

TVC

Digital magazine

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Acing the Oral Exam

Emory Animal Hospital shares the secrets to a successful Pet Dental Health Month

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Pricing for Services

By Rich Morris, Chief Educational and Communications Officer

Pricing product is not the same as pricing services. For instance, dental products such as dental chews can be bought at your clinic, in a store, or online. But you can't just have dental work performed anywhere.

Pricing services depends a lot on location. If you practice in the middle of Manhattan, your pricing may be higher than say a clinic in downstate Illinois or the middle of Wyoming.

It's different because the cost of living is different, and salaries are different.

So, how do you figure pricing for services?

Have a team member call around to nearby clinics. The distance depends on the geography. Clinics located in a city like New York or Chicago could call within a few miles. Clinics located in more rural areas should expand to 20-30 miles.

Have the team member call as a customer, and ask about pricing on a variety of services offered. This will give you a better idea of pricing in the local marketplace. Once you've got your benchmarks, you can price right on top of it. Or, if you believe that the service you provide is better, price above that. But, you'll need to let the customer know why. Otherwise, they'll assume you're overpriced.

The reverse could also be true. If another clinic is pricing a service higher than you think it should be, you can price below it, but explain to the customer the reason why.

Whether the price is higher, the same, or lower, effective communication with clients is key. Pet owners may come into the conversation thinking services are overpriced. They may not realize all that goes into teeth cleanings – anesthesia, the instruments used, team members needed to perform the service, and the use of the OR. Getting in front of the conversation can help build a loyal, well-informed client base.

If another clinic is pricing a service higher than you think it should be, you can price below it, but explain to the customer the reason why.



TVC CO-OP OWNERS ONLY

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NEWS

This Month at the Veterinary Cooperative

TVC News

We enjoyed meeting new TVC Co-op Owners and re-connecting with old ones at the TVC 2019 Annual Meeting and Reception, held in conjunction with VMX in Orlando on January 19, 2019. Nothing beats an opportunity for us members of the TVC staff to meet with our Co-op Owners in person, and hear firsthand about the different programs we can develop to better suit Co-op Owners' needs. Please know that if you ever have any questions, concerns, or ideas, we're always here at TVC to help. If you have questions about how to access the website or a specific TVC program, please contact our Owner Success Team at sales@tvc.coop. If you have a more general question or idea, please reach out to us at support@tvc.coop.

Vendor News

February is National Pet Dental Health Month, and several of our vendors carry dental products, including [Ceva](#), [KVP](#), [Purina](#), [Stratford](#), and [Vetoquinol](#). And of course, our distributor partner [MWI](#) carries all of the afore-mentioned products! [Vetoquinol](#) is offering a Buy 3 Bags, Get 1 Free on all of their dental chews through February 28, 2019, as well as a bonus offer of 12 Free Enzadent Fingerbrush kits if you spend over \$400. [Stratford](#) has a Buy 1 case of EZ-Clenz Dental Chews, get 1 case of Dental Wipes free through February 28, 2019. Check out these dental promos, as well as all of our other vendor promos in the "Promotions" section.

Did you know that [Stratford](#) can brand all of their products with your clinic's logo *at no extra charge*? And [Stratford](#) can offer you free marketing support for your private label products: product shots, exam room posters, help with social media, and they can even drop ship to your clients on your behalf! The benefit to you is that your clients won't be able to find "your" products on the internet—they'll have to keep

coming back to you, but not literally, since [Stratford](#) can drop ship "your" products for you!

Looking for an easy way to boost revenue? Consider a pet microchipping clinic! Our vendor partner [Petlink](#) says microchipping is an easy revenue stream; you don't have to compete against Chewy or Amazon. [Petlink](#) offers many free tools to help TVC clinics get started with a microchipping clinic: social media, raffle ideas for clients, a staff March Madness Microchipping Bracket, and more! Check everything out at <http://petlink.marketing/>. Clinics that have offered microchipping (with some kind of promo, usually \$10 off) have often seen their microchip business double or *triple* in a year! And [Petlink](#) has 3 distinct advantages over its biggest rival: [Petlink](#) uses a smaller gauge needle for insertion with a better read distance; [Petlink](#) is the only company to allow for 2 alternate contacts (helpful because many pets go missing while the family is on vacation); and [Petlink](#) charges *no annual owner registration fee for the pet parent!*

TVC University Live CE Webinars

Tuesday March 12, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. CST

CE Webinar: Enhancing Compliance With Flea Control in the 21st Century

Program description: Join Boehringer Ingelheim with speaker Dr. Brian Scott, for a 1-hour long RACE-approved webinar to earn **1 CE credit** and enter the drawing to win a **\$500 gift card**. There will be two lucky winners at both the AM & PM sessions!

