

Ep 29 Prevention

Intro: If you want a wildly healthy, naturally disease resistant pet who turns heads and starts conversations with awestruck onlookers, you're right where you belong. This is the Vital Animal Podcast with your host, homeopathic veterinarian, Dr. Will Falconer.

[00:00:24] Will Falconer, DVM: This is Dr. Will Falconer. Welcome to the month of April when I'm recording this. And in this season of spring, at least here in the Northern hemisphere, thoughts often turn to heartworm prevention. And even for cat owners you are, if you're going to conventional veterinarians regularly, you're likely also getting the spiel to get your cat on heartworm prevention.

[00:00:49] April is often called Heartworm Awareness Month by Big Pharma though, for years, I've called it Heartworm Bewareness Month.

[00:00:59] Why?

[00:01:00] Well, first you have to understand what's being sold to you as prevention. Now, when we think of prevention in our mind, usually it turns to something safe and effective.

[00:01:11] Something taken before a disease gets a chance to bring you or your animal down with illness. Some of the things commonly associated with prevention include immunization, which is making your animal immune to some infectious disease in some way. Vaccination is often thought of as the way to do immunization, right?

[00:01:35] But I'd submit that it's far from safe and there are better ways. Controlled natural exposure is a better way to immunize producing far stronger immunity without risk. And by the way, I'll have a free report on this in the show notes for you. And as this is episode number 29, the way to find the show notes and those links is VitalAnimal.com/29.

[00:02:04] Along with controlled natural exposure immune system boosting helps make sure your animal responds appropriately and well to the germs that you'd like to prevent. I will link also in the show notes to our Canine Immune Complete as a perfect means to do that boosting efficiently and powerfully.

[00:02:26] And in my practice, I'd often use homeopathic nosodes to prevent parvo and distemper as these are really the only two common viruses that can kill a pup. And this is a very safe and very efficacious way to prevent these two, as long as you understand how to use these remedies appropriately. Again, you'll find details in the show notes.

[00:02:54] Do you think of a healthy diet as prevention? If not, perhaps it's time you did. The obvious comparison to foods we know of and eat comes to mind. We know for years now that sugar suppresses the immune system and it lasts a while. A sugar treat today could last for several days, as I recall, and toxic food of course is a no-no.

[00:03:21] And most all kibble fits here by its very nature of its processing and ingredient choices. And it clearly makes more work for the body. The deep fried foods made with oil extracted with chemical solvents and bleached and tortured in high heat is a classic human example. Maybe you've heard in some areas, Krispy Kreme donuts were being given free as an incentive to get the COVID-19 vaccines.

[00:03:52] How's that for nonsense?

[00:03:55] And exercise on a regular basis makes for a healthy body and mind, of course, regardless of species. This is pretty well known and for quite some time, and it especially applies to those cats who live indoors. If you haven't already, you'll want to listen to episode number 8 and 23 for more on that from my homeopathic colleague, Dr. Andrea Tasi, who has a 100 percent homeopathic, 100 percent cat practice. Dogs and people, all species, we

really all need regular exercise to stay healthy. And of course that happens in the wild cousins on a regular basis, right? The wolves don't lie around, waiting for someone to dish them up a bowl of cereal.

[00:04:42] Okay. But what does all this have to do with heartworm prevention? What is Heartworm Awareness Month urging you to do exactly? Well, as you might've guessed, conventional veterinarians are on a whole different page here as is the American Heartworm Society, who, by the way, mentions that heartworms are still a big problem. They tell you this about yearly at this time, they're still a big problem in spite of all the high powered meds in use since the seventies and eighties.

[00:05:15] Intro: Hmm.

[00:05:18] Will Falconer, DVM: To understand the conventional approach, it's necessary to understand a bit about the life cycle of heartworm. So here's the short version. The long visible adult worm lives in an infested dog's heart. When there are male and female worms present, they mate. Their offspring are microscopic larvae that swim around in that dog's bloodstream. Mosquitoes, if they get contact with that infested dog, suck them in when they feed on a blood meal from that dog. They can then presumably deposit them in your dog or cat,

[00:05:59] and absent a good level of health or with any number of variables, like I mentioned about that are bad for health, these larvae can grow to adulthood over many moons. This is not a fast process, by the way. Parasites, heartworm included, don't kill anybody suddenly. They're chronic illnesses. It takes six to seven months, if all lights are green, for deposited larvae to make it to an adult worm and get into your dog's heart.

[00:06:31] Well, prevention of this parasite in conventional practice involves giving a pesticide that is actually a neurotoxin.

[00:06:39] Wait, what?

[00:06:41] Yeah. Here's the way these drugs work. Whether you're sold Trifexis, Heartgard, Advantage, Sentinel or Revolution, or any other knockoff names, the mode of action of these drugs is all the same. They paralyze heartworm larvae, period. Paralyzed, these microscopic heartworm young can't breathe. So they die.

[00:07:09] But wait, does your dog have heartworm larvae? Well, maybe, maybe not. You're "preventing," I'm using air quotes around preventing, something that's just assumed to be introduced into your dog. Or cat, even your indoor cat.

[00:07:28] Yup. You know, the spiel, you never know when that mosquito might get into your house and carry that deadly larvae right to your innocent cat. Kind of like that nasty rabid bat that just might fly down your chimney and bite your indoor cat. Are you with me here?

[00:07:45] By the way, the side effects of using neurotoxin drugs?

[00:07:50] Well, not surprisingly, they are nervous system effects in your animal. The commonest being tremors, twitching, ataxia, AKA that wobbly gait that looks like the dog is drunk. Or, wait for it... seizures. Oh my. Here's a recent comment that will let you play detective a bit. One of the fun parts of being a vet.

