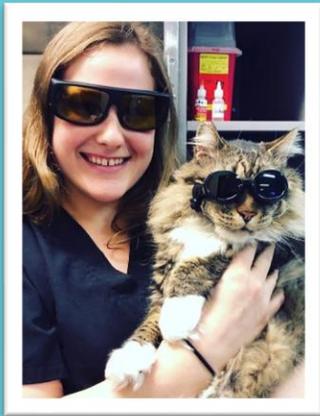




Adoption Ward Update!

Handsome Theo found his forever home in February! After almost a year of being Viking Royalty, he has been welcomed into his new kingdom. All of us are so happy for him and his new family! Thank you for everyone who donated to his care and wished him well on his hunt for a home.



Additionally, our Feline Ambassador Jessica, advocated for two PCC Veterinary Technology Program cats to take over our adoption ward as they awaited their new homes. These two lovely ladies, Nani and Serendipity, spent less than a week with us in March before they were welcomed into their new homes!



In This Issue:

- Adoption Ward Update
- Viking’s Commitment to Continuing Education
- COVID-19 Facts for You and Your Pets
- The Viking Approach to the Itchy Dog



Continuing Education at Viking Veterinary Care

Veterinary medicine is a field that is continually growing and changing. And Viking Veterinary Care is committed to providing our patients with the highest quality of care.

At staff meetings in 2020, our Viking Team has:

- Reviewed **CPR updates** and recommendations for best results in dogs and cats.
- Discussed updates to best protect our clients, patients, and staff from **COVID-19**.
- Established protocols for how to best serve you, our clients, with **Vet Valet and Skype services**.
- Made a plan to safely bring back our **Puppy Play Day** during the pandemic so that puppies can practice essential socialization skills.

Additionally, **100% of the Viking Team are Fear Free Certified Professionals**, including 4 team members with “Elite” status (3+ years!).



Just the Facts: Coronavirus, Your Pets and You

If you are feeling overwhelmed by all of the news right now, factual and otherwise, you're not alone. It can be an intimidating challenge to sift through this information and know what is safe for you and your pets. Dr. Rosie has recently hosted some Facebook Live events to provide up-to-date accurate information to our community. **Check out our Facebook page to watch the recorded videos.**

The Coronavirus Family and Testing Options

Coronavirus is a family of viruses with many strains, including some that can infect dogs and cats. **Puppies can have coronavirus diarrhea and Feline Infectious Peritonitis is caused by a Coronavirus.** COVID-19, the current viral strain infecting humans, is labeled "SARS-COV-2." There is **no indication that the coronavirus vaccines currently available for pets will protect against this new strain.**

There have been cases of pets in the news lately who have tested positive for SARS-COV-2, but what does this mean?

There are **three types of tests:**

1. Serology – An antibody test that indicates the body is mounting an immune response to an invasion of a specific organism.
2. Virus Isolation – A test for the presence of a live virus
3. PCR – A test detecting the presence of a nucleic acid which makes up the virus. (The virus can be dead or alive.)

Idexx is one of the main veterinary laboratories our industry uses for labwork. They've developed a test for the SARS-COV-2 virus in animals using PCR testing. Thus far, they have tested thousands of samples already submitted to the lab, which showed zero dogs and cats had it, which means **it's not a pandemic in our pets at this time.**

Based on these results, the current recommendation from the State Health Veterinarian are if your pet is showing respiratory signs, to contact your veterinarian and **test for more common respiratory pathogens first.**

Testing for COVID-19 in animals is currently available to leading health authorities if it is clinically relevant, but they don't want to take laboratory reagents away from the human medical field. Thus, this testing will only be approved by a case-by-case basis.



Animals Testing Positive in the News

A Pomeranian in China was the first animal to test positive with the PCR test, but was negative for antibodies. This indicates contamination but not infection. Later tests showed antibodies had formed, indicating infection on some level. The dog was quarantined for 14 days, showing no clinical signs of being sick, and unfortunately passed away shortly after, likely from unrelated issues. (The dog was 17 years old.)

Seventeen dogs and eight cats who lived with residents who were confirmed to have COVID-19 in China were tested for the virus. Of these pets, none of the cats were positive and only two of the dogs were positive. Both of the dogs were found to be healthy; this shows evidence that while **pets can be infected, they are not infectious**, infectious being defined as “likely to spread infection.”

