



P.O. Box 1135, Midland, MI 48641
989-689-6198
www.sosar@charter.net
www.sosanimalrescue.org

SOS Animal Rescue Newsletter • Volume 07, Issue 1 • January 10, 2007

SOS Success Story: Lexi Gets Cozy

What a sweetheart she is! On the ride home from adopting this lovely cat “Roxy,” our younger son Maxwell decided that her name was “Lexi” and told his brother Zachary of this fact. She is apparently unaffected by this renaming. I think Lexi’s gotten bigger since we brought her home. At night she likes to snuggle with Zachary while he falls asleep (pictured). We convinced my sister and brother-in-law from Tennessee to adopt a cat, and they are heading for their local shelter as soon as they get home! Thank you!

From Amy, recent adopter.



Canine Influenza

What is it?

Canine influenza, also known as dog flu, is an emerging viral disease that causes respiratory infection in dogs. It is believed to have spontaneously developed from a horse influenza virus that is now capable of infecting dogs. Canine influenza was first observed in Florida in racing greyhounds several years ago but has now been suspected or confirmed in numerous states and most recently in Los Angeles County.

continued on next page

SOS EVENTS

Every Sunday
Noon – 3:00 p.m.
Adopt-A-Thon at PetSmart

January 20
Noon – 3:00 p.m.
Adopt-A-Thon at Petco

February 3
Noon – 3:00 p.m.
Adopt-A-Thon at Petco

February 17
Noon – 3:00 p.m.
Adopt-A-Thon at Petco

February 19
6:30 p.m.
Monthly SOS Meeting
Conference Room B
at Grace A. Dow Library

March 3
Noon – 3:00 p.m.
Adopt-A-Thon at Petco

March 17
Noon – 3:00 p.m.
Adopt-A-Thon at Petco

March 19
6:30 p.m.
Monthly SOS Meeting
Conference Room B
at Grace A. Dow Library

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms include coughing, fever, and nasal discharge. Most dogs will develop a mild form of the disease with cough and mild fever lasting 10 to 21 days. Treatment with antibiotics and cough suppressants may make the dog more comfortable but will not cure the virus while it runs its course. Severe cases of canine influenza develop a pneumonia that can require hospitalization and intensive care. The fatality rate is low and estimated to be one to five percent of all exposed dogs. As with most flu viruses, the very young, the geriatric, and dogs with other health conditions are more likely to have complications associated with the flu virus. The disease looks very similar to the syndrome called “kennel cough” caused by other common bacteria and viruses for which we have vaccinations available.

How would my dog be exposed?

The virus is spread through aerosolized respiratory secretions and contaminated inanimate objects (leashes, water and food bowls, toys, bedding). People moving back and forth between infected and healthy dogs may spread the virus on their clothes, hands, and feet. The virus is believed to be killed by routine disinfectants. Dogs may be shedding the virus for several days before showing symptoms of the disease.

Can people catch “dog flu”?

No. There is no evidence that humans can be infected with this type of influenza. The “flu” in humans is related to the canine influenza but is not the same strain of virus.

How can I protect my pet?

- Make sure your dog is current on vaccinations as recommended by your veterinarian for the age, health and activities that you pursue with your pet. There is no vaccination yet available for Canine Influenza.
- Call your veterinarian if your dog develops a cough. If your dog is coughing, do not take your dog to locations where it may come in contact with other dogs. Keep your dog home until it is well, or as directed by your veterinarian.
- Routine sanitation and tidy habits will reduce the risk of exposure among apparently healthy dogs. Absolutely wash your hands after handling any sick dog before touching your own dog.

Risks and Prevention

Influenza viruses are highly contagious and “sneaky.” The animal may look healthy but can actually be shedding the virus to other unsuspecting animals. No one wants to get the flu but just how dangerous is this flu virus going to be for our pets?

The symptoms are exactly what we would see with the syndrome called kennel cough but the symptoms may be more severe and last longer. As with people, the very young, the geriatric, and individuals with other health conditions have a

higher risk of complications and fatality. Testing for the antibody to the canine influenza virus in the bloodstream of a newly infected animal and then comparing it to a sample from the same animal after recovery will help to confirm if the symptoms are due to canine influenza. Samples from animals that have died may also be tested for the actual viral particles (viral isolation).

Treatment for canine flu is essentially the same as for kennel cough in that the pet may receive antibiotics to protect against bacterial infection following the virus and a cough suppressant for his comfort. The viral infection itself just has to run its course. The infection could be present for three weeks. Complications with pneumonia require longer recovery and may require hospitalization. A blood cell count and chest x-rays are often recommended to follow pneumonia cases.

