



KALAMAZOO ANIMAL RESCUE

Phone: (269) 226-8570

KAR Friends

May 2014

In This Issue

[Pet Wellness ~ 10 Tips](#)

[Ask the Vet ~ Home Remedies for Pets](#)

[Doggie Den ~ ACL Injury or Disease](#)

[Cat's Corner ~ Claws of Trouble](#)

[Special Thanks](#)

Dear Reader,

Providing for the well-being of our beloved pets is important to animal lovers like us. In the spirit of taking the best possible care of cats and dogs, this issue is devoted to **Pet Wellness**. We start off with 10 tips for keeping your furry friends healthy and in tip-top shape.

Also this month, KAR addresses the touchy topic of home remedies in our Ask the Vet column, the controversial subject of declawing cats, and the common predicament afflicting our doggy pals, ACL injuries.

There is something for everyone! If a particular topic peaks your interest, please feel free to share this issue with friends and family.

Danielle Wallis
KAR President

P.S. KAR's [Special Spring Edition](#) newsletter is here! Read about our memorial and honorary gifts program, rescue news, happy tails, pet safety tips for summer and more.

Pet Wellness

10 Tips to Keep Your Pet in Tip-Top Shape

By Lynn Bolhuis

Giving affection to a dog or cat and loving them is easy. Providing the well-rounded care they need to ensure a long and healthy life can be a bit more challenging. Here are some tips for keeping your furry friends in the best shape—inside and out, and nose to happy tail.

1. **Annual Wellness Exam** – pets should see a veterinarian at least once a year for a physical exam. Senior cats and dogs many may need more frequent visits to check on their overall well-being and health.



KAR

Newsletter
Archives

[View Past Issues Here](#)

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue • P.O. Box 3295 • Kalamazoo, Michigan 49003

Phone: 269.226.8570 • www.kalamazooanimalrescue.org

Our Sponsors

(click on the ads to visit their websites)



Camp Ravenwood Kennels
Boarding for Dogs, Cats and most other small animals
(269) 375-9606
www.CampRavenwood.com



Timberwood Crossing APARTMENTS
A pet friendly community located in the heart of Portage with uniquely spacious floor plans
6285 Ivywood Dr. Ph: 269.323.1706
Portage, MI 49024 Fax: 269.323.9930



REO Specialists llc
FREE list of foreclosures at www.REOmamma.com
Richard Stewart ePRO
914 S Burdick St
Kalamazoo MI 49001
Direct: (269) 345-7000
Fax: (269) 585-5922
Richard@2693457000.com

2. **Immunizations** – animals need vaccinations to ensure protection against diseases such as rabies, distemper, parvovirus, feline immunodeficiency virus and feline leukemia. Other risks may exist based on where you live and where your pet roams so consult with your vet to determine the best vaccination regime.
3. **Lumps and Bumps** – when brushing or petting your cat or dog check for [lumps and bumps](#). Some cancers start this way so monitor any growths you find and have them checked by your vet.
4. **Dental Care** – If left unchecked, dental disease can lead to other health issues. Your pet's teeth and oral health should be checked annually; and it's worth taking steps to prevent tartar build up and gingivitis by brushing their teeth frequently.
5. **Diet and Nutrition** – your dog or cat's wellness is impacted by the food, treats and supplements they eat; and not all pet food is created equal. [Read food labels](#) to avoid fillers, preservatives and artificial ingredients when possible.
6. **Weight Management** – according to the [Association for Pet Obesity Prevention](#), 57.6% of adult dogs and 52.6% of cats are overweight or obese. Excess weight can decrease a pet's life expectancy and put them at risk for high blood pressure, heart and respiratory disease, cancer and other problems. Work with your veterinarian on preventative measures or to help your pet lose excess weight.
7. **Spay/Neuter** – having your cat or dog surgically altered can lower their risk of reproductive cancers and illnesses. Sterilization also helps to reduce pet overpopulation and the number of animals euthanized in shelters.
8. **Daily Exercise** – is good for your furry pals to keep them both mentally and physically fit. Regular activity helps to maintain a healthy weight as well as to burn off excess weight and improve your dog or cat's quality of life.
9. **Parasite Protection** – animals need protection from external parasites like fleas and ticks as well as from internal parasites like heartworms and giardia. Check with your vet about treatment and prevention measures that will work best for you and your furry friend.
10. **Emergency Preparedness** – it's best to prepare for an emergency or unforeseen event like a natural disaster *before* it happens. Make a [pet first aid kit](#) and learn pet CPR. Put an emergency plan together and update that microchip contact information!

