

The PAW Print

News for the families of our animal friends



Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Therapy

By Piper Hays, DVM



Dr. Hays provides VSMT to improve Wiley's mobility and reduce pain.

Veterinary Spinal Manipulative Therapy (VSMT) is a **non-surgical, drug-free** approach to improve **mobility, pain management, musculoskeletal injury, post-surgery recovery, anxiety** and many other chronic medical conditions. Additionally, it can be part of regular wellness care for pets. It is akin to chiropractic care for people.

All the nerves that come and go to the rest of the body have to enter the spinal cord, and must pass through a very small opening between each pair of vertebral bodies (the bones of the spine). Any little change

of position or any inflammation in this area can lead to discomfort, pain and/or a loss of normal function of these nerves. Symptoms can occur far removed from the spine itself, and can even be a problem with soft tissues, such as the urinary bladder.

During a VSMT treatment, the practitioner will examine each joint of the animal's spine to determine if there is normal motion and positioning. If a vertebral segment is found to be abnormal, a small thrust can be given. This thrust stimulates very specialized muscle tension receptors, called **golgi tendon organs (GTOs)**. **The GTOs, when stimulated, allow for muscle relaxation.** Once the muscles relax, the vertebral segment can return to a more normal position. All this can happen in an instant.

After an animal has VSMT, they should take it easy for the following 24-48 hours. This rest allows their nervous system to adjust to any changes that may have occurred. Some animals may have a softer stool for a day.

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Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease

By Shea Gatewood, DVM

Fun fact: did you know that cat urine will actually glow fluorescent under a black light? Talk about a kitty disco! Unfortunately, there are also a lot of "un-fun" facts about cats and their urinary tracts. Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD) is a painful disease that occurs in the urinary tract of cats that leads to inappropriate urination and, in extreme cases, death. **FLUTD affects both male and female cats, but it is more severe in males.**

The bladders of affected cats become very inflamed, leading to frequent, painful urination and, sometimes, urinary tract infections. Adding insult to injury, their urine can form microscopic "crystals" in the bladder. These crystals, in conjunction with bladder inflammation, cause bloody urine and bladder stones in some cases.

In male cats, as the disease progresses, a "plug" of mucus or crystals can become lodged in the urethra (narrow tube for passing urine in the penis), completely obstructing the ability to urinate. **If left unchecked, kidney failure and eventually death can follow.**

Not all male cats (and rarely female cats) will become obstructed. If a male cat becomes blocked, this is an emergency, and needs immediate medical attention. A urinary catheter will be inserted while under sedation to remove the obstruction and will remain there until the bladder begins to heal. Some



A perineal urethrostomy was performed to alleviate Ike's severe FLUTD, and he feels much better.

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On My Mind

At Eastside, we understand that our job is to care for pets...AND PEOPLE. While our primary role is to care for your pet family members who can't speak for themselves, we never want to neglect you, and that is why client service has been on my mind. We want your experience

with Eastside to be friendly, convenient, and timely. In order to enhance your experience here, we've made the following upgrades:

Our Website: www.EastsideAnimal.com

We redesigned our website with your time in mind. Our improved site offers the following services:

- Save time by filling out **lodging and grooming forms** at your convenience prior to your pet's arrival and check-in at Eastside.
- Make **appointments** and request **medication refills** online at anytime - 24/7.
- Access your pet's **health records** and **vaccination due dates** via your pet's PetPage - offered free to all Eastside clients with a valid e-mail address.
- Download the free **PetPage app** to communicate with us anytime.

Our Loyalty Reward Program: **Pet Care Tokens**

In April we will launch our new and improved **Loyalty Reward Program**, and you won't need to do a thing. Just like earning automatic rewards for using your credit card, now all Eastside clients can earn Pet Care Tokens for what you are already doing for your pet. When it's convenient for you, redeem your Pet Care Tokens for things you and your pet love at Eastside. So, if you are committed to providing your animal companions with the best possible care, have a pet with an on-going need, refer friends to us, or, if you use our boarding services, our Loyalty Reward Program will benefit you.

