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Supplements: Are They The Right Choice for Your Pet?

By: Sandy Gregory, M.Ed, RVT, CCRA

Should you provide your dog with supplements? And if so, which ones, how much, how often? Let’s look at the scientific evidence...

Supplement Suggestions:

1) Providing a supplement means that you believe that your dog is not getting sufficient amounts of that component in its diet. Vitamins and minerals in their natural forms often have better bioavailability and retention in tissues than their synthetic counterparts (1) so be sure that at least part of your dog’s diet consists of fresh (unprocessed) food.

2) Ask yourself: What is the scientific evidence that my dog should be getting this supplement? See list of recommended supplements and the scientific evidence below.

3) Many supplements have a mixture of components so that the manufacturer can claim their supplement as unique. Do you really need all of those additives?

4) Stack the deck in your favor – only buy supplements from manufacturers that: (a) provide data on all of the supplement’s nutrients and micronutrients in the packaging, and (b) are established and have a reputation to uphold.

5) Purchase supplements designed for and tested in dogs. Supplements designed for humans might not have the same bioavailability as those for dogs and some might even have ingredients, such as xylitol, that are unsafe or even fatal for dogs.



Reduce, Reuse and Recycle!



Never Recycle Another Glass Jar!

They're easy to wash (dishwasher-friendly), have an air tight seal, freeze well and don't leach toxics like Bisphenol-A (BPA).

Substitute: Store leftovers and dry goods (instead of buying containers) or pack your lunch in glass jars. Note: Depending on the distance of your work commute, you might choose stainless steel lunch containers because glass is heavy.

Recommended Supplements for Active Dogs

(and the Evidence)

1) Joint-Protective Nutraceuticals – A dose of about 20 mg/lb of glucosamine per day is recommended. Products designed for dogs include Dasuquin Advanced, Glycoflex II or III. Natural sources of glucosamine include trachea (1 oz =~ 1400 mg) and chicken feet (one foot =~ 400 mg).

- The Evidence: A 2018 meta-analysis of publications on a variety of dietary supplements for osteoarthritis in humans suggested improvement of pain and function with glucoasamine, chondroitin, MSM and avocado soybean unsaponifiables, although they stated that there was also a need for more higher quality evidence.

2) Omega-3 Fatty Acids – The recommended dose is 15 mg/lb of DHA. Make sure the source is tested for heavy metals. Good sources include Grizzly Salmon Oil as well as Nordic Naturals, but there are others as well.

- The Evidence: Two 2016 metastudies concluded that there is evidence for the systemic anti-inflammatory effects of omega-3 fatty acid supplementation

3) Antioxidants – Antioxidants are most effective if fed in their native form. Blueberries are very high in antioxidants, and an easy way to provide them is by purchasing freeze-dried blueberries. Give about 10 blueberries for a small dog, 20 for a medium dog and 30 for a large dog once a day in their food. Available at Amazon.

- The Evidence: Two studies show that diets containing antioxidants improved cognitive function in old dogs, so why not provide antioxidants to all dogs that need optimum cognitive function?



The First Annual CaRVTA Symposium

By: Dani Fernandes

The Vetcorder



The Vetcorder from Sentier is a ECG/Pulse Oximeter device. This small piece of equipment will allow the students to monitor a patient's vitals without even having to be in the room! The Vetcorder connects wirelessly to any tablet, laptop or phone. It transmits temperature, heart rate and oxygen rate of a patient under anesthesia or recovering from surgery. This tool can even go home with clients to help them monitor how their pet is doing. All vitals can be saved and logged for later use and record keeping. One of these wonderful things has been donated to the program! And starting in the spring quarter with the senior's surgery class, they will be able to use the Vetcorder.

On February 25th of 2018, Foothill College and the Vet Tech Program hosted the first annual CaRVTA symposium. Many people from the veterinary field attended, as well as several students and teachers from the Vet Tech program. A total of eight speakers gave lectures: Stephan Cital, Nicolette Zarday, Leslie Boudreau, Jeff Backus, Ayllyne Moon, Kenichiro Yagi, and the programs very own Sandy Gregory. The whole event was sponsored by Foothill College, Mid-Peninsula Animal Hospital, Adobe Animal Hospital, VCA Animal Hospitals, Sentier, Henry Schein, Abaxis, Purina, Pet Emergency & Specialty of Marine, and CaRVTA itself. Without the time and effort put in by the speakers and the sponsors, this event could not have taken place.



