



# AMSCOPE

Newsletter of the American Miniature Schnauzer Club

June 2022

Volume 42

Issue 6

## What's the Latest on Using CBD for Pet Anxiety and Pain?

By Dr. Ken Lambrecht, DVM

I am a veterinarian practicing in Madison, Wisconsin. For the record, I have never prescribed or used medical cannabis/hemp products on pets. I may not even be technically allowed to discuss medical hemp, which is legal in all 50 states, with pet parents for the pets in my care.

The Veterinary Examining Board of Wisconsin is preparing a statement as I write this to the effect of "there are **no legal** uses for cannabis and related products in veterinary medicine, in Wisconsin, by veterinarians or veterinary clinics."

However, when it comes to veterinary practitioners, it is important to be knowledgeable of the academic and veterinary attitudes as well as the laws in place when it comes to CBD oil.

Recently, within the veterinary community, there has been an increase in discussion into the issue of using CBD oil to treat pets. Studies have even been published on what CBD oil may have to offer the veterinary community.

### What Is CBD Oil, and Is It Legal?

Is medical hemp a product that is "related to cannabis"? It would seem to be.

Hemp is NOT cannabis, which is where much of the confusion lies. Hemp is a selectively bred variety of the cannabis

sativa plant that contains less than 0.3% THC (per dry weight). Cannabidiol (CBD) comes from both hemp as well as from cannabis that has a much higher THC content.

Hemp is federally legal in all states, while CBD is still a Schedule I drug under federal law, although it is legal in some states. Products with less than 0.3% THC (like CBD oil, tinctures, gel capsules and treats) are legal in all 50 states, and our clients are buying them. This puts veterinarians in a bit of a catch-22 to be informed on CBD, but unable to provide consultation to our clients on the issue due to legal restrictions of cannabis in general.

### The Veterinarian CBD Oil Conundrum

The AVMA explains, "To date, 29 states and the District of Columbia have legalized medical marijuana for people, yet veterinarians are prohibited from administering, prescribing, dispensing or recommending cannabis for their patients."

Despite these current restrictions, it is still important for veterinarians to be informed about the scientific developments of CBD oil and other cannabis derivatives. This is because, as veterinarians, we are the only ones who are sufficiently trained to recognize the value and benefits of these products and to evaluate the possible side effects. Most importantly, we are, by oath, obligated to help your pet, but above all, "do no harm."

Another reason why veterinarians should be informed is that regardless of the veterinary rules about CBD oil, pet parents are purchasing it in hopes of it offering health benefits for their pets.

To be clear: All that I am advocating at this juncture is education and becoming informed on the endocannabinoid system that all mammals possess, not the use of THC or CBD products, nor the prescribing of medical hemp (unless it is legal in your state).

The endocannabinoid system is a system of receptors that every organ has. These receptors affect a variety of physiological

processes, including appetite, pain sensation, mood and memory.

### Recent CBD Oil Developments

There are four recent developments that will hopefully lead to more clarity.

1. Cornell University published the first medical hemp veterinary study at a major teaching hospital on July 23, 2018. It was conducted by a very highly regarded team of experts and led by Joe Wakshlag MS, DVM, PhD, DACVN, DACVSMR. The study shows good results in treating canine osteoarthritis and notes that there were no real side effects, except for an increase in alkaline phosphatase during the CBD treatment.

2. Cornell University is currently conducting a study that will focus more on the interaction between CBD oil and felines, while Colorado State University is working on a study that will be examining the role of CBD oil in the treatment of anxiety and seizures in dogs. This will also bring a little more clarity to the dosing of CBD products.

3. The company behind ElleVet—the product used in the Cornell study—is also doing a feline osteoarthritis study. This study has my attention, as we have very few drugs safe for long-term use in cats with osteoarthritis, and with 90 percent of cats at 10 years of age suffering from this disease, this is a big deal! There are three more clinical trials starting this fall with Dr. Wakshlag and the University of Florida in seizures, oncology and post-operative (TPLO) pain.

4. Epidiolex, a hemp isolate, was just approved by the FDA for seizures in children on June 25, 2018. The FDA just recently (September 27, 2018) placed Epidiolex in Schedule V of the Controlled Substances Act, the least restrictive category. It is the first cannabis/hemp product to not fall under the Schedule I Controlled

**The deadline  
for the July issue is  
June 8**

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# LOOK

Please let me know if you make a change

\* **DECALS & PINS.** You can get **AMSC decals (\$1.00)** and **replacement pins (\$7.50)** from

**Debbie Herrell**

13445 Phal Road  
Grass Lake, MI 49240  
Phone: 517-522-4173  
sercatep@yahoo.com

**Report all changes to the Roster to**  
**treasurer@AMSC.us**

**Bonnie Keyes**  
**511 River Terrace**  
**Endicott, NY 13760**  
**(607)742-3828**

**The log in information**  
**for the Members**  
**section is as follows:**  
Password is: **2020Schnauzer**

Here's the link to the Members  
Section:

<http://amsc.us/members-log-in>

Please write down or save the  
User Name and Password as  
there is quite a bit of pertinent  
information in our Members  
Section.