Abstract: The average pet parent has a tendency to run to Google, before running to their vet. When it comes to dermatological issues, especially those concerning fleas, this can be detrimental. The reason for this is that the same approach will simply not work for all patients. In this webinar, you will learn about the goals of flea control, its connection to bathing and shampooing, why dermatologic patients need more rigorous flea control through the year, and perhaps most importantly, why flea control fails. We will then review how to combat this failure by brushing up on client compliance and communication skills, addressing the concerns that many veterinarians have. Ultimately, we want to examine 4-quadrant flea control for dermatologists, using owner preferences and case examples to explore options. With all of these facets of flea control and compliance addressed, we will have the necessary tools to tackle the misconceptions of our clients, and most importantly, those pesky fleas.

[Click here to register](#)

Tuesday March 19, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. CST

TVCU Live Webinar: The Importance of The Preferred Recommendation

Program description: Join TVC and Boehringer Ingelheim at the upcoming TVC University Live webinar to learn the importance of the preferred recommendation and enter the drawing to win a **\$500 gift card**. There will be 2 lucky winners at both the AM & PM sessions!

Abstract: Most often, pet parents are reactive rather than proactive. This means they respond to what they can actually see, whether that is actually seeing a pest or seeing the discomfort their animals are facing due to that particular pest. In a matter of days, two fleas could have laid hundreds of flea eggs. For this reason, it is important to educate clients on the importance of attacking fleas even during the stages of eggs and larvae. In this webinar, we will speak about educating clients on identifying the pests that are plaguing their pets and being proactive in combatting them.

[Click here to register](#)



NEWS

Conferences

[Register](#)

TVC Central: 2019 Chicago Vet Show
May 13 – 16, 2019 | Chicago, Illinois

Chicagoland Veterinary Conference is a great place to expand your knowledge and grow your network. TVC will be sponsoring a fantastic lineup of speakers and lecture topics you won't want to miss out on. **TVC Co-op Owners can receive 10 percent off of their registration with promo code: TVC2019.**



[Click here](#) for more information on the conference.

Hope to see you at this great event!

[Register](#)

TVC East: 2019 TVC CE Conference & Trade Show
September 22, 2019 | Atlanta, Georgia

Free CE with TVC!

Join TVC and TVC Vendor partners at our annual Free one-day CE Conference and Trade Show in Atlanta, GA. We will be offering a variety of RACE-approved lectures sponsored by TVC vendor partners, each worth 1 CE credit. There will also be trade show giveaways and a mini Treasure Hunt. The show is FREE to TVC Co-op Owners!



Trade Show: TVC is expecting about 25 of our vendor partners to participate in the TVC East Trade Show. In between lectures you will have time to learn more about TVC offerings, rebates, and discount programs, as well as talk directly to our vendor partners about their products and programs that can help you practice better medicine and increase your profitability. Also, take part in the mini Treasure Hunt and enter raffles to win great giveaways!

We hope you'll join us at this great event!



Help 20 more dogs in your community get the heartworm disease prevention they need by January 1, 2020.

Heartworm disease may be on the rise,¹ but together we can change that. When you participate in the *Heartworm 2020* movement, your practice will receive:

- ✓ Heartworm disease education and incentives for pet owners
- ✓ Helpful tracking tools and resources for clinic staff
- ✓ The chance to win great prizes via HeartgardClinic.com (starting in March)

Join the cause, protect more dogs & earn great prizes!