Additional Resources:

- [Pet care and grooming](#)
- [Selecting pet food](#)
- [Ideal pet weight ranges](#)

Ask the Vet

Home Remedies for Pets

By Karren Jensen
Reviewed by Bruce Withers, DVM
[Eighth Street Veterinary Clinic](#)

Have you ever thought about trying a home remedy for a pet's health problem? Perhaps you felt that conventional medicine had failed you and your pet or you might have felt that you could save



Pets of the Month



[Dex](#)



[Garfield](#)

some money by trying a home remedy. Before you decide to use any home remedy for any pet health problem, please consider these questions.

Question 1: Is it safe? There are nearly inexhaustible resources on the internet suggesting all sorts of home remedies for every kind of pet disease but how reliable is this information? Since the internet is not policed or reviewed, anybody can publish nearly any kind of information without the need for proof that the information can be used safely. If you choose to use such treatments, do careful research and make sure that the information is reliable. If you are not comfortable with traditional veterinary medical treatments for your canine or feline friend, seek out a medical professional whose practice is centered on alternative treatments or holistic medicine. Before turning to any non-traditional treatment or practitioner, you should ensure the safety of your pet by making sure the person providing medical care or advice is fully licensed and qualified.

Question 2: Does it work? Nearly everybody has a story about some home remedy for a pet ailment that “works better than anything your doctor recommends.” While some home remedies are harmless, some can be deadly. Never give your pet any medications you may have access to through your own prescriptions or those of a family member. While some home remedies might be somewhat effective, your best resource for up to date and accurate health information is your veterinary clinic.

Many of the comments made at online pet home remedy sites express concern for saving money by using home remedies to keep pets healthy. Remember that your veterinarian and the office staff at your pet’s clinic are all pet lovers themselves and they will work very hard to provide the best healthcare for your pet within your budget. Don’t take needless chances with your pet’s life by using unverified advice. Your best friend deserves the best care so that you can enjoy many years together.

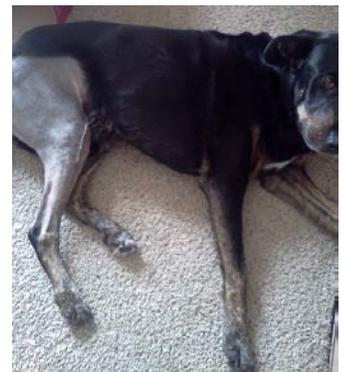
Doggie Den

Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Injury or Disease: A Multi-Billion Dollar Industry

By Danielle Wallis

This is a topic I feel compelled to talk about as so many pet parents seem to be facing this predicament, and I was one of them.

My dog, Josh, was running in the yard a couple of summers ago when he suddenly yelped in pain and lay down on the grass. I instantly knew something was wrong when he tried to stand and could not put weight on one of his rear legs. Our veterinarian examined him and said that he had a partial ACL tear. With lots of rest and short leash walks, Josh might heal on his own. If he did not recover then surgery would be needed.



Josh after his recent ACL surgery. He was adopted from KAR six years ago.

Josh ended up needing ACL surgery three months later. At the time, we were told that his other knee was 50% more likely to tear as well. Two years later that’s exactly what happened. According to veterinarians, the second injury is the more common in canines. Coincidentally, it happens the same way with humans.

