



EMERGENCY B·Y·T·E·S



Chicago Veterinary
Emergency Services
ER
Open Nights, Weekends & Holidays
773.281.7110

News and information from the Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services

Summer 2007

Common Emergencies

Below are several common medical emergencies seen frequently at the Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services, along with the signs and symptoms that may accompany each emergency:

1. Bacterial infection of the intestinal tract:

Loss of appetite, diarrhea, and/or vomiting. Blood in either the feces or vomit. Symptoms lasting for more than 24 hours require immediate medical attention.

2. Urinary blockage in male cats:

Straining to urinate, frequent trips to the litter box without elimination, licking excessively at the genital area, or dribbling urine. Vomiting and crying may also be seen.

3. Seizures: Pet falls on its side, shaking, drooling, and foaming at the mouth. Pet is usually disoriented after episode for a short period of time.

4. High Rise Syndrome: Any fall from a height. Frequently involves fall from windows. Injuries can involve fractures and/or internal injuries..

5. Hit By Car: Any pet struck by a vehicle.

6. Low Blood Sugar: Most common in toy breed dogs and diabetic dogs, or cats on insulin therapy. Pet can exhibit seizure-like symptoms or profound lethargy.

7. Bloat: Dog is licking the walls, floor, and/or air. Retching (trying to vomit unproductively). Above signs can often be accompanied by firm, distended abdomen.

8. Heart Failure: Difficulty breathing, pale gums, lethargy.

9. Saddle Thromboembolism: Most common in cats. Loss of use of hind legs. Cat is often very vocal and in pain. Be careful not to get bitten when handling a cat with this condition.

10. Intestinal Foreign Body: Vomiting, and/or diarrhea with blood. Lethargy, not eating, and painful abdomen may also be signs.

Celebrating 25 Years of Caring

Dr. Jerry Klein recently celebrated his 25th anniversary as a veterinarian at the Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services (CVES). What has kept this respected and exceptional veterinarian working in emergency medicine for over two decades?

Originally from Morocco, Dr. Klein and his family immigrated to Cleveland, Ohio, when he was five years old. His father, a physician, worked for years to learn English, pass his American boards, and complete a residency. As his father was opening his own practice, he became ill, and was never able to enjoy the fruits of his labor. For this reason, Dr. Klein says, "I made sure I would always enjoy life to its fullest capacity."

"We all want the best for every patient we see, and that is a very commendable quality."

After graduating from Ohio State Veterinary School in 1979, Dr. Klein worked briefly for a small animal day practice in Rockford, IL. It did not take him long to realize that this type of practice was not for him. He moved to Chicago and started working part-time relief at Lakeshore Animal Hospital and on weekends at CVES. In December 1981, Dr. Klein made the leap to become a full-time veterinarian at CVES.

Dr. Klein loves the adventure of working at CVES. "You never know what you are going to get into. It's never boring, and you always have something interesting to talk about at dinner parties," says Klein. He strives to be as straightforward as possible with clients. While treating each pet as he would a friend, Dr. Klein says, "I listen carefully to what the pet owner says because the history of a patient is very important."

Once he formulates a diagnosis, Dr. Klein makes sure the animal's owner understands what is wrong with the pet and what treatment options are available. With such knowledge, the client can make

an informed decision about how to proceed with the pet's treatment. Dr. Klein feels this honest approach helps greatly in calming the fears of CVES clients. His approach makes them more comfortable in situations where they must make very difficult decisions and place their trust in strangers.

All of this can make for some very stressful days. To stay calm and relaxed, Dr. Klein spends time working out and pursuing his other passions—breeding champion Afghan Hounds and judging dog shows. "All that may seem to be superficial, but sometimes being superficial has its place," says Dr. Klein.

Dr. Klein is not about to retire, but when he does, he would like to spend his time judging dog shows and traveling more. Often the two go together. Judging has already taken him to such exotic locales as Sweden and Japan. He may even start a small business, perhaps a restaurant.

Overall, Dr. Klein is an honest, straightforward person. What you see is what you get. And this extraordinary doctor believes his greatest achievements are staying in a job he loves and maintaining his health. Dr. Klein is proud that living a balanced life has prevented professional burnout, an all too-frequent byproduct of the stress of emergency medicine.

Dr. Klein is very impressed by the dedication and commitment shown by the staff in giving the best possible care to every pet. "The people who work here really care about each other and they also genuinely care about the pets we treat," he says. "We all want the best for every patient we see, and that is a very commendable quality," he adds.

Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services is happy to have had the honor of working with Dr. Jerry Klein for so many years, and looks forward to many more.