A cat in Belgium developed vomiting, diarrhea, and respiratory difficulty one week after the owner got sick. SARS-COV-2 was found in this cat’s feces. The test used to determine this result is unknown. These signs are what we consider “non-specific” and can fit with a stressed cat experiencing a gastrointestinal upset with secondary aspiration pneumonia. Very little information was released regarding this cat.

Tigers and a lion at the Bronx Zoo tested positive for COVID-19 with clinical signs of coughing and decreased appetite. It is assumed they were infected by one of their caretakers, who tested positive for the virus as well but was asymptomatic.

So far, there have been no cases of humans getting the virus from animals.

In summary, there are cases of human-to-animal transmission, but your risk of exposure is from people, not pets. If you are sick, stay away from other people’s animals like you would people. Keep your own pets inside and away from other people. Social distancing applies to pets too!

What happens if someone infected with COVID-19 has to go to the hospital or they can’t physically care for their pet?

The virus has not been shown to be able to live on porous surfaces, including pet hair, for longer than three days. Pets from infected households should be isolated from other pets for 14 days in case they are actively shedding the virus.

To remove viral particles from the fur and skin, bathe the pet with shampoo or Dawn dish soap and use personal protective equipment (PPE) while doing so. Since cats are not...*ahem*....



amenable to bathing, it is recommended to keep them in a kennel for three days and use PPE to care for them, using a towel to move them when necessary.

At this time there is no known transmission from a pet to a person! We are monitoring this situation closely and will be sure to share information as soon as it becomes available.

COVID-19 Protocols at Viking Veterinary Care

We have protocols in place to keep our staff and community safe and healthy. Our staff uses cleaning solutions that are shown to be effective against Coronavirus without causing “nose-blindness,” a source of fear and stress in our patients. **The hospital is being cleaned constantly**, including each exam room, even when owners are not coming into the building.

We are offering **Vet Valet services, Skype exams and drop-off appointments** at this time. We request that upon arrival, all clients call or text from the parking lot, as **our lobby is closed**. For pets who have severe anxiety and stress without their owners, or for euthanasia/quality of life discussions, we are utilizing our largest exam rooms to help maintain the recommended social distancing guidelines. **Masks are required to enter the building!** If there is someone showing signs of sickness in your household, please let us know so we can help facilitate an appointment.

Our **online pharmacy** (<https://vikingveterinarycare.vetsfirstchoice.com/>) is a great option to get what you need for your pet while supporting our small, independently-owned, hospital. Like several other online suppliers, there have been some shipping delays, so order earlier than you might otherwise. If you would like to fill a medication through our hospital, please call in advance and our technicians can have it ready for you. Once you arrive, please call or text from the parking lot and we'll bring it out to your car.

Through our App, you can request prescription refills, access vaccine history and text our team directly during our business hours. This helps us keep our phone lines clear for our staff to communicate with owners whose pets are in the hospital. Please click on the link to access the online portal: https://connect.allydvm.com/pet/viking/sign_in



While wait times at the emergency clinics have seemed to improve since the beginning of the pandemic response, they can still be lengthy. Please call us at 971-371-4024; **we are available for same day appointments**. Governor Brown **lifted the restriction on elective procedures**



(spays, neuters, mass removals, dental cleanings) as of May 1st. Please reach out to us if you'd like to get your pet on our schedule.

The Viking Veterinary Care Crew are doing our best to stay safe and healthy! Team members are **wearing masks at all times**, due to evidence that indicates humans can be infectious for a period prior to showing signs of the virus.

When our staff comes to your vehicle to pick up your pet, we will request to swap leashes to **decrease any objects from home entering/exiting the hospital**. If you have a small dog, puppy, or cat, **please bring them in a carrier if possible**. This ensures the staff will be able to safely bring your pet into the building while maintaining a cleanable surface.

We are accepting payment over the phone utilizing our secure system, and we are happy to keep a **card on file** for you to expedite the check-out process.

Health Trends in our Pets During COVID-19

With more people spending time at home, **arthritis has become more obvious to both cat and dog owners**. We have a number of options to help both species continue to move comfortably for a long as possible, including joint supplements, medication options, laser treatments, acupuncture, platelet-rich plasma injections, and stem cell therapy. Make an appointment with your senior animal to discuss which of these options may be best for your household!