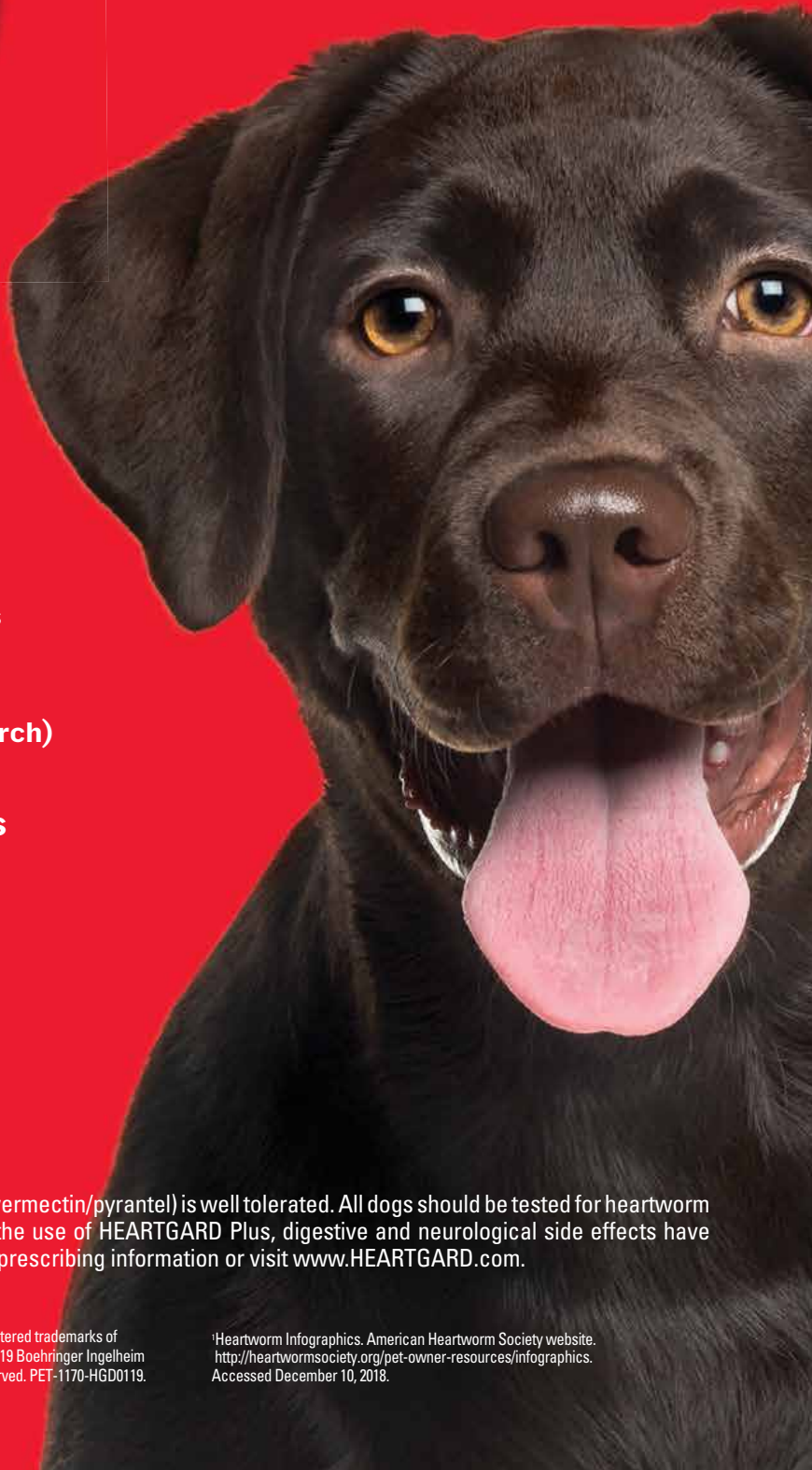
Heartgard[®] 
(ivermectin/pyrantel) **Plus**

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION: HEARTGARD[®] Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) is well tolerated. All dogs should be tested for heartworm infection before starting a preventive program. Following the use of HEARTGARD Plus, digestive and neurological side effects have rarely been reported. For more information, please see full prescribing information or visit www.HEARTGARD.com.