Why do so many dogs injure their ACL?

Connect With KAR



[Find us on Facebook](#)

KAR Links

- [Volunteer](#)
- [Become a Foster Family](#)
- [Adoptable Dogs](#)
- [Adoptable Cats](#)
- [Adoptable Kittens](#)
- [Special Needs Pets](#)
- [Senior Cat Companions](#)
- [KAR Website](#)



[Donate Today!](#)

Adoption Events



May 24th and 31st
June 7th



June 14th

Visit the [Events](#) page on our website for upcoming adoption and other special events.

There is no exact reason why this orthopedic injury occurs so frequently in dogs. One theory is “chronic biomechanical stress.” The biomechanics in dogs are different than in humans. A dog’s weight bears down in a backward motion at the joint causing a downward, backward sliding stress. The knee joint is under continual stress, typically resulting in a gradual, little-by-little wear and tear.

Once the ACL starts to tear they rarely heal by themselves and, if not treated, will be debilitating for your pet. Some canines will have intermittent, slowly, progressing lameness but it varies between dogs and environmental factors. Clinical signs include observing the dog in a “sit” position. If Fido is unable to sit straight down, this is a sign. Dogs will put an injured leg out to one side due to pain or discomfort.

What dogs are at risk?

Some breeds are more prone to ACL injuries including Labradors, Poodles, Golden Retrievers, German Shepherds and Rottweilers. Other factors that come into play are particularly active and athletic dogs who put repetitive strain on their ligaments; canines with structural abnormalities during the formation of the bones, thereby creating unnatural stresses on the ligaments; and obese dogs (another reason to keep Fido fit and trim).

How will I know if my dog has injured his ACL?

There are different types of injury, either a partial rupture or a complete tear. Typically partial ruptures will get worse with time but can take weeks or even months to fully tear. The dog will become lame and there will be noticeable muscle wastage. A complete tear is usually a sudden or acute injury to the knee, a specific event such as jumping or twisting the leg unnaturally, creating injury and forcing the dog to hold the leg up off the ground, becoming non-weight-bearing and there will be fluid build-up around the joint.

What treatment does the dog need?

Vets will palpate the knee to see if there is a thickening on the joint (fluid build-up or changes to the structure). They will also check for instability by moving knee back and forth or side to side, called a cranial draw. X-rays can show fluid on the joint or bone spurs caused by the unnatural movement taking place.

Surgery is the only treatment and there are three different procedures that vary in cost as well as success. The important thing to remember is finding a doctor who has experience with ACL surgery and is willing to discuss all the options. ACL surgeries have become a multi-billion dollar a year industry!

1. The replacement ‘tightrope technique’– a lacing through the bones using a strong man-made material and stainless steel buttons connecting to the bones. There are pros and cons to this technique. It is less expensive but the outcome is often less successful. The lacing and buttons can loosen over time.
2. Tibial Tuberosity Advancement – the TTA procedure involves cutting the tibia so it can heal at a different angle, thus lessening the stress on the knee joint.
3. Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomies – TPLO is becoming the preferred surgical procedure among veterinarians. This ACL surgery changes the biomechanics of the joint by cutting the tibia and then using plates and screws to hold it in place. Arguably it has a higher success rate but is more expensive and more of a specialized procedure.



Dr. Bauer, [Colorado Canine Orthopedics](#)

Welcome New Volunteers

- Jessica Cooper
- Andrew Domino
- Holly O'Brien
- Ann Rosenbaum
- Susie Trillet

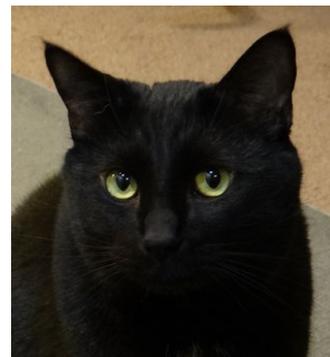
After surgery, Fido will need time to rest and recover. Some dogs may benefit with physical therapy which should also be discussed with your veterinarian.