Several lectures took place ranging from client communication to pain management for our animal friends. Each lecture was incredibly valuable, opening the eyes of all the people who attended. The toxicity lecture touched on all the things that could easily harm or kill a patient, from chocolate toxicity to marijuana toxicity. The client education lecture gave plenty of helpful tips and pointers on how a veterinary technician can speak with a client and handle hard situations. Another lecture focused on passive range of motion; giving a technician new skills on how to work with patients recovering from surgery and even geriatric patients within the clinic or in the home.

This invaluable event kick started the first of many just like this one. It brought people within the veterinary community together, creating new relationships, inspiring speeches, and new friendships sure to last a lifetime. The Veterinary Technician program even got a new piece of equipment donated to us by Robert Young from Sentier! Having events like these that help the students and professors network with the veterinary community also can lead to things that can help the program itself!

Important Upcoming

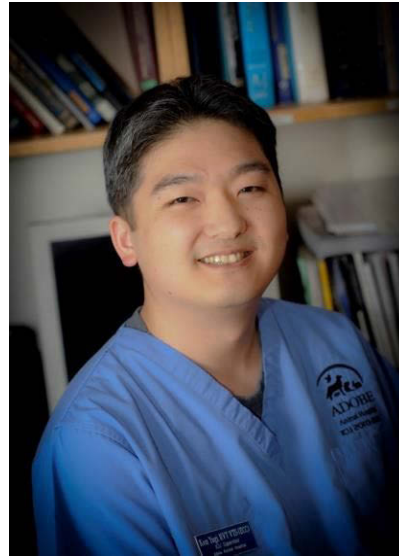
Dates:

- Veterinary Society of Surgical Oncology Meeting: April 9th - 11th (UC Davis)
- VMC School of Veterinary Practice Management: April 16th – 20th, 2018 (San Diego, CA)
- SASD: April 29th, 2018 (Foothill College)
- Pet Ready Event: May 19th, 2018 (Foothill College)
- Ethos Veterinary Symposium by VetBloom: May 20th, 2018 (San Diego, CA)
- Wild West Veterinary Conference: Oct 3rd – 7th, 2018 (Reno, NV)

Becoming a Veterinary Nurse:

A Quote from Ken Yagi

By: Ken Yagi BS, RVT, VTS (ECC, SAIM)



My journey with the Veterinary Nurse Initiative started when I was appointed the state representative committee chair and conducted a national leadership summit. When asked the question "do we need to unite the profession under a single credential under the title of veterinary nurse?" the answer was a resounding "Yes!!".

Fast forward 3 years of conversations with the states, more leadership summits, discussions with stakeholders, a series of surveys and reports to the NAVTA board, it was announced on May 15th, 2017 that the Veterinary Nurse Initiative will pursue the standardization of the credential, including credentialing requirements, defined scope of practice, CE requirements, and proper use of a single title for our profession, Registered Veterinary Nurse, only by credentialed individuals. The 2016 NAVTA demographic survey revealed that 56% of respondents changed jobs within 5-7 years, and of that, half of them had actually left veterinary medicine altogether. And we are certainly not happy about this.

Reasons cited were low wages, lack of respect, burnout, compassion fatigue, a lack of value of credentialing, poor utilization in practice, lack of reciprocity, and lack of public recognition.

Part of these challenges arise from the patchwork of credentials we have in the United States where we have Licensed, Registered, and Certified Veterinary Technicians, and one stat with LVMT, one state without credentialing at all, and several

Tech Tip!

What's wrong with this tag?
Look closely....



ANSWER:

You cannot see any of the important information for your pet.

You should check your pet's tags every couple of months for...

1. Legibility – engravings can wear off easily
2. Updated phone numbers
3. Change of address

states not having a licensure system in place. The patchwork of credentials leads to veterinary technicians having varied titles, with us having inconsistent regulated job tasks, and in some states, we don't exist, legally. The VNI aims to bring a single credential to the US, which will address these issues.

Another part of the VNI is to change our title from veterinary technician to veterinary nurse. The key reason for this change is because while "technician" is tied to being focused on the science and technology used in the work we perform, the term "veterinary nurse" will include our role of providing patient and disease-focused care using the science and technology to act on our critical thinking and judgment to bring a patient to healing.

The familiarity of the title will bring clear understanding and expectations of our role in the veterinary team by the public due to the familiarity. "Veterinary Nurse" is also the term used by the vast majority of the countries in the world for our role, adding to the understanding.

Throughout the past couple of years, we have been reaching out through media outlets, conferences, our national district representatives, and web sessions much like this one to distribute information and gathering feedback. A timeline was set to introduce new legislation in a couple of states in 2018 to start the process. We are currently working with the veterinary technician in the state of Ohio to support the grassroots effort. This first year will be a learning process for us in working with the legislature from a national level.

