

## **Family Vet Visit, Urgent Care, or Emergency Room – Do you know how to decide what is best for your pets?**

We love our pets just like family and when they become ill, it can be difficult to know how to best care for them. Unlike our human family members, pets can't tell us what hurts or why they are sluggish, so we rely on the expert care of a veterinarian. A licensed vet can assess and diagnose your pet and work on a plan to get them back to running around the house and chasing their tail. Depending on the severity of your pet's health issue, there are several levels of care that are available for your pet.

### **Levels of veterinary care**

Similar to the primary care model for human health care, routine care such as wellness checkups, vaccinations and tests are provided by your local veterinarian. Finding a doctor who sees your pet regularly creates continuous care, a familiarity with your pet's medical history and reduces the anxiety that your pet may experience with different faces and places. In addition to routine care, your local veterinarian may provide inpatient care and scheduled surgical services. Your veterinarian is also the best source of preventative care, providing prescriptions for heartworm, flea & tick and other preventative medicines. Your pet's annual visit is a perfect opportunity to ask questions, describe any odd behaviors your pet may be showing and to learn how to care for your pet as they age.

There are also emergency situations where your pet needs to be seen quickly. There are numerous 24/7 emergency veterinary clinics that care for these types of health issues that occur after hours or that are very serious and require immediate care. You will want to use emergency veterinary care for any life-threatening incidents such as choking, blunt force trauma, unexplained seizures, or difficulty breathing. These symptoms often mean that your pet is experiencing something serious and emergency medical care may be needed.

In the human health care model, the middle ground between routine and emergency care is urgent care, and now, the veterinary team at The Ohio State University Veterinary Medical Center in Dublin has adopted the human health care model to veterinary care by providing an urgent care service for pets. There are definite similarities between veterinary urgent care and human urgent care practices in that they both provide health services that complement the family veterinarian or family doctor's practice scope, respectively, typically during evening, weekend and holiday hours, and no appointment is necessary! The urgent care model provides after-hours, non-emergency/non-critical care for issues like infections, diarrhea or vomiting, loss of appetite, minor wounds and lacerations, limping, general discomfort and more.

### **Ohio State Veterinary Medicine**

As of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, the Ohio State's Veterinary Medical Center in Dublin has been offering after-hours pet urgent care for dogs and cats on evenings, weekends and holidays. Ohio State's veterinary urgent care was one of the first two to open in the Columbus market. Veterinary urgent care is a new concept in Central Ohio that helps fill the gap between routine veterinary care and true emergency care,

enabling your pet to receive the right level of care at the right time.

The Ohio State Veterinary Medical Center in Dublin is located at 5020 Bradenton Avenue, near the intersection of Frantz and Rings Rd. The urgent care service is open Monday – Friday from 4pm to 11pm\*; 11am to 11pm\* on Saturdays, Sundays and most major holidays. Walk-ins welcome! Call 614-889-8070 or visit <https://vmc.vet.osu.edu/services/companion-animal-urgent-care> for more information.

\*New hours as of April 1, 2024. Monday-Friday, 3pm-10pm; Sat/Sun:9 am-10pm, and most major holidays - 9am-10pm.