Anxiety behaviors appear to be on the rise, which can manifest as noise sensitivity for dogs and litterbox issues for cats. Please make sure you have created a safe place for your pets to retreat to, away from the family. Pheromones-Adaptil for dogs and Feliway for cats-can be helpful in reducing stress in pets, but please bring in your pet to evaluate if there is a medical cause first.

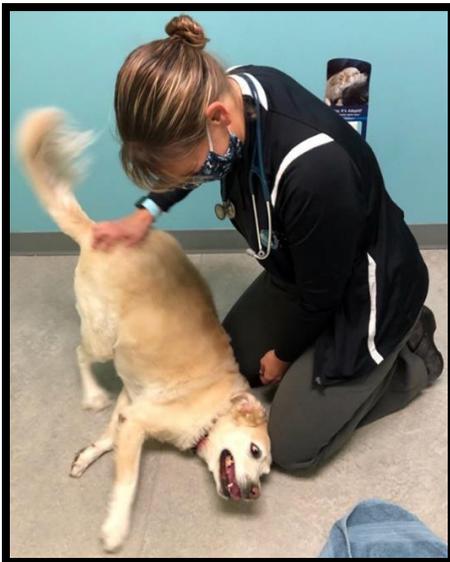
Now is the time to be active with your pets! Training exercises for dogs AND cats help work their brains and relieve stress. Make sure to reward their hard work with a high value treat! As the weather continues to improve, now is a great time to get outside for a “sniffari” around the neighborhood!



We appreciate all of our amazing clients who have been so patient as we continue to adapt in this ever-changing environment. We remain committed to providing individualized Fear Free Care to each and every patient!



Keep an eye on our social media for more information, live events and updates from your Viking Veterinary Care Team.



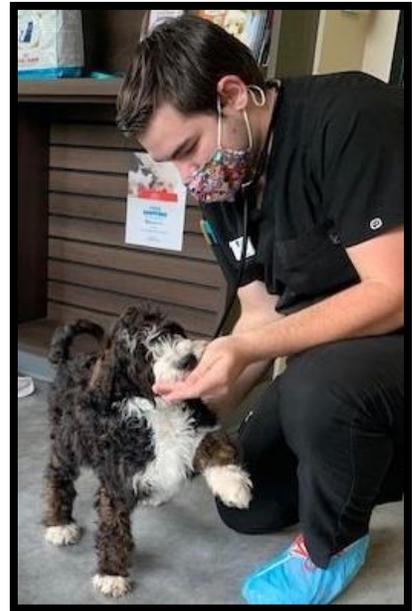


Puppy Play Day in the Pandemic



Our staff has put new COVID-19 protocols into place to protect against viral transmission, while ensuring a safe, fun environment for our puppy patients to work on socialization and desensitization to veterinary equipment, while creating a positive experience within our veterinary hospital!

Puppy Play Day starts at 9 am on Saturdays and puppies have the opportunity to play for 45 minutes (since we aren't incorporating a mid-session break); please be back at Viking to pick up your puppy by 10am.



Clients text on arrival and a technician will meet you outside, utilizing our leashes to bring your puppy inside the building. We request that small puppies arrive in carriers. All puppies will be wiped down with waterless shampoo and have a foot bath to prevent transmission of viral particles that may be present on puppy's haircoats. (Owners are encouraged to bathe their puppies upon return home as well.)

For now, clients will not be allowed in the building for Puppy Play Day, but our staff will take plenty of pictures to send via text message. Our hope is that we can eventually make these sessions into a Facebook Live event. We ask that all puppies have the opportunity to potty before they come in the building. Time will be allocated for our Puppy Players to weigh in, update vaccinations, and for owners to pick up parasite preventatives immediately after playtime.



As always, puppies must have been examined by a Viking Veterinarian, be as up-to-date as possible on vaccinations, have had a negative fecal sample, and not showing any signs of sickness. Puppies must be under 16 weeks of age.

We ask that puppies from households currently under self-quarantine due to sickness not attend for the safety of our staff and clients. Puppy Play Day will be \$25 and we recommend having a credit card on file for payment to expedite check out at the end. For more information or to reserve your spot today (**reservations are required**), please give us a call at 971-371-4024 or email us at info@vikingveterinarycare.com.





The Viking Approach to the Itchy Dog



This is Jasmine, before and after individualized treatment for her itchy skin!

