

Welcome! The veterinarians at Modern Mobile Vet, LLC are looking out for the health of your pets and family members. Please review this important information regarding our recommendations for wellness items and preventative care that should be performed on a yearly basis.

**Annual Wellness Exam by a Veterinarian**

The annual physical examination is one of the most significant ways that we can keep pets living longer, happier, and healthier lives. This is the time to address concerns that you may have about your pet's energy level, eating habits, skin/ coat, any change in urination or defecation, or any other changes you may have noted. A full physical exam includes checking your pet's teeth and gums, using tool to examine their eyes and ears, listening to their heart and lungs, palpating their abdomen, feeling their lymph nodes, checking the range of motion in the hips and other joints, and inspecting their skin and hair coat. We will also check their weight and establish what a healthy baseline weight is for them. Subtle weight changes may be the first sign of illness and are often not obvious to the pet owner. Catching changes like these early can lead to more options for treatment and better success with resolving problems. It is also important to discuss what diet your pet is on, what type of parasite prevention they are taking, and what vaccinations they may be due to receive/ if they are healthy enough to receive them.

**Parasite Detection and Prevention: Heartworm and Fecal testing**

Performing a heartworm and fecal test is recommended at each annual exam, even if you are sure that your pet has never missed their monthly parasite prevention. There are many reasons for this, including variables such as being late on a dose, the chance a pet could have vomited or spit out the medication, or that topical medication may have been accidentally washed off due to swimming or bathing.

Heartworm disease is spread by mosquitos and is **DEADLY**- but **preventable**. Heartworms cause damage to the kidneys, lungs, blood vessels, and heart but infected animals do not show signs of illness for many years. If the infection is not screened for yearly, it is often too late for treatment by the time owners see signs that their dog is sick. In cats, the disease presents differently, often causing coughing or asthma-like breathing difficulty. For more information on Heartworm disease in dogs and cats, please visit <https://www.heartwormsociety.org/pet-owner-resources>.

Parasites that are found in feces are easily spread through the environment, picked up on the animal’s paws from the ground or the litterbox and ingested. Many of these parasites can be transmitted to and cause disease in **HUMANS!** For more information on parasites that can infect your pet or that may infect humans, please visit <https://www.petsandparasites.org/>.

Remember, it is easier and more cost-effective to **prevent** parasites than to treat them once your dog has them. It is also safer for you and your family to have a parasite-free pet.

**Infectious Disease Prevention: Core Vaccines and Optional Vaccines for Dogs and Cats**

Research has shown that vaccinated animals remain protected from certain infectious diseases longer than previously thought. Major universities and groups such as the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) recommend that cats and dogs get vaccinated every 3 years against certain common diseases in the year following their initial vaccine series. Here is an outline of which vaccinations are recommended to be continued on a yearly basis, and which can be performed every 3 years.

**Core Vaccines** = Vaccines recommended for ALL dogs/ cats. These include the following:

* **DAPP and FVRCP**: Puppies are routinely vaccinated against Canine Distemper, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza, Adenovirus 2(infectious hepatitis). Kittens are routinely vaccinated against Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, and Feline Panleukopenia (also known as feline “distemper” or feline parvo). Puppies and Kittens need to receive their DAPP or FVRCP vaccinations in a series of boosters given 3-4 weeks apart. This series typically involves 3 boosters- beginning at 8 weeks of age and continuing until at least 16-20 weeks of age, then, given again in 1 year. After the first year, these core vaccinations are approved for revaccination in 3 years.
* **Rabies** vaccination is a legal requirement for all pets, as this disease is deadly for both animals and humans but is easily prevented through vaccination. It is most commonly spread by exposure to infected wildlife. Puppies and Kittens typically receive this vaccination between 12-16 weeks of age, then given again in 1 year, and again every 3 years. Your rabies vaccine certificate is also required to purchase a license for your pet in Lake County
* **Leptospirosis**: This bacterial infection was recently added to the list of core vaccinations for dogs. Risk factors for leptospirosis include dogs spending any time outdoors (including urban, suburban, and rural environments), exposure to rodents, and time in kennels or dog daycares. This disease can easily be spread through urine or contaminated water. It can infect and cause life-threatening disease in people as well as dogs. This vaccine is initially given in a series of 2 boosters, 3-4 weeks apart and then given annually.
* **FeLV (feline leukemia)**: FeLV is now considered a core vaccine for kittens (or any cats < 1 year of age), for cats in shelters, and for cats who go outdoors or have exposure to outdoor cats. outdoor cats or known FeLV+ cats. It is important to do a blood test to confirm the cat is not infected with FeLV before vaccinating. This vaccine is initially given in a series of 2 boosters, 3-4 weeks apart, starting any time after 8 weeks of age. \*At-risk adult cats (fighting, outdoor lifestyle, living with a FeLV infected cat, etc.) should continue to be vaccinated against FeLV annually, others may consider a 2-3 yr booster. FeLV is considered a non-core vaccine for “low-risk adult cats”- meaning cats with no potential exposure to it.

Certain pets may have different lifestyles or risk factors for exposure than others and may benefit from additional yearly vaccinations. For dogs, these “non-core” vaccines may include Bordetella (Kennel Cough), and Canine Influenza.

**Spaying and Neutering Recommendations**:

There are many health and behavioral benefits as well as community benefits to spaying / neutering your pet. Many studies have shown that spayed or neutered dogs and cats live longer, on average, than other dogs and cats. Spaying female dogs and cats can prevent uterine infection and reduce the risk of breast cancer. Removing a female dog or cat's ovaries eliminates their heat cycles and generally reduces mating-related behaviors that may frustrate owners. Neutering males can eliminate their risk of testicular cancer and reduce their risk of developing enlarged prostate glands (known as benign prostatic hyperplasia). Removing a male’s testicles reduces testosterone, resulting in reduction of unwanted behaviors such as urine spraying/marking, roaming, and aggression. In addition to these medical benefits that can extend your pet’s life, spaying and neutering reduces pet overpopulation in our community by preventing unwanted litters. Even with the efforts of animal shelters and rescue groups, millions of unwanted dogs and cats are euthanized each year, including puppies and kittens because there are not enough homes for them.

For all the reasons listed above, we encourage you to have your pet spayed/ neutered. Establishing the best time for this surgical procedure can be discussed with the veterinarian at the time of your pet’s exam. In general, we recommend spay/ neuter between 3-6 months for kittens and between 6-8 months for puppies. \*Note- Giant breed dogs may benefit from delaying spay/ neuter an additional 6-12 mo.