or have photos on your phone. It helps to have a way to remember that at the end of the day you've got that cutie waiting for you. Some working moms also like to look at pics as a reminder of why you're working: to provide for your little one and to set an example of a badass mom accomplishing your career goals.



SHARE
your thoughts
with us!

What steps have you used to balance your career life? And where are you still struggling?

- > Send your questions to "Ask the Experts" at **firstline@advanstar.com**.
- > Got a great tip you'd like to share? We'll pay \$50 for every tip we publish. Email them to "My Great Tip" at **firstline@advanstar.com**.

Oriana Scislowicz, BS, LVT, is a Firstline Editorial Advisory Board member and a technician in Richmond, Virginia.

There's no doubt that the balancing act of a new mom is difficult in veterinary medicine, with our long hours, sometimes unpredictable shifts and the already emotional nature of our work. It takes determination and a positive attitude to take control. Empower yourself as a new mother and prove that you can be an exceptional veterinary professional and an awesome mom!



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5 reasons **YOUR BOSS** *isn't paying you more*

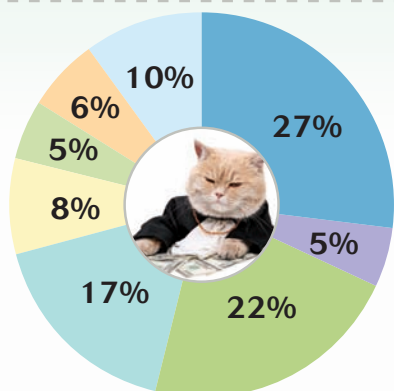
Whining about your pay gets you nowhere. Learn why your bosses aren't paying you more. Then bust through their excuses (ahem: reasons) to earn more at your veterinary practice. *By Karen E. Felsted, CPA, MS, DVM, CVPM*

1

Running a veterinary practice is expensive, and the economy is slowly climbing out of the toilet.

Practice owners always talk about how it's so expensive to run the business and times are tough. (Insert eye roll. They also walked 10 miles to veterinary school uphill—both ways—right?) Is it just an excuse? Not really.

Fact check: It *is* expensive to run a practice and times really *are* tougher than before. For every dollar that comes into the practice, about 10 cents is left over after your boss pays all normal and necessary expenses.



■ Drugs and medical supplies, lab, food

■ Rent

■ Non-doctor compensation (this is you)

■ Doctor compensation

■ Employee benefits and payroll taxes

■ Utilities, telephone, repairs, other facility costs

■ Marketing, office supplies, credit card fees, other admin costs

■ What's left over

“Don’t worry about paying me. I can survive solely on my love for animals,” said no veterinary team member ever.

That 10 cents—or 10 percent of what comes in—must pay for everything else: new equipment, more team members, a return on investment for the owner, upgrading the building, raises and more.

If your boss increases fees regularly, never gives raises and has a brand new Lexus every other year, the “times are tough” line may get old. But if your owners are busting their butts to keep the practice going, didn’t fire anyone during the recession, help arrange your work hours around your school schedule and offer some kind of raise every year, then at least recognize that running a practice is no picnic—and it is expensive.

You may still want—and deserve to be—paid more. But it’s more productive to focus on how your contributions can make the practice stronger and make it easier for the owner to pay you more.

So now you’re thinking, “I get it. Show me the money!”

2

But are you sure you’ve got the skills to pay the bills?

Be honest with yourself. What are you bringing to the table? Use this quick self-test:

1. If the other technicians in the practice make more, is it because they can all perform dentals and monitor anesthesia better than you can? Are the receptionists or managers taking on more responsibilities in areas including client care and practice marketing?

2. What kind of ratings do you get for technical performance on your performance evaluation?

3. Can you perform all the duties on your job description well?

Even if you don’t have a recent performance evaluation or job description, compare yourself to others and to what you are expected to do regularly. If your skills aren’t as strong as others, use these steps:

- > Ask for additional training.
- > Come in on your day off and shadow someone.
- > Seek opportunities to practice your skills during your scheduled shift.



So we get it. You’ve got the skills. It must be your boss, right?

PROFESSIONAL growth

3

Perhaps your boss doesn't know the going rate for your job.