HEARTGARD[®] and the Dog & Hand logo[®] are registered trademarks of Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc. ©2019 Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc., Duluth, GA. All rights reserved. PET-1170-HGD0119.

¹Heartworm Infographics. American Heartworm Society website. <http://heartwormsociety.org/pet-owner-resources/infographics>. Accessed December 10, 2018.



Promotions

Bayer: Winter Promo: Purchase 6 pack Advantage Multi (Mix and Match), Receive up to \$100 in Consumer Rebates! Through February 28, 2019. [Click here for details](#)

Hill's: Q1 PurrrchasePoints™ Promo: Grow your Hill's online sales over last year and earn TVC PurrrchasePoints™! Hill's will award 5 PurrrchasePoints™ for every \$10 in Hill's online sales through your vet-sponsored online solution, including our partner Vetsource or Hill's to Home. Through March 31, 2019. [Click here for details](#)

Human Interest: New vendor of 401(k) plans tailored for the small business market. They have waived their \$499 set up fee exclusively for TVC owners. [Click here for details](#)

Jurox: New Alfaxan Multidose can be used for 28 days after broaching! Buy 10, Get 2 FREE!

Promotional orders must be placed directly through Jurox. Call 1-844-253-2926 to take advantage of this offer.

Mango Voice: Exclusively for TVC Owners: Free E-Fax, phones, and Apps with a 60-month contract. [Click here for details](#)

Provecta: Earn a FREE Yeti Rambler with the purchase of 1 case of Provecta Advanced for Dogs between January 28 – April 15, 2019. Mix and Match; 1 invoice. [Click here for details](#)

ProVetLogic: Check out the new TVC Members-only portal on the ProVetLogic website. In addition to the TVC rebate, TVC members also get a 15 percent discount on all products, plus access to online staff education. [Click here for details](#)

Purina: Exclusive TVC Calming Care Promo: TVC clinics can win a potential \$40,000 in prize payouts from Purina if we reach our group purchase goal of 6,000 cases by February 28! [Click here for details](#)

RapidBac Vet: Exclusively for TVC owners: Get a free sample and 25 percent off the only rapid test for the detection of Gram-negative and Gram-positive bacteria in urine! Through February 28. [Click here for details](#)

Securos Surgical: Save 10 percent on the TriDenta Surgical System through February 28. [Click here for details](#)

Stratford Rx: Order 1 case (12) of EZ-Clenz Dental Chews, Get 1 case (12) of Dental Wipes FREE! Available in your clinic's label! Through February 28. Email Shannon@stratfordrx.com and mention TVC EZ-Clenz offer in the "Comments" box, or call 1-877-498-2002 Ext. 242. [Click here for details](#)

VetOne: EnteDerm Ointment: Buy 5, Get 1 Free! Must be on 1 invoice. Through February 28. [Click here for details](#)

Vetoquinol: All Dental Chews: Buy 3 Bags, Get 1 FREE (Mix & Match)! Bonus Offer: Spend \$400 or more on Vetoquinol dental products and get 12 Enzadent Fingerbrush kits FREE! Both offers end February 28. [Click here for details](#)

Vetoquinol: Buy \$1750 of Vetprofen, get a free pair of BLOXR X-ray gloves. Valid on purchases January 1 – March 31, 2019. [Click here for details](#)

Vetsource: For every Purina Calming Care order placed through Vetsource's ScriptRight ePrescribing tool you can enter to win 1 of 6 \$100 Amazon gift cards through March 31, 2019! [Click here for details](#)



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Acing the Oral Exam

Emory Animal Hospital shares the secrets to a successful Pet Dental Health Month

Emory Animal Hospital, a TVC Co-op Owner, is a small animal and exotic animal clinic looking to make a big impact with pets and clients. It is a well-established, comprehensive, small animal veterinary hospital located in Powell, Tennessee, and also serves the greater Knoxville area and surrounding communities. They treat dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, reptiles, and pocket pets.

The clinic has six employees, and its veterinarian, Dr. Andrew Skelley has been in practice for about 25 years. “We are more like family than co-workers,” say Pam Holbert, Finance Director and Patient Care Coordinator, and Emilie Robinson, LVMT.