Our Payment Options: **expanded!**

We understand that making our pet's lives better comes with costs. To maximize your convenience and ensure your pets get the best care possible, Eastside has expanded our payment options. While we will always accept most major credit cards, we know that many hardworking people live on a budget, and now accept **CareCredit** (www.carecredit.com) and offer payment plans through **vetbilling.com** (www.vetbilling.com). For qualifying individuals, payment plans and veterinary-care financing allow access to the best care without creating an excessively burdensome financial strain.

We are honored that you have chosen us as your family veterinarian, and it is our goal to give you the best experience possible when you walk through our friendly doors!

With Kind Regards,

Dr. Laura Strong, DVM

Hospital Owner/Director Eastside Animal Hospital

Professional Spotlight

In each issue, we feature one of our 40 dedicated Eastside team members. This spring, we're throwing the spotlight on Inventory Manager Natalie Harryman:

Natalie Harryman serves the Eastside family as our **inventory manager** and she is a **veterinary technician**. She's worked with us since July of 2011, and exclaimed, "I love it here!" She began her career at EAH as a vet assistant while she earned her veterinary technician degree at Brown Mackie College. She's always had a passion for animals, and knew she wanted to work in the veterinary field from a young age. "I especially have a soft spot for senior pets and cats," she said, and remarked that one of the things she most appreciates about Eastside is our hospital's emphasis on being so feline friendly. "We do everything we can to make our feline friends feel welcome, and I love that," Natalie said. "Eastside has always been dedicated to providing the best care for all of our patients and I love being part of that."

After Natalie and her **husband Dustin** welcomed their **son Cade** into the family in July of 2016, Natalie requested to transition from being a full-time vet tech to working as our inventory manager, and we were happy to help her structure her time differently. In addition to their son, Natalie and Dustin said they also have two "fur" babies at home: **Eleanor**, their 12-year-old Beagle/Basset mix and **Bugsy**, their feline friend who is nearly 6-years-old.

At work, Natalie said the camaraderie among the doctors and support staff keeps her smiling, and she enjoys functioning as a cohesive team with everyone here. She said, "Eastside has become part of my extended family, and I wouldn't want to work anywhere else."



Natalie Harryman, with her husband Dustin, son Cade, and fur babies Eleanor and Bugsy the cat

"Veterinary Spinal" cont. from page 1

Conditions that can benefit from VSMT:

- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Neurologic injuries
- Intervertebral Disc Disease
- Degenerative Joint Disease
- Inflammatory Bowel Disease
- Feline Lower UTD
- Incontinence (fecal /urinary)
- Lick Granulomas
- Generalized Anxiety
- Performance animals

The frequency of VSMT depends on the problem being managed. For healthy, athletic animals, once every 3-4 months is fine. Alternatively, to help manage an injury or chronic disease, treatments may need to occur every week, and then slowly decrease frequency as a response is seen. **Each animal is evaluated individually.**

VSMT is part of an integrative health care plan, and can be used in conjunction with other, more "traditional" care - or, in some cases, as an alternative to pharmaceuticals. This is especially helpful if an animal cannot take some medications due to side effects. It is very exciting to have one more thing we can do to improve our pets' lives.

"Feline Lower Urinary" cont. from page 1

cats will have multiple instances of becoming blocked. For severe cases (like poor Ike, in the photo), we can alleviate the blockage by surgically removing the penis through a procedure called a perineal urethrostomy.

Clinical signs that your cat may be experiencing FLUTD:

- crying out when urinating
- urinating outside of the litter box (*which the black light can help you find*)
- small, frequent bouts of urine or blood in the urine
- constant straining to urinate without producing urine

Treatment Goals:

- pain relief
- control of bladder and urethral inflammation
- treating underlying infection
- obstruction relief, if needed

Although the exact cause of FLUTD is unknown, it is speculated that there is a correlation between stress in the cat's brain and inflammation in the bladder. Despite their nonchalant attitude, **cats are affected by a wide array of stressors and can be quite skilled at hiding it.** Some common things that may get your cat in a tizzy include **inter-cat aggression, territory changes, litter box anxiety**, or any **changes** to their **human family**.

Long-term medical management for FLUTD is necessary since this is a lifetime struggle for many affected cats. Treatments may include a specialized prescription diet, increasing water intake, decreasing stress in the home, natural anti-inflammatories, and therapy laser.

