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Animal Crackers

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Tri-Color Cats

Color in cats is a complicated subject. A calico is a white cat with patches of red and black. A tortoiseshell is black with patches of red and sometimes with white. Genetically, calicos are tortoiseshell with white. Nearly 99% of these cats are female. The gene producing this color is sex-linked. The males are generally sterile because of the genetic abnormality.

Calicos are popular, possibly because of a widespread superstition that they bring good luck. In English folklore, they are referred to as "Money Cats." The good luck cat of Japan, the maneki neko, is a calico. If a statue of this cat faces the front door, Japanese tradition says it will bring good fortune and money.

The standards of different cat breeds have descriptions of the many colors. Tabby is a color and the classic pattern include bracelets on the legs, necklaces and frown marks on the forehead forming the letter "M."

Color and markings are inherited features and can be an intriguing field to study.

Pancreatitis

Pancreatitis is inflammation of the pancreas — an organ which secretes digestive enzymes and insulin. The cause usually is unknown but contributing factors may include a high-fat diet, infection and some drugs.

The clinical signs are nonspecific and common to many other gastrointestinal disorders. Depression, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pain may occur. Leukocytosis (increased white blood cell count) is a frequent laboratory finding. There is no ideal test and diagnosis usually tentative. Middle to old-aged dogs are most often affected.

Treatment includes temporarily

withholding food to place the pancreas at physiologic rest. Fluid therapy is used to replace lost fluids and maintain the animal. Mild cases improve in one or two days; serious cases may require several days of hospitalization. Oral feeding may start after there has been no vomiting. The diet should be high in carbohydrates (rice, pasta, potatoes) and low in fat. Antibiotics may be indicated.

In some dogs, pancreatic insufficiency may develop. These dogs may lose weight in spite of excessive food consumption. Supplementing the diet with pancreatic enzymes usually helps these cases. Lifelong treatment is necessary.

Your veterinarian should be consulted about the treatment and management of gastrointestinal problems. Many different conditions have the same clinical signs but the treatments may differ. An important rule is that fluid replacement is indicated when there is severe diarrhea and vomiting. Don't delay seeking professional help.

Pure-Bred vs. Mixed Breed

Many factors are involved in selecting a dog as a companion. Whether or not a purebred is selected is not as important as knowing what to expect from a puppy.

The big advantage of a purebred is *predictability*. The characteristics of a registered breed have been established over many generations. Size at maturity, coat characteristics and temperament will help determine if the dog selected will fit your lifestyle. If a dog is obtained from a breeder, you should have an opportunity to see adults and learn what is required for proper care, such as grooming and exercise.

There are many good mixed-breed pets and some feel that adopting a dog from a shelter is one way to help with the

over-population problem. The blame should be placed on the irresponsible owners who do not provide proper care and training and allow unwanted pregnancies because their animals are not neutered. Unfortunately, many people decide they do not want a dog after all and abandon it. A dog should be a part of the family for at least 10 years.

If your interest is dog shows and possible breeding, you must start with a purebred. The American Kennel Club now has a Limited Registration Program for purebreds that may not meet the breed's standard in all respects. These dogs are considered unsuitable for breeding (any offspring could not be registered) and are not eligible for entry at championship conformation shows. To the untrained eye, they can look like show dogs and they are wonderful pets and companions.

Jack Russell Terriers

Jack Russell Terriers, called Parson Jack Russell Terriers in England, are a small breed, very much like a small, short-legged Fox Terrier. The breed is recognized by the Kennel Club (England) and the United Kennel Club (United States), but not by the American Kennel Club. The dog was reduced in size to develop a hunting terrier which would go to ground and bolt the fox. They are excellent family pets and readily adapt to house and apartment life.

The dogs are smooth, rough or broken-coated. All are predominantly white with tan, brown or black markings. The docked tail, about four inches long, provides a good hand-hold. They are active and alert with a happy, fearless disposition. Their height ranges from 10 to 15 inches and they weigh around 15 pounds.

There is a U. S. Registry for the breed,

but conformation showing is not encouraged — the parent club wants to focus on working qualities.

