



May Newsletter



National Pet Week is May 7th - May 13th!

We all can agree our pets are the greatest companions there are - furry, feathered or scaled. Not everyone is aware of what our fur-kids need to keep them healthy and happy long into their senior years. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has laid out, for each day during this week, essential actions vital to achieving a lifetime of love! Check out their website for more information.

<http://www.petweek.org/lifetime-of-love.html>

**Bark for Life will be June 17th
from 8:00am - 10:00am at the
Mondovi Fairgrounds!**



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY
BARK FOR LIFE
A CANINE EVENT TO FIGHT CANCER

April showers bring the flowers... and allergies! Many of us experience seasonal and food allergies, but did you know, your pet can get them too. When treatment isn't enough, we offer allergy testing through Spectrum Labs who can test anything from food to environmental allergens - all we need a little blood!



With severe weather season upon us, it's always important to have a disaster preparedness plan in place for not only ourselves, but our pets too. The following list will assist in starting your own plan:

- 1) ID your pet using a collar and microchip
- 2) Put together a disaster kit
- 3) Find a safe place ahead of time
- 4) If you evacuate, take your pet
- 5) If you stay home, do it safely
- 6) After the disaster, be patient with your pet.

For more detailed information, follow the link to [the humane society's website.](#)



Ask Dr. Sarah

Spring is well under way, and so are everyone's allergies. May is Allergy

Awareness Month!

Just as many of us suffer from allergies, whether it be toward blossoming flowers or eating peanuts, our pets can also develop allergies. This month we will discuss how allergies occur, how they are diagnosed, and how to manage them.



What are allergies and how do they develop?

An allergy is when the body's immune system sees an allergen (any substance that can cause an allergic response), and overreacts to it. An allergen can be anything from an ingredient in your pet's food, to ragweed, to fleas, and any number of things in between.

What are signs of allergies? Symptoms of allergies depend on what your pet is allergic to. If your pet is allergic to an ingredient in their food, they may experience diarrhea, vomiting, or itchy feet. If the allergy is to something in the environment, they may chew out their hair, have red or itchy skin, or have recurring ear infections.

How are allergies diagnosed? If allergies are suspected in your pet, intradermal allergy testing is the best way to determine what allergens your pet reacts to. Intradermal allergy testing consists of injecting purified allergens into the skin in a grid pattern, then documenting how the body reacts to each individual allergen. This type of testing is best performed at a specialty hospital to ensure the most accurate results. An alternative to this is to test your pet's blood for antibody levels toward different allergens. While not as sensitive as intradermal testing, blood testing

offers a viable alternative when going to a specialty hospital is not feasible.

How are allergies treated? If allergy testing has been done to identify specific allergens, then those allergens should be avoided. This may entail changing your pet's diet, removing plants from your yard whose pollen makes your pet suffer, or keeping your pet on an anti-parasitic medication such as Nexgard or Frontline if they are allergic to fleas.

If your pet has undergone allergy testing, then an allergy injection can be made that contains very small amounts of the allergens your pet reacts to. The point to these allergy injections is to desensitize your pet's immune system to the allergens, thereby preventing the immune system from overreacting to them and alleviating the symptoms of allergies. Allergy injections take months before becoming fully effective, and injections may have to be given lifelong at varying intervals.

If allergy testing has not been done, then it is important to consider your pet's history of clinical signs. If the signs are year round or resolve when the diet is changed, then we may recommend performing a food elimination trial. If the allergy only occurs during certain times of the year, then wiping off your pet's paws after they have been outside and giving them medicated baths may help to ameliorate signs of allergy.

In addition to changing your pet's environment to manage allergies, there are several types of medications available to keep your pet as comfortable as possible. If your pet is experiencing any of the signs previously discussed or you feel they may have allergies, please schedule an appointment so we may perform a full evaluation and can work together to help your pet feel their best!



ANIMAL WELLNESS CENTER OF BUFFALO VALLEY