

Some Holistic Views on Heartworm and Vaccines

Well, spring is around the corner and it is time to start thinking about Heartworm blood testing and protecting our animals against the mosquito carrying heartworm microfilaria.

I feel that to reliably prevent heartworm disease, Heartgard or Interceptor should be given every 4-6 weeks, from May until December. It is very important not to miss a dose for adequate protection. Alternatives for prevention are available but there are no scientific studies to confirm their effectiveness in preventing heartworm infection.

I prefer to use Veterinary Contact Reflex Analysis (VCRA-muscle testing) to determine which heartworm prevention is best for your animal. If both are weak on VCRA, then NAET (Nambudripad Allergy Elimination Technique) should be used to strengthen and help eliminate the weakness first before starting on the prevention this spring.

Times are changing and the views of yearly vaccinations are being challenged by scientific studies. A physical examination and confirmation of a healthy individual is a prerequisite before any vaccine should be given (as stated on the vaccine label). Since most of the animals I see have some major health problems, in the present or past, I recommend Vaccination Blood Titers on an annual or biannual schedule. This is a blood test which monitors antibodies and blood protectors produced from vaccination. The amount of antibodies present in the blood suggests how much immunity that pet carries against a certain disease (i.e.: Distemper, Parvo, Panleukopenia) and how they might respond if exposed to that disease. These are the best tests we have available to predict protection against virus challenge. If the blood titers are below the recommended protection ratio, a revaccination should be considered. I use homeopathy and NAET to try to keep your pet's immune system in balance if a vaccine, like Rabies is necessary.

Vaccination in certain individuals can increase the risk of autoimmune disease and worsen their overall health. I encourage you to discuss these risks with me and decide what is best for your pet.

For people who board their pets in facilities that require annual vaccinations, protective antibody titers actually provide more accurate information about a pet's immune status than a simple history of receiving annual vaccinations. Unfortunately kennels will be slow to accept these new recommendations but a few kennels do accept blood titer results for boarding.

It is important to keep a record of current Vaccination Blood Titers and Heartworm testing results at home to keep your records up to date.

In closing, I encourage you to read and search the Internet on these current issues.

-----*Pamela Fisher, DVM*-----

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