In our shelter pets, symptoms consistent with either kennel cough or canine influenza will mean the dog will not be made available until it has recovered and demonstrated not to be from canine distemper (a very serious condition). It is entirely possible to adopt out a dog and have it show signs of contagious disease in its new home. We will not knowingly place publicly owned animals at risk by distributing highly contagious dogs to the public. This will increase the length of time the dog stays in the shelter and place additional burden on the staff to follow through on an intensive sanitation protocol, administration of medications, and monitoring those with pneumonia.

Reprinted from www.cityofirvine.org.



Blessing of the Animals at St. John’s Episcopal Church.

THANK YOU!

We would like to send a special thanks to everyone for their generous contributions to SDS Animal Rescue. Whether it was a financial contribution, supplies, food, volunteer time, etc. – without your support, we could not accomplish our goal to help animals in need. Again, our heartfelt thanks!



Gray 4-H Group

for building and donating ten cat scratch posts. Some posts will be used by our foster families and the rest will be gifts to low income families who would otherwise be tempted to give up their cats due to ruined furniture.

Soldan's

for co-sponsoring the giving tree. Many generous customers filled wishes from the tags hanging on the tree, and we received many supplies and food. Several low income pets in the area will also experience a merrier Christmas due the everyone's generosity.

Petco

for donating funds from the Round Up/Spay Today campaign. The four-week fund-raiser concentrated on raising funds for spay/neuter-focused organizations. Petco customers could round up their purchase, with the donated difference going to support spay/neuter efforts to help solve the problem of pet over-population.

Cphoon's

D&R Automotive Supply

Glover's Pharmacy

LaLonde's

Midland Animal Clinic

Soldan's

for canister donations

Merry Blades

Marsha Bradley

Tag & Diane Bushre

in memory of their cats Slick & Sunny 1

Leslie Foote

Carolyn Goike

in memory of Mary Jane Johnston

Sally Holmes

Beverly Holtham

Alexander Iwanow

Pfizer United Way

Bev & Mike Riggie

in memory of Marty Witkop

Tricia Sommer

for monetary donations

Wysong Corporation

for generous donation of pet food and treats.



How Can You Help?

It takes everybody's help to keep our homeless animals happy and healthy! Your donation of money or supplies to the SOSAR will help us provide the best possible care to the animals who come to us each year.

When you donate to SOSAR, you'll receive our quarterly newsletter. For larger donations, we will be happy to talk with you about naming opportunities and other forms of recognition.

Monetary contributions are always gratefully accepted. As we are a non-profit organization, your donations are tax deductible.

Donations may be mailed to SOS Animal Rescue, P.O. Box 1135, Midland, MI 48641.

Current Wish List

Things you may have at home:

- Gently used pet supplies
- Pet beds
- Dog and cat toys
- Scratching posts & cat towers
- Dog, cat, and kitten food
- Dog and cat crates

Long-term needs and giving opportunities:

- Dog runs and play yards
- Shade structure for play yards
- Cat play room toys

**WE WANT
TO HEAR
FROM YOU!**

**If you would like
to send us comments
or have an interesting
story on a rescue,
please direct these to
Darlene Andrews at
darandrews@gmail.com.**

Purina Weight Circles

Do you feed your dogs and cats Purina products? If so, save those weight circles and mail them to us or drop them in the SOS donation canister at Soldan's. Thank you!

E-Newsletter

Help us save more money for the animals by allowing us to e-mail our newsletter to you. Drop a note to sosar@charter.net and we'll add you to the e-mail distribution list.



SOS Animal Rescue was at the Midland Mall for pet photos with Santa. SOS interacted with pets and their families. A fun time for all!

Foster Homes Needed!

Every year Midland Animal Control and ads in our local newspapers are filled with pups and kittens that need forever homes. We call upon our team of Foster Care volunteers to take these little critters into their homes, attend to their physical needs, and give them the handling, socialization, and love that they require.

Please consider helping by providing a foster home, which is a temporary refuge to an animal in need while it waits to be adopted. These are animals whose time has run out at the local shelter and they are in dire need to be rescued. SOS Animal Rescue will pay for all the veterinary work and provide you with tons of support and assistance from other group members. Your job is to give the animal daily love and care. Please call 989-689-6198 to leave a voice mail (speak slowly and clearly with name, telephone number, and mention "foster care"). Or e-mail sosar@charter.net and our Foster Home Coordinator will contact you.

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP)

For anyone who's dealt with it, the thought of feline infectious peritonitis (FIP) brings stark fear. FIP is a disease that breaks all the rules. Rescuers have to deal with it frequently and they know that it's hard to diagnose and that the diagnosis is usually a death sentence.

