



ANDOVER  
ANIMAL HOSPITAL

# Around the Barn

### Andover Animal Hospital

243 Newton Sparta Road  
Newton, NJ 07860  
Phone: (973) 940-BARN (2276)  
Fax: (973) 940-0309

[www.andoveranimalhospital.com](http://www.andoveranimalhospital.com)

### Hours

Monday: 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Tuesday: 8:00am - 6:00pm  
Wednesday: 8:00am - 6:00pm  
Thursday: 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Friday: 8:00am - 5:00pm  
Saturday: 8:00am - 12:00pm  
Sunday: Closed

Harvey E. Hummel, VMD  
Shelley L. Parker, DVM  
Wendy Turner, DVM

## NexGard

Looking for a flea and tick product that is not a topical? We now carry NexGard for dogs, a monthly chewy beef-flavored tablet that kills fleas and ticks. It can be conveniently given at the same time as your dog's monthly Heartgard tablet, safely with other medications, and is hypo-allergenic. NexGard is brought to us by Merial, the manufacturer of Frontline and Heartgard. Call us or stop by to see if NexGard is the right choice for your dog.



### Stock up and save on parasite prevention

Come in for a free trial dose of NexGard. Receive a \$50 rebate when you purchase a NexGard 6-pack with a Heartgard 12-pack. Quantities are limited - while supplies last.

## What's Wrong?

You wake up one morning to find your dog just isn't right. Maybe he's vomiting, coughing, not eating or just laying around when "he never does that." And he was okay yesterday!

Maybe you bring your cat in for her annual exam and routine blood work, but the lab results for your seemingly healthy cat are abnormal.

Your older dog or cat has been slowing down lately, nothing specific that would alarm you. But you're worried, so you bring your beloved pet in for an exam.

What do all these cases have in common? Your pet has something wrong that could be mild or serious, either negatively affecting him now or likely to in the future. You are concerned, and you want the best for your pet.

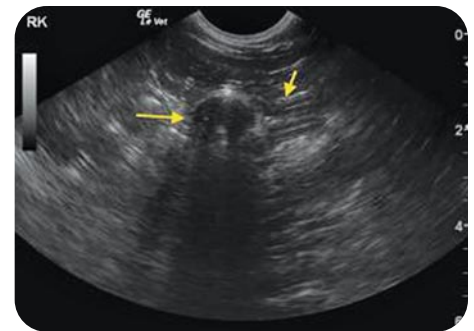
Our job is to compile a complete picture of your pet's current health status in a timely manner, so we can give you the most complete information and make the best recommendations, thereby allowing you to make informed choices.

Our basic diagnostic options include taking a thorough history, a comprehensive physical exam, blood work, urinalysis, radiographs and ultrasound. We create a diagnostic plan based on your pet's situation, which may include some or all of these tests.

We have been offering diagnostic ultrasound for years, utilizing mobile specialists who bring their equipment and expertise to our practice. We are excited to announce that we are now offering in-house ultrasound, which gives us more flexibility in our ultrasound appointment scheduling. We transmit the images via tele-medicine to a specialist and receive results within 24 hours of submission.



This (above) is what a pistachio looks like outside your cat, and this (large arrow below) is what a pistachio looks like inside your cat.



Nuts are indigestible, and this one became lodged in the kitty's small intestine. Fortunately, it was surgically removed and the mischief-maker recovered well!

Several staff members have undergone training in order to bring this technology to Andover Animal Hospital.

Ultrasound is unique in that it can give us a 3-D picture of what is going on inside your pet — something we can't get any other way, other than exploratory surgery. It is non-invasive and a relatively comfortable procedure. Ultrasound goes hand-in-hand with blood work and urinalysis, and complements radiographs. All together these modalities give us as complete a picture as we can get of your pet's current health status.

So, in the event you find yourself wondering what's wrong with your pet, we hope that having some familiarity with our diagnostic tools will enhance your comfort level as we work to expedite your pet's diagnosis and put him/her on the road to recovery as quickly as possible!



## Healthy Kids

Children who live with dogs and cats, especially in early infancy, tend to be healthier than those who do not. Research has shown multiple benefits of exposure to pets, and the results have been published in several respected journals. For example, a study published in the journal *Pediatrics* in 2012 concluded that children who lived with dogs had fewer respiratory symptoms and ear infections, and needed fewer courses of antibiotics than did children who did not live with dogs.

Although it was established that pets appear to lower the incidence of respiratory illnesses, scientists are still trying to pinpoint the reasons why. A recently published study provided some clues. The study in mice, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS), showed that exposure to "dog-associated" house dust alters the population of microbes in the gut, which in turn increases the number of immune cells in the airway that respond to allergens.

According to the researchers, the next piece of the puzzle will be to determine how the microbes in the gut affect the immune response.