The breed takes its name from Parson John (Jack) Russell, born in England in 1795. He was one of the founders of England's Kennel Club in 1873 and judged Fox Terriers in 1874 at the first Kennel Club show in London. He did not exhibit his own dogs. It is said that he believed the true measure of any terrier was his degree of gameness and it annoyed him that many owners who showed their dogs considered them too valuable to engage in the task for which they were originally bred.

Microchips

The American Kennel Club has established the AKC Companion Animal Recovery Program with a 24-hour phone and fax line to unite lost pets with their owners. An essential part of this program is a central database that will record, for a fee of \$12.50, the permanent identification of a pet. Tattoos or microchips from any manufacturer are considered permanent identification; collars and tags are not. The registry is open to any pet, cat, dog, bird, as long as it has permanent identification.

Enrollment forms may be requested from AKC Companion Animal Recovery, 5580 Centerview Drive, Suite 250, Raleigh, NC 27606-3394.

A microchip is a tiny transponder with a unique number that is implanted by injection under the skin in the shoulder area of the animal. The chip is read with a scanner. Unfortunately, there is no scanner that reads all microchip brands, though scanners will indicate the presence of a chip, so a different scanner can be tried. The AKC and others are working toward a universal scanner.

Microchips are implanted by veterinarians. Your veterinarian may use the AKC-recommended chip or another one. No matter which one is used, to recover a lost pet, the permanent identification must be registered. At this point, it appears that the AKC Companion Animal Recovery Program is the only national registry for all types of permanent identification. The phone number to report a lost or found pet is 800-252-7894 and the fax number is 919-233-1290.

HUP and VHUP surgeons use new technique to help dog



● Oliver's lungs had a slow leak. A tiny hole in one of the lobes let air escape into his chest cavity, normally a vacuum, causing a spontaneous pneumothorax, a serious medical problem. Oliver couldn't breathe properly because the air in his chest prevented his lungs from expanding fully.

The 12-year-old Siberian husky was admitted to VHUP for treatment. Here he made veterinary surgical history by becoming the first clinical canine patient treated by thoracoscopy and thoracoscopic surgery. His owner offered VHUP surgeons the use of special instruments and Dr. Larry R. Kaiser, a thoracic surgeon at HUP who developed the instruments and the procedure, agreed to come to VHUP to help ● Oliver.

"Normally we would have opened his chest sternally," explained Dr. Joan Hendricks. "This is very painful and the recovery is lengthy. We also could have attempted to inject some irritants, hoping that scarring on the exterior of the lung lobe would close the leak. Both are pretty drastic steps. So a thoracoscopy looked very promising. We accepted the offer by Dr. Kaiser and the owner worked out the details for the joint effort

by VHUP and HUP surgeons to help the dog and spare him a painful, lengthy recovery."

Oliver's owner works for a medical instrument company where the Kaiser-Pitling™ No Cannula Thoracoscopy Instruments are manufactured. Invented by and named after Dr. Kaiser, these instruments permit a surgeon to perform procedures within the closed chest cavity. They are used in conjunction with a thoracoscope equipped with a light source and camera chip. The instruments are inserted into the chest through a relatively small incision.

"These instruments have a special configuration to allow their usage in the chest," said Dr. Hendricks. "They are longer and curved in a special way and include forceps, hemostats, spatulas, knives, suction tubes, and a stapling device as well as other items. It was incredible: we saw the interior of Oliver's chest, projected onto the TV screen and then watched as the lung lobe was gently manipulated by Dr. Kaiser. The hole was found and closed."

● Oliver was up and around shortly after he woke up from anesthesia and went home a few days later. "This procedure changed a major operation into a relatively minor procedure," said Dr. Hendricks. "This is so promising, particularly for older patients. It could replace the thoracotomy when we need to perform a chest exploratory. We are quite excited and are trying to figure out a way to acquire the thoracoscope and the instruments so we can use the technique here. We are lucky in that Dr. Kaiser and his colleagues are just down the street, so training our surgeons will not be a big problem as there is a great cooperation between the two hospitals and schools."

The technique has been used successfully in human patients in Europe for a number of years and Dr. Kaiser is a leading proponent of the procedure. It is less invasive and the recovery time is much shorter than for the traditional methods of open chest surgery.