[00:08:17] Sarah writes, "I'm at a loss. My 11 month old Goldendoodle is starting his second round of vomiting and diarrhea after getting his Interceptor Plus." That's a common heartworm preventative. "I did not attribute the first round to the drug. However, the second round is making me think otherwise, A month ago, he started vomiting and then

started having diarrhea with blood in both.

[00:08:46] "We took him to an emergency vet. They did x-rays and said, this was not an obstruction. They said that his blood looked good, but he was a bit dehydrated. So they gave him IV fluids. He thought he may have gotten into something." Good deduction, right? Little did they know the thing he got into we'll go on in a minute, but he did get into something.

[00:09:11] "They sent him home with anti-nausea meds and antibiotics. He finished that and started feeling better. Well, two nights ago we gave him as Interceptor Plus, and now today he has vomiting and diarrhea throughout the house. The last bit of diarrhea is full of blood again. He is laying around and will only move around a little.

[00:09:36] "We did get him to drink a little and he has a vet appointment tomorrow. But now after reading your blogs, I'm wondering if they will only give him something that will make it worse. Any advice will be much appreciated."

[00:09:49] So don't you love how Sarah's mind is working here? Kudos to her. She's starting to unravel this and she's seeing a correlation. And wondering if the heartworm drug is causing this sickness coming after this drug given twice, two months in a row. Vomiting and diarrhea are, if you look up the side effects to the common heartworm medications, two of the more common side effects.

[00:10:18] But now wait a minute. Don't these symptoms make complete sense? If you were poisoned with pesticide pills, don't you think your body would try its best to get rid of that poison, ASAP? "Whoa, get this stuff out of me right now! Vomiting and diarrhea are two effective ways to purge, right? This young golden doodle was reacting perfectly to a toxic intake. He's actually to be applauded in getting rid of that stuff.

[00:10:47] Well, I shared this with Sarah who's vowed to never give these drugs again, and is going to seek out safer preventative methods. By the way, Sarah isn't the first one to reveal this to me. I had a patient years back who similarly got diarrhea, bloody diarrhea around the first of every month that made her sick for several days.

[00:11:09] Careful questioning revealed that this illness started when my client began a popular heartworm drug on a monthly basis.

[00:11:19] But back to Sarah's pup, there's more we can unwrap here. Let's take a moment to also note the treatment Dr. WhiteCoat gave this youngster. Fluids. Now that makes sense, right? It helps the flushing process, gets that body rehydrated, hydration is lost with both vomiting and diarrhea. So great choice there.

[00:11:40] Anti-nausea meds? Hmm. Are they going to help or hurt the detox process this pup was in? They're going to turn it off, right?

[00:11:51] How about antibiotics? Hold the phone! In what universe are those indicated here? His blood looked good was the evaluation by the vet. And I take that to mean there were no signs of infectious disease. His white blood cell count wasn't high, et cetera. As you likely know, it's all too common for Dr. WhiteCoat to prescribe this class of drugs, just to cover the bases. And yet, what do we know now about the importance of a healthy microbiome? This lively collection of bacterial and yeast and even viral cells in the gut that are outnumbering our own native cells by about 10 to one?

[00:12:36] Well, we know, especially in the immune system, the gut is important with estimates of somewhere in the vicinity of 80 or 90% of that immune system being gut related. So a couple of takeaways to leave you with. First, prevention is very often the

reason your animals are getting sick. It took me years to figure this out.

[00:13:01] Years in holistic medicine before I finally put this all together, but it's been clearer. Your animals are getting sick often in the name of prevention. Over vaccination is probably the top most reason and most often results in chronic long-lasting disease. Like the number one reason dogs see vets: itchy, allergic skin or ear diseases. We've got data on this for at least 15 years, solid data showing that's the number one reason dogs see vets.

[00:13:36] Another preventative that comes your way is the one we're talking about: pesticides. Whether it's for heartworms, fleas, ticks, worms of any kind. There are not a far behind second in terms of causing problems, but the illness from them is more likely to be acute, shorter acting. And stopping giving these things will likely turn things around.

[00:14:03] Crappy food is a third, often sold by vets with the buzzword of "prescription" on the label. And that's another pseudo preventative that you'd do well to avoid.

[00:14:16] In the show notes for this episode again, episode number 29, found at vitalanimal.com/29, I'll have links for you to healthy prevention methods for all three of these areas: over vaccination, pesticide use and junky food. So be sure to visit that vital animal.com/ 29 link. And my most popular at this time of year is the drug-free heartworm prevention protocol that I've had in use for probably 25 years now.

[00:14:48] Keeping animals heartworm free without any drugs at all.

[00:14:52] So the big takeaway here is know that you have prevention options. You don't need to take what's being sold to you that is damaging. The more you follow this line of logic, the you'll think your way out of this, that there are healthier options.

[00:15:10] And second takeaway is that you have the right to know what treatments are being proposed. And you can refuse antibiotics when they're clearly not indicated, which by the way, seems to me to be most of the time, unfortunately.

[00:15:27] Even with a diagnosis of Lyme disease, if you haven't already heard it, episode 21 with Dr. Todd Cooney is quoting from experts on this illness called Lyme. That's really not an illness in most dogs. And the experts are telling us "Don't give them antibiotics for a month."

[00:15:48] Well, thanks for listening and keep your eyes and ears open for more ways to keep your animals wildly healthy, naturally disease resistant and vital.

[00:15:58] Stop into [vital animal.com](http://vitalanimal.com). And use the search box on any article page to discover more. This is Dr. Will Falconer signing off until next time. .