# Vestibular Syndrome

Your senior dog has been the picture of health, but one morning she starts staggering like a drunken sailor. The signs look scary. Is it vestibular syndrome?

The vestibular system is the sensory system that gives us our sense of balance and spatial orientation. It consists of structures within the inner ears that send signals to the brain, and the portions of the brain that process those signals. When something goes wrong with any part of that system, it can cause problems such as:

- Loss of balance, falling or an unsteady gait
- A head tilt
- Nausea and vomiting
- Circling, usually in one direction
- Rapid eye movement from one side to the other, known as nystagmus
- An inability to get up

Vestibular syndrome (also called vestibular disease) is characterized by the location of the underlying problem: if the dysfunction is in the brain, it's known as "central vestibular syndrome," and if it is in the inner ear, it's known as "peripheral vestibular syndrome."

Common causes of central vestibular syndrome include brain tumors, trauma/head injury and strokes. This type of vestibular syndrome is often accompanied by additional signs, such as weakness on one side of the body and/or mental dullness.

Causes of peripheral vestibular syndrome, which is far more common, include inner ear infections, hypothyroidism and certain medications. "Old dog vestibular syndrome" may be the most common form of all – this form afflicts senior dogs, and is usually idiopathic, meaning no cause can be found.

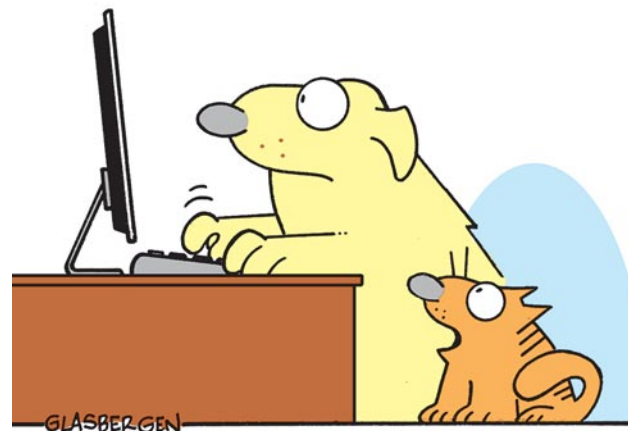
If your dog or cat suddenly displays the signs of vestibular syndrome, it's important to seek veterinary help. Unfortunately, these signs alone are not diagnostic, and your pet may have a more serious problem.

Most dogs recover completely within a few days from idiopathic vestibular syndrome, although some may have mild signs that last, such as a head tilt. If your veterinarian has said that the likely cause is idiopathic vestibular syndrome, there are a number of things you can do to help your pet while she recovers.

1. Confine her to a small, safe space, away from stairs, with soft bedding.
2. Keep food and water nearby so she doesn't have to travel far to eat.
3. Provide assistance going outside to potty or to the litter box.
4. Keep a light on at all times, as vision can help her deal with some of the dizziness.

If symptoms do not resolve within a few days, additional diagnostic tests can help determine the underlying cause and appropriate treatment.

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glasbergen.com



**"Tell her you like long walks in the country and snuggling on the sofa, but don't mention anything about drinking from the toilet."**





# Seizure!

You're awakened from a sound sleep by a loud, rhythmic banging on the floor. You leap out of bed to find your dog in the throes of a grand mal seizure; legs thrashing, eyes wide but unseeing, lips drawn back, teeth bared, drooling and urinating uncontrollably. Heart pounding, you watch helplessly as the seizure continues.

Like the complex circuitry in a powerful supercomputer, electrical signals in the brain are transmitted and processed by networks of special cells, called neurons. When a seizure occurs, there is a flood of electrical activity, causing the neurons to send excess messages to certain parts of the body.

During a grand mal (or generalized) seizure, the entire body is affected. First the whole body becomes stiff (called the tonic phase) for about 30 seconds, then enters a rhythmic phase where the muscles quickly contract and relax, and the animal appears to be "paddling," (the clonic phase), usually lasting about two minutes. Animals (and people) are typically unaware of what is going on during a seizure.

A partial, or focal, seizure, is a seizure where only part of the body is affected, and may appear as facial twitching, for example. A complex partial seizure may trigger what appears to be odd behavior, such as "fly biting" when there are no flies around.

Prior to a seizure, many pets experience an "aura," where they may appear nervous or restless, seek attention or seclusion. The period following a seizure is referred to as the "post-ictal" phase, where pets may be confused or disoriented. This phase can last minutes, hours or even days.