Finding a Job at The Job Fair!

By: Dani Fernandes

Support Our Program!

Our next fundraiser will be at Chipotle in Mountain View. Just come and eat and Chipotle donates 50% of the proceeds to our program. Date and Time TBA. We would love to see you there!



On February 7th, 2018, students and graduates alike attended the Veterinary Technology Job Fair. This event is meant to connect students and graduates with employers. The veterinary community comes together at the job fair to inspire students and create a little friendly competition among practices and other veterinary employers in hiring out current and former students. With the help of the professors of the vet tech program, and all the wonderful vet techs, staff and doctors that put on this event, students are given the rare ability to survey just a small portion of the veterinary field.

The clinics and businesses that attended were: San Francisco SPCA, Sunnyvale Veterinary Clinic, Oakridge Veterinary Clinic, Los Gatos Dog and Cat Hospital, San Jose Animal Care Center, North Peninsula Veterinary Emergency Clinic, Alpine Animal Hospital, Silicon Valley Veterinary Specialists, Veterinary Vision, Animal Cove Pet Hospital, Humane Society Silicon Valley, Adobe Animal Hospital, Banfield Pet Hospital, Pinnacle Animal Hospital, PMI, VCA Hospitals, Sage Centers, Aragen BioScience, - Peninsula Veterinary Hospital and Pet Emergency Specilaty Center of Marin. Each group came with goodies, flyers and even games to help entice students to join them in their field of work. Each table was more enthusiastic than the last, talking about what their clinics/businesses had to offer to young minds working towards their futures.

Many people wander through their lives with no real direction, and no real help to figure out their path. But within this program, surrounded by professors and students that will stop at nothing to support each other and host events like this is a major factor in what motivates our students to strive for what they really want to do with their lives. Even people who weren't part of the vet tech program stopped by to partake in this event, gaining some newfound knowledge, and hopefully even inspiring them to try their hand in the veterinary field. Thanks to everyone's passion and effort, our freshmen students got a wonderful taste of the happiness the veterinary world can bring to them, as well as the knowledge that can easily expand their horizons beyond a small general practice (even though those are just as amazing!).

A special shout out also goes out to the senior students. Each one was incredibly proud and excited to pull around the freshmen students, introducing them to clinics they work at, like

or have attended for their own needs. They helped to motivate the freshmen and guide them along each station, hoping to get each student interested in each different clinic. By speaking to each person, they tried to figure out what they wanted, and then placed them in the right direction.

A Special “Thank You” To Nancy!

Nancy and her husband have also greatly contributed to the Foothill Vet Tech program! Since they both worked deeply within the dental aspect of the veterinary field, they have donated towards, taught and almost perfected the dental class!



Inspiring Techs Everywhere: An Interview with Nancy Ehrlich

By: Dani Fernandes

Nancy Ehrlich is an amazing woman on an amazing journey to help vet techs not only better themselves but be understood properly by the general public. She began in the early 1970s, after moving from New York to the Bay Area, after meeting a beautiful veterinarian from the Berkley Humane Society that happened to be a woman. At the time, she was a secretary at a Donut Factory, but after meeting her, she decided the animal path was the right path for her. She began taking many science classes to gain the experience necessary to following the veterinary path. She also began volunteering in Albany at an animal hospital on Sundays with a veterinarian. They ended up working alone much of the time, getting to know each other and spend lots of time together. That veterinarian ended up becoming her husband. With his love and support and her endless determination, she applied to vet school. Sadly, because the times were so different back then, only ten women were allowed at a time to enter vet school. The competition was too great, and she didn't make it when she applied. In 1974, the CVMA passed a bill creating the new position of a Registered Veterinary Technician. With this bill, it created the proper title for

Joanna's Joke Corner

What is a cat's favorite movie?

The Sounds of Mew-sic

What has four legs, a trunk, and sunglasses?

A Mouse of Vacation

What do Whales Eat?

Fish & Ships!

What is the difference between an elephant and a Zippo?

The Zippo is a little lighter!

What do you Call an Alligator in a Vest?

An In-vest-igator

the people within the technician category. Nancy waited until the second exam; since the first took place in L.A., and the second took place in the Bay Area. She passed in February 1976. With her new licensure, Nancy and her husband built their own veterinary practice.