Emory Animal Hospital stays current with the latest advances in veterinary medicine, while providing pets with comprehensive medical, surgical, dental, and emergency care. Chief among the services offered is dental care. “Dental care is important because dental issues can become severe enough if left untreated to affect other organ systems such as the heart due to so much infection going into the bloodstream from the infection in the mouth,” say Holbert and Robinson.

The month of February, National Pet Dental Health Month, is peak dental services time. Emory Animal Hospital does about 4-6 dentals a week during the month of February. In fact, it’s such a popular few weeks that sometimes the dental special they offer clients has to carry over to March because they run out of spaces on the surgery schedule.

With such an emphasis on dental care, Emory Animal Hospital has invested heavily in the right technology to perform exams, cleaning, and surgical procedures. For instance, digital dental radiography is included in the cost of the dental procedures. The dental cleaning machine covers a lot of bases, including suction, a quiet compressor, high and low power lighted drill which can also be used (with special attachments) to file down teeth of rodents and lagomorphs (rabbits).

When it comes to effective dental products, the animal hospital uses [Vetoquinol’s](#) Dentahex Oral Rinse.

With such an emphasis on dental care, Emory Animal Hospital has invested heavily in the right technology to perform exams, cleaning, and surgical procedures.

“A bottle gets sent home with every dental patient that we see,” say Holbert and Robinson. “It is very effective in keeping plaque from forming back onto the teeth. We have seen that Dentahex oral rinse works better than water additives when used on a weekly basis. Both dogs and cats seem to tolerate it very well.”

Clients are very receptive to oral exams of their pets and oral exams are done free of charge during dental months of February and August at our clinic.

“The most common questions that we answer [from pet owners] involve the procedure and whether it is required that the pet be put under general anesthesia,” Holbert and Robinson say. “We explain that no pet is put under anesthesia without a blood panel run prior to the dental procedure to check liver and kidney function and also to check a complete blood count. This does not completely rule out risk of the anesthesia, but it does give our staff the best way to decide which anesthetic drugs will be the safest to use.” ■

Building Your Dental Care Business

TVC asked Co-op Owner Emory Animal Hospital what suggestions they would have for other veterinary practices who want to build their dental care services.

- 1.)** Offer a discount of some sort during your dental month to bring in more patients for dental cleanings
- 2.)** Verbal Client education in the clinic during appointments and handing out of brochures about the importance of keeping their pets’ teeth clean and what they can be doing at home to space cleanings out more.
- 3.)** Marketing to get clients informed about services offered at the clinic.

AVMA: “Doggie breath” could be a sign of serious disease

Does your sweet pet have sour breath? A bad odor coming from the mouths of your pets could be more than a nuisance; it could signify a serious health risk with the potential to damage not only your pets’ teeth and gums but their internal organs as well.

To address the importance of oral health care for pets, the AVMA is sponsoring National Pet Dental Health Month in February. AVMA President Dr. John de Jong says regular dental exams are an integral and

According to the American Veterinary Dental College, most dogs and cats have some evidence of periodontal disease by the age of three, often indicated by bad breath, a change in eating or chewing habits, pawing at the face and mouth, and depression.

primary component of a pet’s overall health care, and can help prevent more serious health problems.

“Oral disease is the most frequently diagnosed health problem for our pets,” said Dr. de Jong. “In addition to causing receding gums, tooth loss and significant pain, bacteria in the mouth enters the bloodstream, potentially affecting the heart, liver and kidneys, which can be life threatening.”

According to the American Veterinary Dental College, most dogs and cats have some evidence of periodontal disease by the age of three, often indicated by bad breath, a change in eating or chewing habits, pawing at the face and mouth, and depression.

In addition to professional dental care, Dr. de Jong advises pet owners to make oral home care part of their pet’s routine as a way to prevent tooth decay.

Although daily tooth brushing is advised for dogs and cats, a study published in the Journal of Veterinary Dentistry showed that only 2 percent of dog owners follow through with this practice. In addition, a survey of pet owners showed that only 14 percent of dogs and 9 percent of cats receive dental care at the veterinarian’s office. Pet owners can work with their veterinarians to begin a pet dental care routine at home in addition to regular dental exams and professional dental cleanings.