Insight from a first time kitty owner

By Adriane O'Neal

Kitty
Corner

I was all set for my new kitten: I had my carrier, food bowls, litter and toys. However, what was lacking couldn't be bought; it needed to be learned. Just like humans, cats have likes, dislikes and preferences - for just about everything. Granted, I work at Eastside, and have learned a lot through our cat-friendly practice and from focused observation, but I wanted to know what made Evie unique. I learned that her ear postures, tail positions and body language will typically tell me what she's thinking and feeling. Cats tend to cling to the familiar and dislike the unfamiliar. However, there are specific ways to make life more comfortable and less fearful for them. Since they thrive on the familiar, getting them in for **regular check-ups** is very important. To make the trip less stressful, **keep the carrier out** in your home, so your kitty becomes comfortable with its existence, and please bring him or her to **Eastside, a cat-friendly practice!** After arriving, you and your kitty will be immediately placed in a "cat" room, so you won't be in the lobby with dogs that bark, and your kitty will be blanketed in a **Feliway towel** that calms felines through a natural pheromone aroma. Education, observation and great vet care are the keys to create and strengthen the bond between you and your kitty - for life.



Adriane with her kitty, Evie

Eastside offers full service Boarding, Exercise, Training & Grooming

For additional details and pricing information, please visit our website at www.eastsideanimal.com.

- Grooming
- Small dog hotel
- Standard dog accommodations
- Deluxe dog accommodations
- Kitty Condo
- Kitty Penthouse
- Strolls
- Playtime
- Manners Matter Fitness Package



Veterinary & Medical Services

- Wellness Services
- Internal Medicine
- Surgical Services
- Dental Services



AAHA accreditation - Eastside Animal Hospital is accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (since 1988). AAHA accreditation means that we voluntarily adhere to more rigorous standards, set by a board of peers, and are reviewed on a regular basis. Eastside is one of only three practices in all of metro Louisville and the only one in southern Indiana accredited by AAHA.

What's everyone BARKING about at Eastside?



Flea and Tick Season – The season is here...or did it ever leave? Fleas have been around for 60 million years and ticks for 15 million years! These parasites have utilized their long-standing time on earth to figure out how to survive. Fleas live year-round unless we have about a week straight of below freezing temperatures, and ticks seem to just go into hibernation for a short while. Year-round prevention is imperative!

To kill fleas and ticks on our canine companions, we recommend:

- **Bravecto** - an oral chew given every 3 months
- **Simplicia or NexGard** - an oral chew given 1x monthly
- **Seresto** - a collar worn for 8 months

For our feline friends, we recommend:

- **Revolution** - a low-volume topical solution to prevent fleas, heartworms, intestinal parasites and ear mites
- **Seresto** - a collar worn for 8 months to kill fleas and ticks



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Creature Feature



Scrapy

Scrapy, a.k.a. "Little Buddy," is a small, 12-year-old mixed breed that is one-of-a-kind. For the past 10 years, he has been the leader of the pack at the home of Nathan Eberle (his human), with cats Monster and Boo Boo, and Daphne, a Golden Retriever. Scrapy may be little, but proves on a daily basis that he can overcome just about anything. After being diagnosed with diabetes several years ago, the Eberle family went from visiting Eastside for annual and semi-annual wellness visits, to practically feeling like Eastside is their second home. With the management of

Scrapy's diabetes mellitus and, recently, going through extensive oral surgery, Scrapy's daily routine includes insulin injections, special food and numerous eye drops. None of this gets Scrapy down. Despite being blind, Scrapy continues to chase Monster around the house to ensure all there know who's boss. Scrapy, although sightless, also loves playing fetch.

It's understandable that Scrapy needs frequent veterinary visits to maintain his care, and even though he needs regular injections, the Eberles delight in how comfortable Scrapy is in the care of



Monster



Daphne



Boo Boo

Eastside team members. With Scrapy's on-going medical needs, questions from the family commonly arise. "There is so much comfort in knowing that our calls to Eastside will be answered the same day," Nathan said. "I can't even get that from my primary physician." The Eastside team has grown to love Scrapy, and will always welcome all pets who have special needs and require extra care.



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