Her husband greatly enjoyed the dental aspect of veterinary medicine, while she loved the laboratory aspect of it. Their hospital had an amazing dental suit, and a very sophisticated lab for Nancy to work in. She loved her new home, a place where she could work independently rather than having to be an assistant. Also, together with some coworkers, she started the Alameda Vet Tech Association, which later became the Bay Area Vet Tech Association. This began her travel into the political world of the veterinary field. She became a board member, and after later leaving the board, continued to attend meetings and has been for more than 40 years. There, using her voice, she has been able to help shape what we now know and understand as veterinary technicians. She loves to mentor and help people and being involved on the medical board and with politics, she's been able to do just that. Such as with the newest push within veterinary medicine; changing the title veterinary technician, to veterinary nurse. Even though at first, she didn't quiet agree with the title, she found herself using the title nurse more often then not. The title doesn't fully do justice to the position we fill, but it is pretty close, and we deserve to have a title the public can easily appreciate and understand. Along with events and decisions like this one, she is pushing to create a better word for veterinary technicians and veterinary medicine in general.

Nancy's biggest recommendation to vet techs, and people in the process of becoming one is to get involved in politics. By attending meetings, creating activist groups and getting diving into the political world of veterinary medicine, we help create a louder voice for the people to hear. Since the veterinary field is fast growing and always changing, having people stand up for what they believe in and want to change will create a whole new aspect within the veterinary field. So many people stay quiet and hide in the background, but that won't help change the world we live in now. She suggests finding a place where you are happy, a clinic you know you will thrive in. Be the best tech you can be! Use your skills, special or general, and grow with them. Take those skills with you to the meetings the medical board holds and show them what makes vet techs so great. Show them why there need to be changes made, and how to better shape the world of veterinary medicine. Even though it seems Nancy had a golden

Fieldtrip Fun!



Six Flags Discovery Kingdom



*Palo Alto Junior
Museum and Zoo*



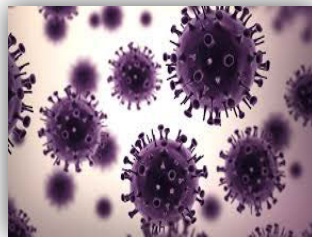
*Cal Academy
Of Science*

situation, with a husband that created the perfect environment to hone her skills, she still faced many obstacles and obstructions that caused major bumps in the road. Everyone must start somewhere, and the best place to begin is in a clinic that makes you happy, surrounded by a network of people who will support you through any event that may come across. Don't let anything or anyone hold you back and follow your dreams to not only become an amazing person, but a super vet tech, and someone who can change the world with just their voice. Your opinion matters, stand up and fight for what you believe in! And who knows, maybe the next article will be written about you and your achievements!

The Battle Against Canine Influenza

By: Katie Murphy (2017 Foothill Graduate)

The past few months have been tough for veterinary professionals, as dogs around the Bay Area have been catching the flu. The highly contagious canine influenza virus can cause coughing, sneezing, nasal and/or ocular discharge, fever, loss of appetite, and lethargy. Though these symptoms can indicate that a dog is infected with the influenza virus, a lack of symptoms does not guarantee that a dog has gone unscathed by this disease, since clinical signs don't appear until 2-8 days after exposure. Infected dogs may be shedding the virus before they show any



symptoms, and some infected dogs never show any symptoms but still shed the virus. The virus is transmitted through direct contact between dogs, through aerosols released when dogs cough, bark, or sneeze their contaminated respiratory secretions into the air, through the sharing of items such as leashes or water bowls, and through contact between dogs and humans (i.e. when humans come into contact with infected dogs and then spread the disease by interacting with uninfected dogs). Areas where dogs are kept in close quarters with one another represent a higher risk for the spread of infection, places such as grooming facilities, shelters, and boarding facilities.

Shelters in the Bay Area have been hit hard by the recent influenza outbreak. At the San Jose Animal Care Center, a cough spread like wildfire among the resident canines, prompting the

Animal Fun Facts

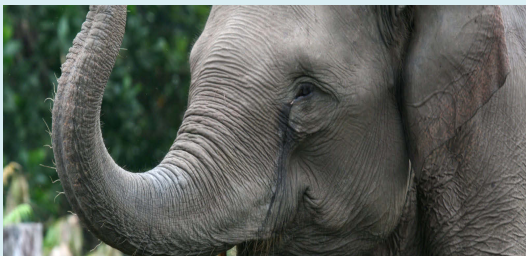
A Tasmanian Devil can open its jaws 80 degrees and has a bite force 3.6 times its body weight!



Every kick of the Red Kangaroo has a force of 759 lbs!



