

July 2009



OAKVIEW VETERINARY MEDICAL CENTER

Oakview Update

Indoor Cat Exposed to Rabies

Recently, one of Oakview's own staff members had an eye-opening experience concerning rabies exposure.

Her indoor cat, Dusty, pranced around the house showing off his new catch, a live bat!

How did a bat get inside the house? Most people don't imagine that rabies exposure could be a personal threat, especially if their pet is strictly an indoor cat. What possible exposure could they have to wildlife, so why vaccinate against rabies?

To our staff member's credit, she retrieved the invader, using protection, and quickly brought the bat to our clinic so we could send it to the Wisconsin state diagnostic lab in Madison for testing.

In less than 48 hours we received the shocking results. The bat tested positive for rabies, and our **staff member's** cat had been playing with it! Because it was impossible to know whether the cat had been bitten or

scratched, we treated as though it was. Fortunately, our staff member keeps all of her pets, whether indoor or outdoor, current on their rabies vaccinations. The entire household (human and animal) was kept under observation for 60 days.

This story has a happy ending, but is important to share. Rabies is a valid concern in our animal population. It is a preventable viral disease that affects the central nervous system and is usually fatal once symptoms develop. Rabies is transmitted by bites, scratches or mucosal contact with an infected animal's saliva. It is a deadly zoonotic disease (a disease that is transmissible from animal to people). Be on the alert for unusual behavior in wildlife such as bats, skunks, foxes, **and** raccoons; livestock (including horses) **and of course** cats and dogs.

Please contact your veterinarian if you have questions about pet exposure to potentially rabid wildlife and what course of action to take. This is a good reminder to check your pet's rabies vaccine status.

What steps should I take if a potential exposure has occurred?

- Contact your veterinarian if your pet was exposed.
- Notify your physician promptly if a bite occurred to a person from pet or wildlife.
- Contact your local health department if a person has been exposed to a bat.
- Do not release or destroy a biting animal until a public health official or animal control officer is consulted.

For more information on Rabies and Bats exposure guidelines please visit the following websites:
www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies
www.cdc.gov/rabies/bats.html

Did you know?

Oakview Veterinary Medical Center is pleased to offer **Pet Portals**—private, secure pet health websites available through our website. We provide **Pet Portals** as a free service to our valued clients. Here are some of the features included with the **Pet Portal** service that allow you to manage your pets' health **24/7**. You can:

- View your pet's health information
- Request appointments & prescription refills
- Update your contact information
- Create & print instructions for pet sitters or kennel staff
- Post favorite photos of your pet
- Print out proof of vaccination for boarding or travel
- Set up personal reminders for medications such as heartworm or flea & tick products
- Ask questions via **Pet Mail**. Our staff monitors **Pet Mail** every business day and will respond to your questions quickly

... and find many other valuable resources.

Don't have a Pet Portal yet?

Sign up today—it's free! Just request a **Pet Portal** at our website, www.oakviewvet.net. You can use your **Pet Portal** to conveniently manage your pet's health online at any time day or night!

Getting to know Angel Heimstead, CVT ...

We are pleased to announce the promotion of Angel as our new Lead Technician.

Angel attended the Madison Area Technical College and graduated in 2004. She received her CVT certification in 2005.

A member of the Oakview team for 3 years, she previously worked at a veterinary clinic in Milwaukee that specialized in holistic and alternative medicine. Angel also spent two years working at a fishing resort in Alaska.

Angel shares her life with her boyfriend, Kris; Sugar, a 6 year old cat; Bandit, a loveable 3 year old Blue Heeler with 3 legs; and Bud, the 13 year old Dalmatian.

Angel has a special interest in holistic medicine and nutrition. She also loves spending time with her animals, traveling, gardening and spending time with her sisters.

Committed to continuing education, Angel recently attended the 2009 Western Veterinary Conference and took classes in nutrition, anesthesia, and dermatology.