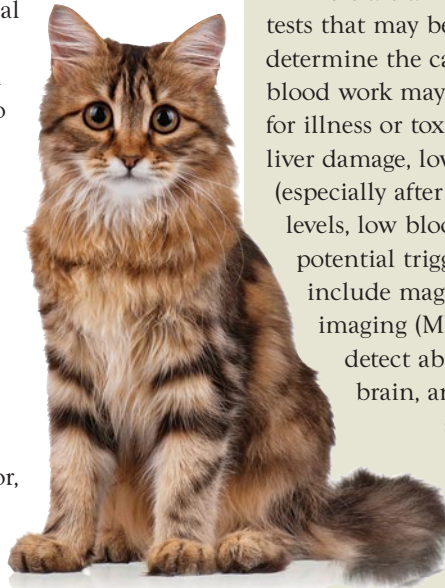
When two or more seizures occur during a 24-hour period, it's referred to as cluster seizures. These are more dangerous, as they may lead to a condition called status epilepticus – an ongoing seizure that lasts longer than five minutes. This is an emergency situation, as the brain may be starved of oxygen and damage can occur.

There are many things that can cause seizures in pets, including:

- Ingesting a toxic substance, such as antifreeze
- Brain tumors
- Head injury
- Illness, such as distemper or encephalitis

Sometimes no reason can be found for seizures, in which case it is called an idiopathic or primary seizure disorder (or idiopathic epilepsy). This type of seizure disorder is more common in dogs than cats, and often does not happen until between the ages of 2 and 5. Seizures that start after age five are often an indication of an underlying cause, such as a tumor. The term "secondary seizures" is used when there is a known cause.

If your pet has a seizure, you should move it to a safe spot where it won't injure itself. Do not try to restrain it or interfere. Try to time the seizure if possible. Block access to stairways, as pets are sometimes confused and uncoordinated when they emerge from a seizure. Contact your veterinarian as soon as possible, and if the seizure will not stop or if another seizure starts soon after it stops, transport your pet to a veterinarian immediately.



## Seizure Diagnosis & Treatment

There are a number of diagnostic tests that may be used to try to determine the cause for seizures. First, blood work may be performed to test for illness or toxic exposure, kidney or liver damage, low calcium levels (especially after whelping), thyroid levels, low blood sugar or other potential triggers. Additional tests include magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), which can help detect abnormalities in the brain, and cerebro-spinal fluid analysis (CSF), which can reveal diseases such as encephalitis.

Veterinarians will use drugs such as valium to stop an ongoing seizure, however they will not prevent future seizures from occurring. There are a number of drugs available to manage seizures, which have varying levels of effectiveness with different pets. As with most medications, these drugs can have side effects, so your veterinarian may suggest waiting to determine whether more seizures will occur, and if so, how frequently, before starting the medications.

Seizure medications must be given on a regular basis, as withdrawal can actually cause seizures to occur. It's important to never miss a dose! Don't despair if your pet isn't immediately managed by the medication. Some medications can take weeks to reach therapeutic levels in the blood. Some pets need combinations of two or more drugs before they're successfully managed.

There is no cure for primary seizure disorders, but in most cases they can be successfully managed. Pets who have seizure disorders should not be bred.

**"Cats are connoisseurs of comfort."**

*– James Herriot*



## Save the Date!

The first get-together of our new "Celebrate the Cat Club" is scheduled for **Thursday, May 15, from 6-7:30 pm**. Our own Dr. Wendy Turner will be presenting a topic of interest to cat owners and devotees!



Stay tuned to our website and our Facebook page for details and registration information.



## Want Your Cat to Feel Special?

Well, cats *are* special! And to prove it, we have designated Thursday mornings for "feline only" appointments. We want to provide a calmer, quieter atmosphere to help make your visit as stress-free as possible. And, when you book your first appointment for a Thursday morning, your cat will receive a little gift to take home! We have many tips and tricks to help make your trip to our office and back home a little easier, so feel free to ask us when you make your appointment.



# A N D O V E R ANIMAL HOSPITAL

243 Newton Sparta Road, Newton, NJ 07860

*25 years of excellence*



### CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE

We've been working hard on our new website. Our goal is to make the latest information about our hospital easily accessible.  
[www.andoveranimalhospital.com](http://www.andoveranimalhospital.com)



## AAH First Annual Dog Walk

You are cordially invited to join us for our first annual dog walk on **Sunday, May 18th, 1-4 pm**.

As we mentioned in our last newsletter, studies have shown that our health improves when we walk dogs, and dogs' health and behavior improve as well. You and your dog can make some new friends by joining us for this festive event. Further details will be posted to our Facebook page and website as they become available.



## Loose Leash Walking Class

Have you been struggling to teach your dog to walk politely on a loose leash? We can help! In preparation for the dog walk, Dee Broton of Holistic Behavior Solutions will be leading a "Loose Leash Walking" class on **Saturday, May 3rd, from 10-12 pm**. Advance reservation required as space is limited. Reserve your space at [www.holisticbehaviorsolutions.com](http://www.holisticbehaviorsolutions.com), or by calling Dee at 973-713-0175.