There are 150,00 muscle units in an Asian elephant's trunk. Its nose has the strength and flexibility to store and spray a gallon of water—or uproot a tree.



It takes 15 milliseconds for an African secretary bird to give a deadly kick, which helps these predators control reptile populations.



medical staff to implement new protocols to contain the virus and prevent any further spread of the infection. Rooms have now been broken into the following categories: clean-break rooms, where uninfected dogs are kept; quarantine rooms, where dogs who are possibly infected are kept; and isolation rooms, where the dogs showing symptoms consistent with canine influenza are kept. In all of the rooms, employees are required to change gloves after each interaction with a new dog, and they are also required to wear gowns and shoe covers in the quarantine and isolation rooms. Maddie's Fund was generous enough to sponsor testing of all the dogs in the shelter for the influenza virus. The medical staff and some wonderful volunteers took on the daunting task of collecting samples each week from all the dogs until the PCR tests came back negative twice for each dog. Thanks to the efforts of everyone involved, the number of coughing dogs in the shelter has been drastically reduced, and presently all the rooms in the shelter are considered clean-break rooms except for one isolation room. Hopefully, the strategies implemented by shelter management to control the spread of the disease can be put to use by other facilities. And the results of the testing sponsored by Maddie's Fund may help shape our understanding of this virus, so we can fight it more effectively in the future.



Green Sea Turtle *Fibropapillomatosis* in the Spotlight

By: Tessa Buchin, RVT

Tessa graduated in 2016, and is a writer and editor of online veterinary and animal health content. She is working on a campaign to draw attention to GTFP and coastal habitat conservation.



The green sea turtle species (*Chelonia mydas*) is symbolically sacred, and is often illustrated as a sentinel of the sea in storied origins of the Earth. Although the species has a lifespan of nearly a century, it is both threatened and/or endangered due to anthropogenic impacts. Beyond our understanding of measurable dangers, green sea turtle alphaherpesvirus-associated fibropapillomatosis (GTFP) is one of the largest threats to tropical and subtropical Atlantic and Pacific populations. The pathogenesis of the condition is poorly understood by scientists and veterinary professionals.

GTFP was first noted in 1938 in Key West, Florida, and mostly affects nearshore habitats and juvenile green turtles at a 92% affliction rate in some populations. The condition has turned up in Australia, Japan, Brazil, and is documented in the Caribbean, the Gulf, Texas, Hawaii, and Florida. The prevalence of GTFP is low in pelagic turtles, which suggests that invasive microalgae, poor habitat quality, and eutrophication may be multifactorial drivers. Similarly, ectotherm immune function is strongly influenced by temperature, so warming ocean and coastal waters are plausibly impacting green turtle immunity; some researchers hypothesize that parasites serve as mechanical vectors of the virus.



Afflicted turtles present with benign hyperplasia around the armpits, genitals, neck, eyes, and tails, and tumors which impede the heart, lungs, and kidneys. These growths affect the species' ability to survive by impairing sight, compromising

foraging abilities, impairing mobility, and triggering internal organ failure, leading to high mortality rates, secondary parasitic infections, malnutrition, eventual starvation, and chronic anemia.

Diagnosis of affected internal organs is done using radiography, CT imaging, and laparoscopy. Current treatment methods include traditional surgery (scalpel), electrocautery, cryosurgery, and the use of CO2 lasers. A fairly new experimental treatment, electrochemotherapy, incorporates drugs and short, high-voltage electrical pulses to drive non-permeant chemotherapy agents into cancer cells.

So what can we do? Managing and evaluating our carbon footprint is a good place to start. As for veterinary professionals, we should direct our attention towards supporting research and rehabilitation efforts in the field.

Tessa Buchin, RVT, attended a seminar by Dr. Doug Mader on GTFP at the 2015 Western Veterinary Conference while studying in Foothill's veterinary technology program. Looking for ways to get involved? Contact CarapaceAlliance@gmail.com.

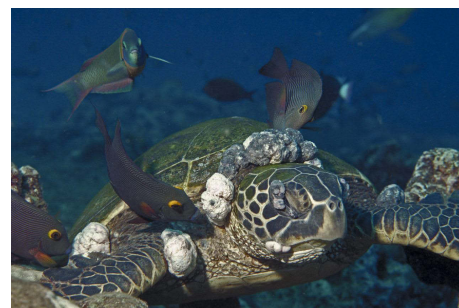


Photo Credit: Peter Bennett & Ursula Keuper-Bennett

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Newsletter Editing/Design: Hannah Greenspan, Dani Fernandes and Richard Nguyen