Recently, I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the FIP Symposium at the Western Veterinarian Conference in Las Vegas. The speakers were Dr. Melissa Kennedy, who specializes in researching viruses at the University of California, Dr. Susan Little, a renowned lecturer, Dr. Danielle Gunn-Moore from the U.K. and Dr. Niels Pedersen from UC Davis who is one of the leading researchers in the field. The information in this article comes from that symposium.

FIP comes in two forms: Wet (effusive) and dry (non-effusive). The experts all agree, and emphasized that there is no diagnostic test for FIP. There may be some abnormal lab values that make a veterinarian suspicious of FIP, but the diagnosis is rarely firm until the cat or kitten dies. Often the cat or kitten presents to the veterinarian as "just not being right." The symptoms, particularly for the dry form can be very vague. There are some symptoms, though, that should cause suspicion that a cat may have FIP.

These include:

- age of the cat (usually less than two years or older than 13 years)
- fever that comes and goes and is not responsive to antibiotics
- loss of appetite
- weight loss
- low energy
- neurological signs such as seizures or difficulty with balance
- urinary incontinence, which is rare in cats and is almost always a sign of FIP
- a very large abdomen filled with fluid (in the wet form only)

Symptoms may occur suddenly or may happen so gradually that by the time they are noticeable, they are very severe. Cats with FIP usually have had a recent stressor such as illness, surgery, moving to a new place, or a recent addition to the family such as a baby or a new cat or dog. It has been noted that many cats with FIP are declawed, so although there's no research on this, it is thought that declawing is a bigger stress to cats than many other surgeries.

So how do cats get FIP? Recent advances tell us that there's a genetic component as well as an environmental one. FIP is a mutation of a virus called Feline Enteric Corona Virus (FECV) that is shed by some cats in their feces. It can also be shed through saliva, though this is rare. FECV and FIP are not communicable to humans. Many cats have FECV but never show signs of illness. If a cat's immune system and genetics are such that they can be exposed to FECV without converting it to FIP, they don't ever get the disease. It's important to note that once a kitten has FIP it doesn't have to be isolated as it is no longer contagious in this form. In fact, the experts believe

that it may be more stressful to the kitten to isolate it. Older cats who get FIP are cats who have been carrying the FECV virus all along, but whose immune systems are now no longer able to handle it. Many of the experts believe that kittens should be kept away from adult cats until they are 6 months old so that they have no chance of being exposed to FECV while their immune systems are still developing.

It used to be that most cases of FIP were the wet form and in this form, kittens usually only live a few days to a few weeks. Now, however, veterinarians are seeing more of the dry form, which, according to Dr. Pedersen, means that cats are developing more immunity. In the dry form, some cats survive several weeks to over a year. Although there is no cure for FIP, the diagnosis itself is not a reason to euthanize a cat or kitten. If euthanasia is necessary, it is because the cat no longer has a good quality of life.

To try to prevent FIP, it is important to keep the environment very clean. Litter should be scooped twice daily and then thrown out after a week. The box and litter scooper should be cleaned with a disinfectant before new litter is put in. Food and water should be changed daily and the bowls should also be disinfected weekly. For rescue groups with kennel facilities, the same bowls should be kept with the same group of cats or kittens. New cats or kittens should be isolated for a minimum of 21 days. Kittens should then be kept separate from adult cats (as mentioned earlier) until they're at least six months of age.



One of the many tragedies of FIP is that often the people affected are those who've lost a beloved older cat and then adopt a kitten. After the adoption, the kitten becomes sick and FIP may be suspected. This is frustrating to both rescuers and adopters as the rescuers see the kitten as healthy and ready for adoption. This is because rehoming can be a great stress for some cats and kittens. When the kitten dies, the adopter who so recently dealt with the death of a beloved pet must now deal with death again. When the panel was asked about this, they said that potential adopters might want to adopt a cat one to two years of age so as to try to avoid this. Cats of any age bond equally well with new families.

While there's still no news of a cure, more information is now known about this disease so that hopefully it can become less prevalent.

By Kari Winters, an RN, member of Cat Writers' Association, and volunteer with Siamese rescue. This article was first published in The Pet Press in Los Angeles, CA. From www.shelterpetsink.com.

Heartworm Disease

Heartworm is an insidious disease that has spread to virtually all parts of the U.S. and many parts of Canada since the early 1970s. It is spread only by mosquitoes; areas heavily populated by these insects tend to have a greater incidence of heartworm disease.