At Viking Veterinary Care, we understand that when your canine companion is miserable, the entire household is affected! Humans and animals alike lose sleep, become irritable, and changes in behavior occur. We may not want to pet our furry friend due to the smell, or share our bed with them anymore. They may withdraw from human affection into their own world of constant distraction. In the end, the ongoing scratching, licking, and chewing can damage the human-animal bond!

There can be many reasons for skin irritation and subsequent itching in dogs. Our goals in treatment are to **stop the itching** while we **figure out the underlying cause**, and **come up with a plan** for long-term maintenance.



Step 1: Improve our patient’s (and our client’s) quality of life by stopping the itch! We have a number of “tools in the toolbox” to do this.

Apoquel- Tablet taken by mouth every 12 to 24 hours that inhibits inflammatory cytokines released by the body when exposed to allergens. Relief begins within 4 hours and itch is controlled within 24 hours. Apoquel can be used with many other drugs and is safe for long-term maintenance with monitoring bloodwork.

(As with any long-term medication, our doctors recommend bloodwork 3 weeks after starting. Then, once a year at minimum thereafter.) Any active skin infections should be cleared up before starting Apoquel. Apoquel can cause vomiting and diarrhea in a small percentage of dogs, as with anything given orally. This medication is not labeled for dogs under one year of age.

Cytopoint- Injection that begins working in 24 to 48 hours and continues to neutralize inflammatory cytokines that cause itching for 4 to 8 weeks. It can be safely used in conjunction with most other medications and in the presence of infections. Cytopoint does NOT require follow up bloodwork, as it is a protein, NOT a medication. In studies, Cytopoint had no more side effects than dogs receiving placebo injections.

Steroids- Injection, tablet, or topical that begins working within 12 to 24 hours. Injectable or oral steroids work well for itching and are very inexpensive, but can affect the liver and cause many unwanted side effects, including increased drinking and urination (sometimes causing potty accidents), increased appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, and gastrointestinal ulceration. There are certain medications that steroids cannot be used with. We LOVE topical (i.e. applied to the surface of the skin) steroids to help with the itching while avoiding the side effects when taken systemically. Most of our medicated shampoos, ear treatments, and sprays have topical steroids +/- other antimicrobials in them.

Antihistamines- Tablets that are available over the counter and take 7-14 days to help with acute itching. Sometimes they will be incorporated in our long-term allergy management plan, but once the scratching has started, they are not much help. Antihistamines work better as a preventative for allergies; once the histamines from allergies are released into the body, it takes them a while to catch up. Antihistamines can be found in combination with steroids (Temaril-P) or on their own (Zyrtec, Benadryl, Claritin). They can cause hyperactivity or drowsiness. Please talk to your veterinarian about proper administration of antihistamines in your dog before giving them!



Step 2: Evaluate the underlying cause.

External parasites- During the physical examination, we are evaluating your pet for fleas, skin mites (demodectic or sarcoptic mange, ear mites), *Cheyletiella sp.* (“walking dandruff”), lice, and any other parasite that may be crawling along their skin or biting them. Additional testing may be needed to diagnose these free-loaders, such as skin scrapings or looking at a sample of dander under the microscope. Some pets are actually allergic to flea saliva, and one flea bite will trigger an episode of allergic dermatitis!



Infection- A number of conditions can predispose an animal to skin infections from bacteria or yeast, often times both! Infections frequently occur in conjunction with immune suppression or food/environmental allergies. If the skin is not healthy, it cannot keep these infections at bay, and intervention is necessary with topical and/or oral treatments!

Food Allergies- To combat the itch and get the skin healthy, we sometimes have to narrow down possible food allergies. Did you know it can take up to 8 weeks for food allergens to be eliminated from the body?! Allergy testing has not been shown to be effective for identifying food allergies, only diet trials.

There are three ways to conduct diet trials, but they MUST last 8 whole weeks! If your pet puts anything in their mouth that is not its food (including bones, rawhides, training treats, yak cheese, etc.), you will have negated the results of your food trial!! Please talk with your veterinarian about:

1. Prescription Hypoallergenic/Hydrolyzed Protein Diets- The proteins in these foods have been broken down into such tiny particles, the body doesn't recognize them and doesn't react to them. The technology to do this is not inexpensive, and these foods are not available without a prescription (see our note on prescription diets below).





