

Exams Stressed During Pet Wellness Month

Twice-a-year check-ups are recommended for cats.

On average, most cats reach adulthood by age 2, and by age 4, many are entering middle age. Because cats age seven times faster, on average, than people, significant health changes can occur in a short amount of time.

As a cat ages, the risk of acquiring serious conditions, such as cancer, diabetes, obesity, arthritis, heart disease and metabolic problems, increases. Many pet owners don't realize that taking a cat to the veterinarian once a year is the same as a person seeing their doctor or dentist once every seven years, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Each October the AVMA and Dodge Animal Health sponsor National Pet Wellness Month to spread the word about the importance of twice-annual check-ups for pets. National Pet Wellness month is dedicated to raising pet owners' awareness of the pet aging process, disease prevention and the importance of twice-a-year wellness exams for cats and dogs.

The AVMA and Dodge Animal Health recommend that pets have a wellness exam every six months so that veterinarians have the opportunity to detect, treat or, ideally, prevent problems before they become life-threatening.

Exams include screenings for a variety of potential diseases, individualized risk assessments of your pet's environment (such as where you live, emerging disease risks in your community, your pet's interaction with other pets and wildlife and travel plans) and other lifestyle considerations.

Pet wellness exams can help your veterinarian determine a proper prevention program, such as a vaccination schedule tailored specifically for your pet. By using personalized pet health protocols, veterinarians can pinpoint specific preventive health care needs for your pet.

Information about the pet aging process, disease prevention and twice-a-year wellness exams is available through the National Pet Wellness Month website, www.NPWM.com.