## ANXIETY...from. p. 1

Substances category. This means that technically, veterinarians could enlist it for "off-label" use, as we do many other FDA medications.

While this means that we could prescribe a "cannabis-related product," we likely wouldn't because of the expense and because there is no published study using this isolate in pets.

But the fact is that we could, according to the FDA, except if it conflicts with our state licensing, which is on a state-by-state basis. This kind of confusion permeates most medical hemp-related discussions between veterinarians and other interested parties across the country at this moment.

### So What Does This All Mean for Pet Parents?

Until we, as veterinarians, are allowed to openly discuss medical hemp, where can a consumer go to get reliable information on current CBD safety and research information in pets?

ConsumerLab.com has a longstanding commitment to impartiality and independent testing of any supplement. They have a full discussion, complete with references, which among other things, includes a strong warning to avoid *synthetic* forms. They also clearly state the huge variation in levels between products and the price of a "dose."

As CBD is currently found in over-the-counter supplements that have no regulation, it is imperative to have third-party testing. That said, we have no way of knowing effective dosing unless a study is able to use a predictable product that can be mass-produced consistently. Thus, it seems the FDA's trend towards favoring isolates over full-spectrum because they can be mass-produced consistently.

This is probably the most difficult issue, according to the formulators I spoke with at the AVMA conference in Denver in July 2018. There over a dozen CBD-related lectures that were very well attended and had lively discussion. They all explained that there are CBD isolates and full-spectrum products. Each product should have a certificate showing exactly where it was grown and what it contains. An Indiana law will soon require QR codes that link to a certificate.

### Dosing and Safety

Full-spectrum is generally thought to be more powerful than isolates—which follows

the trend of "start low and go slow." Most products have a recommended starting "dose," but without research, they are only guesses.

Cornell University did a long-term safety study and pharmacokinetic study on both dogs and cats to determine safety and accurate dosing. They determined the half-life in dogs and cats and are able to accurately dose.

### Can Veterinarians Talk About It?

The Veterinary Information Network (VIN) has a long discussion on what veterinarians in other states can and cannot do regarding CBD.

The article states: "Of 2,131 respondents, 63 percent said they are asked by clients at least monthly—and some weekly or daily—about cannabis products for their pets. Most veterinarians answering the survey said they have never been the ones to initiate the discussion."

On Sept 27, 2018, California became the first and only state where it is specifically legal for veterinarians to talk about cannabis. It does NOT allow veterinarians to administer or dispense it.

Meanwhile in Wisconsin, I am still not clear whether I am able to discuss OTC hemp products with less than 0.3% THC!

### Future Challenges

The DEA's stance on classification, referenced from the Epidiolex classification press release, is: "Marijuana and CBD derived from marijuana remain against the law, except for the limited circumstances that it has been determined there is a medically approved benefit. In those instances, such as here, the drug will be made appropriately available to the public for medical use."

The FDA does not regulate supplements, so how will the issue of quality control be monitored for all of the other hemp-related products? Again, the only reliable resource I am aware of for quality control is ConsumerLab.com, and for effectiveness and duration of action, there are strong peer-reviewed veterinary studies.

The more we can collectively open up the channels of funding and research, the more quickly we will know about the benefits and side effects of CBD oil and hemp for pets.

**ANXIETY.....con't on p. 3**

**ANXIETY...from p. 2**

Dispensaries in states where cannabis is legal must have "certified cannabis counselors." In Washington State for example, these counselors are allowed to describe the risks and benefits of different methods for using products, show how to properly use products, and answer questions about the medical marijuana law.

They are NOT allowed to provide medical advice, diagnose any conditions or recommend changing current treatment(s) in place of marijuana. These people are NOT trained for veterinary use of these products.

Valerie Fenstermaker, executive director of California Veterinary Medical Association, says it best when she says (speaking before the vote on medicinal marijuana), "We have dispensaries selling these products ... and nobody ... outside of a veterinary professional should be giving advice about using these products in animals."