To learn more about dental care for pets, including causes and signs of oral health problems in pets and an instructional video on brushing pets’ teeth, visit avma.org/PetDental. ■



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 **MERCK**
Animal Health

VIN: Veterinarians voice concerns over data sharing

Veterinarians are upset, and concerned, by user agreements and errant emails as a merger loomed between Henry Schein's animal health business unit and Vets First Choice, according to a recent *VIN News Service* article.

This month, Henry Schein completed a spin-off and merger of its animal health division with Vets First Choice. Together, they will form a business to be called [Covetrus](#).

The new company combines Schein's veterinary products and practice information software business, which reported \$3.5 billion in sales last year and active customers comprising 75 percent of veterinarians in the U.S., with an online pharmacy, prescription management and analytics business.

At the time of the announcement, a coterie in the profession sent up [warning flares](#) about the prospect of one conglomerate amassing veterinary practice data, according to *VIN News Service*. "They worried that allowing client information to be shared with third parties violates the confidentiality of veterinary medical records. They also worried that their practice information might be used by rival clinics, online pharmacies or others to compete against them."

More veterinarians have since joined the chorus of concern as the implications of data mining become real, *VIN* reported. One practice owner complained of emails being sent Thanksgiving weekend by Vets First Choice with "Cyber Deals" and discounts purportedly on behalf of her clinic, despite her never having been associated with Vets First Choice. Owners of at least three other hospitals report the company emailed clients without their approval or knowledge, according to the report.

Some veterinarians have voiced their concern of the new license agreements for Schein's AVImark software and have refused to renew service contracts, resigned to do without technical support or software updates from the company. AVImark began explicitly defining its terms for handling

practice information in its [license agreement](#) sometime after October 2017, judging from a *VIN News Service* review of past AVImark agreements.

One veterinarian said he specifically is concerned that Vets First Choice will use his data "to pinpoint market to my clients." He imagines a scenario in which Schein drills into his practice information to identify all feline patients that are on a flea preventive, and what they pay for the preventive; then Vets First Choice contacts those clients directly to make them a better offer. "In my mind this is like the old analogy of shooting fish in the barrel," he wrote in a post. "Except in this case, I am the fish in the barrel and I own the gun, but (by agreeing to this document) I give the gun to Henry Schein to start shooting."

The legal and contractual implications are also unknown at this time. In the future this could affect TVC and its contracts with Co-op Owners and vendors, and TVC would have to take action.

TVC Co-op Owners may have also signed an NDA with other companies that could be violated due to this. (TVC suggests looking into a new practice management software.)

One veterinarian worried that in allowing Schein access to client data, veterinarians might be in violation of some state practice acts. If after the merger, for example, Vets First Choice sent coupons to his clients based on information in his database, he told *VIN*, "I have just violated my clients' confidentiality big time."

Legally, the situation is complicated. Unlike in human medicine, which has the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), no federal law regulates the protection and use of veterinary medical health information. However, 32 states require in their practice acts client authorization to release patient records with some exceptions, according to [research by the American Veterinary Medical Association](#). The majority call for some degree of confidentiality. ■

One veterinarian worried that in allowing Schein access to client data, veterinarians might be in violation of some state practice acts.

To read the full *VIN News Service* article, visit <https://news.vin.com/VINNews.aspx?articleId=51953>.

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Industry NEWS



Study: One out of four pet owners experience barriers to veterinary care

JAVMA News reported that one out of four pet owners experiences barriers to obtaining veterinary care, and the primary obstacle for all pet owners seeking any type of care is finances, according to a report from the Access to Veterinary Care Coalition. “Access to Veterinary Care: Barriers, Current Practices, and Public Policy,” was released in December 2018 and highlights several areas where pet owners face hurdles in obtaining care for their pets, including lack of transportation, no knowledge of where a veterinary facility is, and no equipment, such as crates or leashes, to move an animal. The study outlined the following five recommendations for stakeholders to consider:

- Improve veterinary care delivery systems to serve all socioeconomic groups;
- Provide incremental care to avoid nontreatment.;
- Improve availability of valid and reliable information to educate pet owners;
- Develop public policies that improve access to veterinary care and pet retention;
- Perform further research in other areas to understand the impact of how pets are obtained.