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Emergency Bytes is published by Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services (CVES). The only after-hour animal emergency facility in Chicago, we provide the highest quality emergency medical and surgical care when your regular veterinarian is closed. Fully staffed with veterinarians and technicians who are specially trained and experienced in handling animal emergencies, we are just a phone call away!

EMERGENCY B·Y·T·E·S

CVES Bloodbank – Help Save A Life



We're Looking for a Few Privileged Dogs!

Chicago Veterinary Emergency Services is currently looking for eligible dogs to join its blood donor bank. Like humans, pets sometimes require blood transfusions that are critical to the healing process. Acquisition of canine blood and blood components from commercial sources can delay the ability to supply the pet with immediate replacement. To better provide for this immediate need, CVES has established its own blood bank. As a result, we need donor dogs.

Potential donors should be over 55 pounds, between the ages of two and eight, and have good temperaments. All dogs will undergo appropriate blood tests to assess health and blood type. All testing will be performed at no charge to the pet's owner and the results will be shared with the pet's regular veterinarian. Only about one in nine dogs is a "universal" donor, which is the only type of blood the CVES can use.

For further information, or to schedule an appointment to have your dog screened, please call 773-281-7110, extension 67, or e-mail cvesbloodbank@yahoo.com.

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Quarterly Case: Got Zinc?

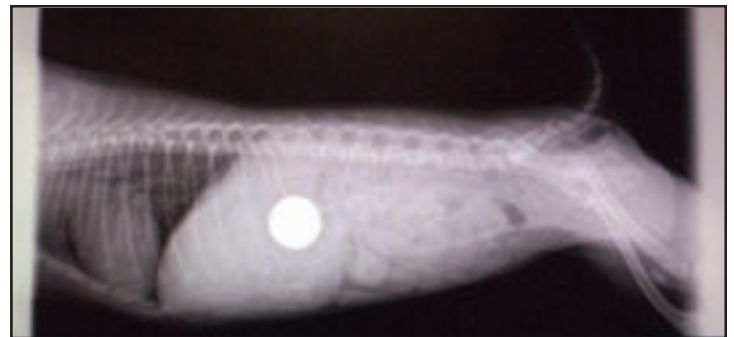
The Chicago Veterinary Emergency Clinic (CVES) sees approximately half a dozen cases of metal toxicity per year. The x-ray to the right is that of a young dog who came through the CVES doors lethargic and vomiting. Blood tests revealed a mild anemia and a decrease in the blood cells required for clotting. The x-ray revealed an unidentified object that the CVES veterinarians attempted to remove. They used an endoscope, a medical instrument consisting of a long tube that is inserted through the mouth into the stomach, for the passage of instruments to retrieve foreign bodies or conduct biopsies. Because a good view could not be attained, surgery was required to remove the object.

It turned out that the object was a somewhat corroded, 1983-penny. While this dog did not need a blood transfusion, special drugs were used to bind the zinc, thereby minimizing its toxic effects (see below). Some very critical dogs have required transfusions to address metal toxicity. The severity of the problem appears correlated to the amount of corrosion on the object.

A summary of zinc toxicosis:

Acute zinc poisoning occurs now and then in small animals. Common sources of zinc include copper pennies minted after 1982 (which contain 97.5% zinc,) plumbing nuts, galvanized cages, nails and staples. Medicinal products such as Desitin®, Desenex®, calamine lotion, antiseptics, and shampoos also contain zinc.

Toxic symptoms include inappetence, gastro-intestinal distress (vomiting and diarrhea), anemia, yellow color to skin, decrease in hemoglobin, and sometimes, renal failure. Diagnosis relies on



determining exposure to a source of zinc, locating foreign object(s) in the abdominal cavity on x-ray, and identifying some of the above symptoms. Elevated liver enzymes and low number of clotting cells are usually present. Since a Pepto-Bismol tablet may be mistaken for a foreign body on an x-ray, it is important to tell the veterinarian if you have given this medication before x-rays are taken.

Testing for the presence of zinc in the blood is a very sensitive test and results can be falsely interpreted if careful techniques of drawing and preserving the blood sample are not used.

Treatment for zinc poisoning may include intravenous fluids to rehydrate the animal, removal of zinc objects via endoscopy or surgery, blood transfusions if necessary to correct the anemia, and chelation therapy, which involves giving a drug that will tie up the zinc in the body and prevent its toxic effects. Early intervention is important in minimizing the serious side-effects of zinc toxicosis.

Written by Medical Director, Rick Pehta, DVM 