Sometimes practice owners are clueless. They don't realize how much pay scales have changed since they opened the practice a billion years ago. But don't just assume that's what's going on based on one conversation you have with Susie over at ABC Animal Clinic, where the sun always shines and the pets poop rainbows that smell like roses. Do some research. Gather information from compensation surveys, such as dvm360.com/teampay, and from local veterinary technician schools. Then review your findings with your bosses. Ask them to consider the data you've gathered, respectfully point out the harm low pay can cause the practice and discuss how you're contributing to the practice's success.



Sure, it's all your boss's fault. Unless ...



But really, we're pretty sure it's your boss's fault. Maybe.

You're regularly late to work, you're the first to complain and you run out the door three minutes before your shift ends.

Uncross your fingers and answer these questions:

- > Do you show up for work a few minutes early, get your coffee and you're ready to go when your shift starts?
- > When you finish your specified job duties, do you stand around and chat about the latest episode of *Bachelor in Paradise* (Joe is such a dog, how could he and Samantha do that to poor Juelia?! or do you look for other ways to pitch in?
- > When your coworker Kelly's being an arse, do you try to work it out with her or do you flounce away and complain to your owner?

Your bosses want employees who make their lives easier and build the business. They don't want employees who act like they belong in the McDonald's Playplace. And they aren't going to pay the entitled 5 year olds nearly what they will pay the team members with better attitudes and better work ethics.

If you have a niggling feeling this might be you, fix it. It may take a while for your boss to notice the 2.0 version of you, but it will pay off in the long run.

4

5

Because your boss may not see how much you do for the practice.

Sometimes your bosses have so much on their plates that they just don't notice who does what or how much you really contribute. So it's important to brag a little, in a professional and not obnoxious way.

For example, if you had a spare 15 minutes and cleaned out the dark corners of the food room, tell your boss: "I rearranged the food in the back of the food room, and I found some torn bags. Can we return these? And could we get some pallets to put the food on so next time we don't have this problem?"

Comments like this are low key, but they highlight your efforts and offer some helpful suggestions for the future.



A final thought: When you do meet with your boss about your performance or raise, bring a list of the things you've done that went beyond your job duties. This way you have concrete examples of your efforts to build the business. **FL**

Dr. Karen Felsted is president of PantheraT Veterinary Management Consulting. She also spent three years with the National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues as CEO.

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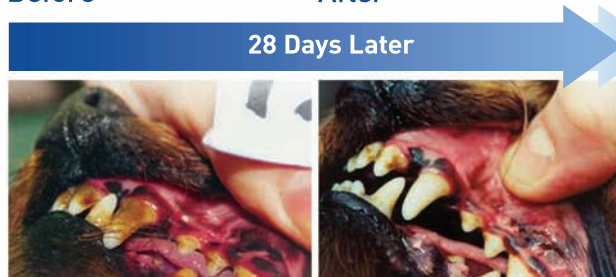
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Take pets' temperature without the *trauma*

Using canned squeeze cheese our veterinary team took the trauma out of taking a pet's temperature. *By Marian Paulachak*

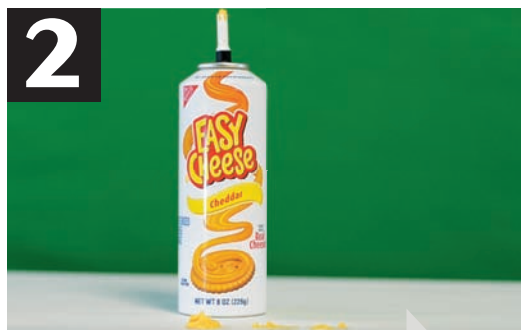
1

Recently I completely distracted a dog from having her temperature taken using canned squeeze cheese.

The owner told me the pooch usually hates her temperature being taken and will scream and cry.



2



Here's what I did: I squeezed out some cheese in front of the pup and she went right for it. So I gave her some more while taking her temperature and giving her lots of praise. She never even looked back at me. It was awesome!

3

The pet owner was so happy that this time taking her dog's temperature wasn't a fearful experience, and I've since used this low-stress approach on other dogs, including the one pictured here.



4



Bonus tip: Easy cheese works for some cats, too!

Marian Paulachak is a veterinary assistant at Cary Street Veterinary Hospital in Richmond, Virginia.



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