2. Prescription Novel Protein Diets- These diets are made up of protein sources a pet usually has not had previous contact with in order to develop an allergy. Prescription novel protein foods are the ONLY diets free of all contaminants during



processing! They actually test the machinery used to process the foods to ensure there is no cross-contamination! Because of this stringent screening, these diets may cost more, but **ALL PRESCRIPTION DIETS ARE GUARANTEED BY THE MANUFACTURER!** If your pet will not eat a prescription diet or it doesn't work for them, your money will be returned. Prescription novel protein diets for dogs include potato & rabbit, potato & whitefish, potato & venison, kangaroo & oats, potato & duck formulas.

3. Prescription Skin Support Diets-What if we could strengthen the skin's barrier so our dogs are more resistant when exposed to allergens? That is the premise behind the prescription skin support diets. These formulas are usually high in omega-3s to help with skin inflammation, contain increased levels of anti-oxidants (Vitamins A, E, and beta-carotene, etc.) to keep skin healthy, and usually have added zinc, amino acids and/or a limited number of novel protein ingredients. Since these are still a prescription diet, they are still guaranteed by the manufacturer to work or your money back!



4. Elimination Diets-To maintain the optimum control over what goes in your dog's mouth, homemade diets that consist of one protein source and one carbohydrate source (Ex. pork and lentils, salmon and sweet potatoes, venison and potatoes) are the way to go. These diets are not nutritionally complete, but they can safely be fed for the eight-week diet trial without nutritional repercussions in adult animals. If itching has resolved after completing the diet trial period, new food sources can be introduced one at a time every couple of weeks while the pet is watched carefully for signs of itching. If itching is seen, the newly added item is eliminated from the diet. In severe food allergy cases, elimination diets can be fed long term under the guidance of a veterinary nutritionist. We recommend www.balanceit.com for help from the UC Davis Veterinary Nutrition Department to make these diets nutritionally complete.

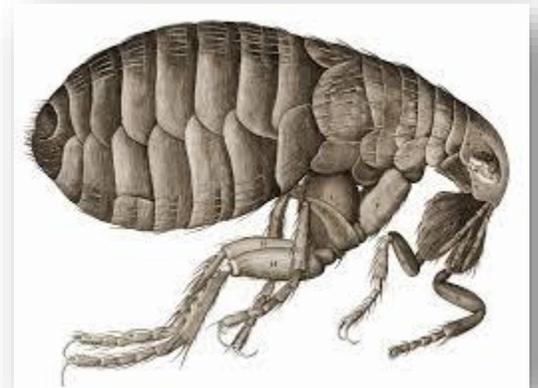


Atopy- “Atopy” or “Atopic Dermatitis” is a fancy way of saying your dog has environmental allergies. This can mean the pet is allergic to pollen, dust, mold...anything their skin may come into contact with. Sometimes the itching will be seasonal, but many patients suffer from this condition year-round. These pets do best if any artificial chemicals or dyes are eliminated from their household (detergents, fabric softeners, carpet cleaners/deodorizers, etc.) and if any allergens can be manually removed from their skin (frequent bathing, wiping feet/belly after being outside). Since we can’t keep them in a giant bubble, dogs with atopy can never be cured, but they can be managed. You and your veterinarian can come up with a plan that works for your pet and your lifestyle!

**Please note: It is not uncommon for a dog to have flea, food, AND environmental allergies with secondary infections from the licking/chewing. We see this all the time!

Step 3: Recheck!

In order for your veterinary team to evaluate if the current plan is working, we MUST see your pet again and discuss with you how the treatment plan went! ***If the fleas are still biting, if the infection is not resolving, or if the diet is not helping, we need to dig further into why.*** Infections can be resistant to a number of drugs and special testing is required to identify this. Bloodwork may reveal an underlying medical condition that is causing the immune system to be weakened, leading to ongoing skin or ear infections. We might need to try a different medication protocol if the treatment or diet is not working for your household. Don’t give up! Your Viking Veterinary Team is here for you and we will figure out a management plan!



For severe atopy cases that are not responding to treatment, our doctors have utilized stem cell treatment. Please ask your veterinarian for more information on this option if your pet’s case is unmanageable!



If there is something you are interested in seeing in the newsletter, please send suggestions to cristen@vikingveterinarycare.com.