Cat's Corner

Claws of Trouble

By Karren Jensen

One of the most controversial subjects ever to challenge cat lovers is the practice of declawing cats and kittens. Although this surgery has become commonplace and widely accepted in the US in recent years, it is considered inhumane and is often illegal in much of the rest of the developed world. Why are a cat's claws such a source of concern for owners and what alternatives to declawing are available? Here are a few ideas for your consideration.



[Owen](#) is a front-declawed male cat available for adoption from KAR.

- What do you think of first when considering whether a cat should be declawed or not? Is this your first line of defense against potential damage caused by a cat's claws or is it the last resort for a persistent problem, after trying many other solutions? There is a common myth that cats are uncooperative and simply not trainable. In most cases, this is simply not true. Cats are very trainable and feel safe when they have routines to follow. Be gentle but persistent in keeping your cat from using off-limit items for scratching. There are many commercially available products to repel a cat from an item that should not be used as a scratching post. Just be sure to provide suitable alternatives when you set something off limits. Cats will naturally scratch so they need to be directed toward acceptable scratching posts or pads.
- Declawing is not a variety of nail spa treatment. Instead it is a surgical procedure which removes the claw and part of the toe, causing changes in the cat's foot action. Claw trimming or nail covers will also keep sharp claws away from furniture and other surfaces with no permanent damage to the cat's feet. It would be much kinder to your cat to try these other methods first if you're anxious to control the availability of their claws.
- Do your homework: look at the arguments and information surrounding declawing before making a decision. Don't just automatically declaw because it is something you're accustomed to. If you do choose to declaw, never let your cat outdoors. Even a front-paw-only declawed cat has fewer defenses and is vulnerable when allowed outside.

To declaw or not is a source of strong feelings and controversy throughout the community of cat lovers. For many, this becomes a strongly emotional topic and is often a source of misunderstanding. If you have concerns about your cat's claw usage, please consult your veterinary health care provider for suggestions about alternatives to declawing. This life changing decision has long-term consequences for your feline family member and should not be undertaken without thorough consideration. The following links will help get you started in finding information about this very difficult topic: [Cat's International](#) and [KAR's declaw statement](#).

Contact Us

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue
P.O. Box 3295
Kalamazoo, MI 49003
(269) 226-8570

Newsletter Team

- Lynn Bolhuis, Editor
- Kim Bourner
- Andrew Domino
- Katie Drenth
- Karren Jensen
- Danielle Wallis

[Email us](#) with any newsletter suggestions or questions!

Special Thanks

By Katie Drenth

A special thank you goes out to Kid's Sports USA/Branch Gymnastics for inviting KAR volunteers and foster animals to their Animal House Gymnastics Invitational in April.

A portion of every entrance fee was donated to Kalamazoo Animal Rescue and, with extra donations from the wonderful event attendees; we were able to raise almost \$1,370 to help our dogs and cats! Thank you so much for your support and showing our foster cats and dogs a great time.



Samantha, a third-grader at Parchment Northwood Elementary, planned and coordinated a fundraiser for Kalamazoo Animal Rescue. With the help of the student counsel and faculty, a letter was sent home with each child asking for contributions. Together they raised \$100 for our animals.

Danielle, KAR President, was able to meet Samantha and accept the donation in person at one of our adoption events and commented, "What a special young lady; a future animal rescuer in the making!"

About Us

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue is an all-volunteer, federally recognized 501(c)(3) charitable organization that was founded in 1991 and is funded entirely through donations from the public.

KAR is dedicated to providing refuge to homeless, stray and abandoned cats and dogs in Kalamazoo and the surrounding communities.

Our volunteers give their time and energy to the efforts of rescuing animals and helping them to find permanent, committed and life-long homes.

Visit our [website](#) for more KAR information!