Pet obesity on the rise for eighth consecutive year

According to data released from pet health insurer Nationwide, pet obesity is on the rise for the eighth straight year. Nearly 20 percent of Nationwide members’ pet insurance claims in 2017 were for conditions and diseases related to

pet obesity – equaling a sum of more than \$69 million in veterinary expenses, according to a release. The boost in total obesity-related claims signifies a 24 percent increase over the last eight years. Nationwide recently sorted through its database of more than 700,000 insured pets to determine the top dog and cat conditions related to or made worse by obesity. For dogs, the top obesity-related conditions were arthritis, bladder/urinary tract disease, liver disease, low thyroid hormone and torn knee ligaments. For cats, the top obesity-related conditions were bladder/urinary tract disease, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, asthma and liver disease.

AVMA, AAHA release veterinary medicine telehealth booklet

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) have teamed up to develop a booklet to help veterinarians navigate the issue of telehealth in veterinary medicine. “The Real-Life Rewards of Virtual Care: How to Turn Your Hospital into a Digitally Connected Practice with Telehealth” was designed to serve as a primer to help veterinarians get started on the path to becoming fully equipped, digitally connected, telehealth-ready veterinary practices. Much of the content is drawn from the AVMA’s Telehealth Resource Center, (avma.org/telehealth), which contains more in-depth information for those looking to learn more about the topic. The booklet outlines the case for virtual care in the veterinary profession and answers questions about how to establish digitally-connected practices.

Heartgard[®] Plus

(ivermectin/pyrantel)

CHEWABLES

CAUTION: Federal (U.S.A.) law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.

INDICATIONS: For use in dogs to prevent canine heartworm disease by eliminating the tissue stage of heartworm larvae (*Dirofilaria immitis*) for a month (30 days) after infection and for the treatment and control of ascarids (*Toxocara canis*, *Toxascaris leonina*) and hookworms (*Ancylostoma caninum*, *Uncinaria stenocephala*, *Ancylostoma braziliense*).

DOSAGE: HEARTGARD[®] Plus (ivermectin/pyrantel) should be administered orally at monthly intervals at the recommended minimum dose level of 6 mcg of ivermectin per kilogram (2.72 mcg/lb) and 5 mg of pyrantel (as pamoate salt) per kg (2.27 mg/lb) of body weight. The recommended dosing schedule for prevention of canine heartworm disease and for the treatment and control of ascarids and hookworms is as follows:

Dog Weight	Chewables Per Month	Ivermectin Content	Pyrantel Content	Color Coding On Foil Backing and Carton
Up to 25 lb	1	68 mcg	57 mg	Blue
26 to 50 lb	1	136 mcg	114 mg	Green
51 to 100 lb	1	272 mcg	227 mg	Brown

HEARTGARD Plus is recommended for dogs 6 weeks of age and older. For dogs over 100 lb use the appropriate combination of these chewables.

ADMINISTRATION: Remove only one chewable at a time from the foil-backed blister card. Return the card with the remaining chewables to its box to protect the product from light. Because most dogs find HEARTGARD Plus palatable, the product can be offered to the dog by hand. Alternatively, it may be added intact to a small amount of dog food. The chewable should be administered in a manner that encourages the dog to chew, rather than to swallow without chewing. Chewables may be broken into pieces and fed to dogs that normally swallow treats whole.

Care should be taken that the dog consumes the complete dose, and treated animals should be observed for a few minutes after administration to ensure that part of the dose is not lost or rejected. If it is suspected that any of the dose has been lost, redosing is recommended.

HEARTGARD Plus should be given at monthly intervals during the period of the year when mosquitoes (vectors), potentially carrying infective heartworm larvae, are active. The initial dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's first exposure to mosquitoes. The final dose must be given within a month (30 days) after the dog's last exposure to mosquitoes.

When replacing another heartworm preventive product in a heartworm disease preventive program, the first dose of HEARTGARD Plus must be given within a month (30 days) of the last dose of the former medication.

