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Animal Crackers

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tissue, mammary glands, lymphoid organs, including the spleen, oral cavity, male genital system, respiratory system and bone. The incidence of cancer in the dog is not known—it could be more than 1,100 new cases per 100,000 dogs per year.

Inherited Skin Diseases were covered by Dr. Vick J. Schiedt. She described a hereditary blistering disorder (Epidermolysis Bullosa) reported in Collies and Shelties and Canine Color Mutant Alopeica, an abnormality primarily affecting the hair follicle in color mutants (blue, fawn) of certain breeds. She also discussed familial diseases: allergic inhalant dermatitis, hypothyroidism, seborrheic dermatitis and generalized demodecic mange.

Tapeworms are a common intestinal parasite of dogs and cats and can be difficult to control. Usually they are not harmful to the animal, but the segments are unsightly and owners become concerned. There are several species of tapeworms and all require an intermediate host. Diphyllobothrium dentatus is the common tapeworm and its life cycle requires the flea (or louse). The flea ingests eggs which have been passed in the tapeworm segments, the parasite develops in the flea and the dog swallows the flea. The worm matures in the dog's intestinal tract and its head becomes firmly imbedded in the lining of the intestine. The head produces segments which eventually are passed. These segments may be seen "crawling" over fresh fecal material and around the dog's tail. The segments soon dry up and look like grains of rice.

Treatment will be ineffective unless the head of the worm is destroyed. A new injectable drug (Prazine, Quantel) is giving good results. However, even if all the tapeworms are removed, re-infection is probable unless the intermediate host is eliminated. Flea control must be considered part of the treatment for Diphyllobothrium dentatus.

Tapeworms are another species of tapeworm found in the dog. It is found more commonly in country dogs which acquire the worms by eating infected rabbits, mice or other rodents which are the intermediate host.

There are a number of other tapeworms which may be found in the dog. A textbook on parasitology would be required to cover the subject. There have been many reports of "epidemics" of tapeworms which do not respond to treatment. It's surprising how many owners don't understand the problem. Worrying the dog is only part of the solution.

Identification. A photograph might help identify a dog if there are unusual markings, but describing a "lost" dog can be difficult especially when so many breeds appear identical—Black Cocker Spaniels for example. Tattooing is a way to be sure a dog can be correctly identified. Usually a number is placed on the hairless skin of the inner hind leg. It lasts a lifetime. Another advantage is positive identification of show dogs. It might be difficult to find where proper equipment is available but tattooing is being done and is a simple procedure.

Heartworm Prevention. Heartworm Disease occurs in almost every part of the United States. It is transmitted by mosquitoes and preventive medication may be recommended by your veterinarian. This is not a do-it-yourself situation. It is important that a blood test be done to determine whether or not infection exists. Preventive medication should be used only if tests are negative. The medication must be given daily. Your decision may be based on the mosquito population in your area, whether or not the dog is outside at night when mosquitoes are most active or even the cost of medication. Your veterinarian is the one to help with your decision.

Canine Epilepsy was discussed by Or. George C. Farnbach. He emphasized that 'seizures' and 'epileptics' are often used incorrectly. Many children have diseases almost identical to those seen in humans. Seizures occur in about 1 in 100 people. The incidence may be as high as 1 in 25 in certain groups. A normal intelligence quotient is available, but tattooing is being done and is a simple procedure.