Heartworm can strike both dogs and cats, although it is much more commonly seen in dogs. As its name implies, heartworm lives in the blood of a dog's or cat's heart and adjacent blood vessels. The adult heartworms living in the heart produce offspring, called microfilariae, which circulate in the infected animal's blood.

When a mosquito "bites" an infected pet, it sucks out blood containing the microfilariae. After about two weeks in the mosquito, the microfilariae become infective larvae. This step is necessary for the transmission of heartworm. When the mosquito bites another pet, the infective larvae are transmitted.

Canine Heartworm

Research has resulted in medications and procedures that have improved the treatment of canine heartworm disease. Prompt detection and early treatment are vital to a successful cure.

Highly effective diagnostic testing and preventive medications have been developed in recent years. It is necessary to have a heartworm test prior to using a preventive. Severe or fatal reactions may occur if preventives are given to dogs with heartworm disease, or may create diagnostic confusion at later.

A small amount of blood is all that's

necessary for a preliminary heartworm screening test that is very accurate in detecting the presence of heartworm. In many regions, this may be the only test needed before starting a preventive program. If the dog shows heartworm symptoms or has visited a known heartworm problem area, additional tests are recommended before starting a preventive or treatment program.

Common blood screening tests can verify the presence of heartworms. Radiographs or X-ray films and other sophisticated laboratory tests are used to detect heartworm disease.

Canine heartworm disease symptoms include difficulty breathing, cough, tire easily, listlessness, weight loss, and rough hair coat. In many cases, there are advanced symptoms. Some dogs do not appear to have symptoms in the early stages]others do. If not detected and controlled with proper treatment, heartworm can lead to congestive heart failure and death.

As a safeguard, many veterinarians recommend annual or biannual screening tests even for dogs that are on heartworm preventives. In known heartworm areas, or if dogs are traveling into these areas, veterinarians usually prescribe preventive medications which prevent the larvae from developing into adult heartworms. Prescribed medications must be given as directed.

Today, the majority of dogs with heartworm disease survives. Most are cured by medications; some require surgery. Prompt detection prevents needless suffering.

Feline Heartworm

Although heartworm is seen less frequently in cats, the disease poses a much greater danger. The outcome is often fatal.

Currently no drugs are approved for fighting heartworm in cats. Cats can be treated with canine medications, but this can lead to dangerous side effects, including lung failure and death. Another approach to battle the disease is by treating the symptoms, with hopes of the cat outliving the worms (heartworms live within a cat for about two years). However, this approach can result in sudden death as the worms exit through the pulmonary arteries to the lungs.

There are no consistent clinical signs of heartworm in cats. Common clues include coughing and rapid breathing. Other signs include weight loss and vomiting. However, all of these signs are also common in other diseases. Diagnosis is difficult for veterinarians and may include outside laboratory tests, radiographs, and ultrasound studies.

The good news is that there are heartworm prevention drugs available for cats. If you live in a heartworm infested area, or plan on visiting a heartworm area with your cat, your veterinarian can prescribe a preventive medication. These drugs are given once monthly and are very effective in cats and kittens.

Research continues into all phases of heartworm disease. For the latest advice, consult your veterinarian.

Reprinted from The American Animal Hospital Association and www.healthypet.com.





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**2006 Spay/Neuter
Statistics**

Female Cats	72
Male Cats	49
Female Dogs	29
Male Dogs	21
Total	171

**Midland County
Spay/Neuter Program**

The Midland County Spay/Neuter Program offers a voucher to help offset the cost of sterilization and is intended to service limited income homes, senior citizens on a fixed income, and other hardship cases. Spaying and neutering all pets is an integral part of any effort aimed at reducing the number of animals destroyed each year. Our program provides assistance to owners who cannot take this important step due to lack of funds. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the Midland County Spay/Neuter Program, please fill out the contribution card below.

**THANK YOU FOR
DONATING TO THE
SPAY/NEUTER
PROGRAM!**

**Auburn HiLites
Larry G. Marshall
One Hour Martinizing
Shelley's Bed and Biscuit
Jane Thickstun**

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Contribution Card**

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City, State ZIP _____

Contribution Amount \$ _____

Please make check payable to
Midland County Spay/Neuter Program
P.O. Box 2323
Midland, MI 48641-2323

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Officers

Heather Kettelhohn, President
Adam Pavaglio, Vice President
Darlene Andrews, Secretary
Carol Arnosky, Treasurer

Mission Statement

SOS Animal Rescue is a non-profit
501(c)3 organization whose mission is
to reduce the number of unwanted pets
in Midland County through placement
and public education.

Board of Directors

Chris Erskine
Shelley Park

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!



MIDLAND ANIMAL CLINIC