If the interval between doses exceeds a month (30 days), the efficacy of ivermectin can be reduced. Therefore, for optimal performance, the chewable must be given once a month on or about the same day of the month. If treatment is delayed, whether by a few days or many, immediate treatment with HEARTGARD Plus and resumption of the recommended dosing regimen will minimize the opportunity for the development of adult heartworms.

Monthly treatment with HEARTGARD Plus also provides effective treatment and control of ascarids (*T. canis*, *T. leonina*) and hookworms (*A. caninum*, *U. stenocephala*, *A. braziliense*). Clients should be advised of measures to be taken to prevent reinfection with intestinal parasites.

EFFICACY: HEARTGARD Plus Chewables, given orally using the recommended dose and regimen, are effective against the tissue larval stage of *D. immitis* for a month (30 days) after infection and, as a result, prevent the development of the adult stage. HEARTGARD Plus Chewables are also effective against canine ascarids (*T. canis*, *T. leonina*) and hookworms (*A. caninum*, *U. stenocephala*, *A. braziliense*).

ACCEPTABILITY: In acceptability and field trials, HEARTGARD Plus was shown to be an acceptable oral dosage form that was consumed at first offering by the majority of dogs.

PRECAUTIONS: All dogs should be tested for existing heartworm infection before starting treatment with HEARTGARD Plus which is not effective against adult *D. immitis*. Infected dogs must be treated to remove adult heartworms and microfilariae before initiating a program with HEARTGARD Plus.

While some microfilariae may be killed by the ivermectin in HEARTGARD Plus at the recommended dose level, HEARTGARD Plus is not effective for microfilariae clearance. A mild hypersensitivity-type reaction, presumably due to dead or dying microfilariae and particularly involving a transient diarrhea, has been observed in clinical trials with ivermectin alone after treatment of some dogs that have circulating microfilariae.

Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children.

In case of ingestion by humans, clients should be advised to contact a physician immediately. Physicians may contact a Poison Control Center for advice concerning cases of ingestion by humans.

Store between 68°F - 77°F (20°C - 25°C). Excursions between 59°F - 86°F (15°C - 30°C) are permitted. Protect product from light.

ADVERSE REACTIONS: In clinical field trials with HEARTGARD Plus, vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of dosing was rarely observed (1.1% of administered doses). The following adverse reactions have been reported following the use of HEARTGARD: Depression/lethargy, vomiting, anorexia, diarrhea, mydriasis, ataxia, staggering, convulsions and hypersalivation.

SAFETY: HEARTGARD Plus has been shown to be bioequivalent to HEARTGARD, with respect to the bioavailability of ivermectin. The dose regimens of HEARTGARD Plus and HEARTGARD are the same with regard to ivermectin (6 mcg/kg). Studies with ivermectin indicate that certain dogs of the Collie breed are more sensitive to the effects of ivermectin administered at elevated dose levels (more than 16 times the target use level) than dogs of other breeds. At elevated doses, sensitive dogs showed adverse reactions which included mydriasis, depression, ataxia, tremors, drooling, paresis, recumbency, excitability, stupor, coma and death. HEARTGARD demonstrated no signs of toxicity at 10 times the recommended dose (60 mcg/kg) in sensitive Collies. Results of these trials and bioequivalency studies, support the safety of HEARTGARD products in dogs, including Collies, when used as recommended.

HEARTGARD Plus has shown a wide margin of safety at the recommended dose level in dogs, including pregnant or breeding bitches, stud dogs and puppies aged 6 or more weeks. In clinical trials, many commonly used flea collars, dips, shampoos, anthelmintics, antibiotics, vaccines and steroid preparations have been administered with HEARTGARD Plus in a heartworm disease prevention program.

In one trial, where some pups had parvovirus, there was a marginal reduction in efficacy against intestinal nematodes, possibly due to a change in intestinal transit time.

HOW SUPPLIED: HEARTGARD Plus is available in three dosage strengths (See DOSAGE section) for dogs of different weights. Each strength comes in convenient cartons of 6 and 12 chewables.

For customer service, please contact Merial at 1-888-637-4251.

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