**A Veterinarian's Advice**

My advice is to schedule a pain-management, *seizure* or pet anxiety consultation with your veterinarian to discuss all options you have for those problems. For example, many chronic pain conditions can be treated very effectively with existing drugs and modalities. That includes integrative/alternative therapies like *laser*, acupuncture, off-label use of human medications (like gabapentin, amantadine and for short-term pain, tramadol) or sometimes just a good weight-management program. There are also fish oil supplements and glucosamine chondroitin sulfate supplements that have undergone independent testing for effectiveness.

Veterinarians are the only ones specifically trained to advise you on the safety of all modalities and drugs for your pets, their interactions and side effects, so they need to be informed to counsel you on anything you give to your pet.

Read all you can and share that information with your veterinarian. Help us fight for the ability to discuss openly and research hemp for pets in products with less than 0.3% THC.

Always be aware of the "wild west" aspect of this area right now. Look for references, follow the researchers I have named here and encourage new research, as that is the only way credibility can be assured. Stay tuned for developments, as they are happening almost daily.

**Tick-Borne Diseases in Dogs: Symptoms & How to Prevent**

By Dr. Jerry Klein, CVO

Tick-borne disease is a growing threat to both canine and human health. Ticks are parasites that attach themselves to animals and people, feed on blood, and transmit diseases directly into the host's system. The disease occurs when an infected tick bites a dog or a human and transmits the disease into the victim's body.

The geographic distribution of ticks is changing due to climate change, de-forestation, and the changing living and migrating patterns of deer, birds, and rodents. This can vary yearly or even by season. Ticks are in virtually all parts of the United States, including some urban areas, and many parts of the world. They present a danger to both people and pets.

The most important tick-borne diseases that affect dogs are Lyme disease, Ehrlichiosis, Anaplasmosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Babesiosis, Bartonellosis, and Hepatozoonosis. All can have serious health consequences for dogs and many can have serious health consequences for people as well.

**Lyme Disease**

Lyme disease is an infectious disease caused by a spirochete bacteria (*Borrelia*) carried by the Black-Legged Tick (more commonly known as the Deer Tick). Lyme disease has typically been associated in the Northeast and upper Midwest areas of the United States, but we are now seeing it also on the west coast (Washington, Oregon, and California), as well as in Florida. In fact, Lyme has been detected on dogs in many parts of the country and also in some areas of southern Canada. The tick has to be attached to its host for about 36-48 hours for transmission of bacteria into the host, and signs of illness occur about 2-5 months after a tick bite.

It's important to do a thorough check for ticks and remove them promptly after a walk in the woods or other grassy or shaded areas where ticks may reside. In urban areas, that may include your local dog park.

Signs of Lyme disease may include fever, lameness, limping, joint pain/swelling, enlargement of lymph nodes, and lethargy. Lyme disease can progress to kidney disease, which can become fatal. (Unlike Lyme in humans, dogs do NOT develop a "bull's eye" rash.)

Lyme disease is usually diagnosed via blood tests. The initial test detects exposure to the tick-agent and helps the veterinarian determine additional testing as needed.

The treatment of a dog that is positive on the initial test but is otherwise healthy remains controversial amongst some veterinarians. When the decision to treat a dog with Lyme is made, dogs are usually placed on antibiotics for 28-30 days.

There is a vaccination for Lyme disease and plenty of other tick preventatives. Though some question its duration and efficacy, the vaccine may reduce the rate and severity of the illness should it appear. Dog owners should speak to their veterinarian to determine if the vaccine is appropriate for their pet.

**Canine Ehrlichiosis**

Canine Ehrlichiosis is found worldwide. It is caused by several types of ticks: The Brown Dog Tick, Lone Star Tick, and American Dog Tick. Signs include fever, poor appetite, and low blood platelets (cells that help the clotting of blood), often noted by nose bleeding or other signs of bruising or anemia. Signs start about 1-3 weeks after the bite of an infected tick. Dogs diagnosed and treated promptly can have a good prognosis, but those who go on to the chronic phase have more difficulty recovering.

Border Collie puppy playing in tall grass. Anaplasma

Anaplasma is a disease caused by a bacterium carried by the Black-Legged Tick (*Ixodes*). Though Anaplasma can be seen worldwide, there are two Anaplasma species that are known to infect disease in North American dogs:

Phagocytophilum: Northeast and the upper Midwestern United States, Platy: California and coastal states.

The signs are similar to Lyme disease, though dogs with Anaplasma often have low blood platelets cause bleeding disorders.

**Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever**

Rocky Mountain spotted fever is one of the more commonly known tick-borne diseases to affect dogs and humans. It is carried by the American Dog Tick and the Rocky Mountain Wood Tick, as well as the Brown Deer Tick. This disease has been found in much of North, South, and Central America. Signs include fever, poor appetite, swollen lymph nodes, and joint pain. Low platelets, which help in blood clotting, are often found. On occasion,

**TICK-BORNE..con't on p. 7**

# American Miniature Schnauzer Club

## Board Meeting Minutes January 18, 2022

### CALLING THE MEETING TO ORDER:

#### Approval of Minutes

October 18, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes motion for approval by Sonny Lelle, seconded by Bonnie Keyes. Approval passed unanimously.

#### Report of the President – Vicki Kubic

Well, here we go! I'm honored and proud to be your next President. Let's work together in support of the perpetuation of our wonderful breed, its health and all the events that showcase Mini Schnauzers!

Welcome to our new board members! Carla Nickerson, Sonny Lelle, Stephanie Davis-Rae and Patti Henderson.

Tentatively scheduled board meetings

Tues., April 5, 2022 at 7 pm EST via ZOOM  
- DATE CHANGE

Tues., July 12, 2022 at 7 pm EST via ZOOM

Fri., Oct. 7, 2022 at 7 pm EST – Face-to-Face at Montgomery Host Hotel

Any additional urgent business should be discussed via the board list. Please get your committee reports and agenda items submitted at least 2 weeks in advance of each meeting and please thoroughly read each report before the meeting. If Board members have questions, they are requested to bring those questions to the Board List prior to the meeting. If a committee has any motions, they should be contained in the report and will be voted on at the meeting. The goal is to basically only have new and old business to go over at the meetings.

#### Report of the Secretary – Carol Hafner

**REMINDER:** If there will be any changes to local club officers, they should be updated/reported to the AKC and the Secretary, especially any changes in local club representatives to the AMSC. Thank you, Mount Vernon for the officer update:

Shawne Imler – President  
Leslie Cromer – Vice President  
Kelly Radcliffe – Secretary  
Barbara Donahue – Treasurer

Board of Directors:  
Denise Baker  
Tatiana Myers (also AMSC Delegate)  
Cindy Sanders  
Paula Tibbs

#### Correspondence

Jason West's first children's book, *The Misadventures of Lord Baxter Dewclaw & Captain Blake Stallion*, has been released. Published and marketed by Barnes & Noble Press™. Naturally, dedicated to the late, great Mr. B. Meet Lord Baxter Dewclaw and Captain Blake Stallion, two miniature schnauzers who are sure to steal any dog lover's heart. This simple story is a reminder that through new beginnings, we can count on trust and love — and sometimes, that's more than enough with a companion by your side! Fresh design art by Natalia Zubets will make this a favorite. Get ready to be charmed by these two schnauzers' adventures! The author will donate 100% of book royalties to Guide Dogs of America. GDA raises and trains guide dogs for individuals who are blind/visually impaired and service dogs for veterans and children with autism.

- Notified by Linda Wahlquist-Soos that the Centennial State Miniature Schnauzer Club has been dissolved.

#### Report of the Treasurer – Bonnie Keyes

Nice profit from the magazine and huge donations for trophies boosted the profit for the club. Budget for 2021 was in line with projected expenditures and revenues. Budget requests for 2022 from Committees and Board officers should be submitted to the Treasurer as soon as possible.

**Membership:** As of 12/31/2021 we have 2 Life, 383 Voting, 28 Non-Voting, Total 413

#### Report of the AKC Delegate – Barbara Donahue

Because of the length of the delegate reports, discussion with President about putting the delegate reports on the Members section of the AMSC website and just putting a reference in the meeting minutes to save space. Reports would be available to all members through the website. Donahue does consolidate down the committee reports before it comes to the Board for the AKC reports and 8 committee reports. Delegate information is not public information. Not all AMSC members are active on the AMSC-L. The AMSC Members section could be used as an archive for things like Minutes, Delegate report and Health Committee report. Notifications to the AMSC-L would be given to inform members of new reports available in the Members section of the AMSC website as well as archived information.

Donahue will publish Delegate report to the AMSC-L soon. Archiving will be worked on.

#### Committee Reports

##### AMSC-L Group – Vicki Kubic

On November 11, 2021, a vote was taken on the approval of the AMSC-L Committee Guidelines. The vote was taken on the Board list and there was 100% participation. The guidelines were unanimously approved by the Board. See AMSC website for details on guidelines.

##### AMSCope – Carla Borelli

Requested that Board Minutes be condensed to save on costs of reproduction.

##### Awards – Sue Ratz

**AWARD COMMITTEE GUIDELINES** approved as amended see AMSC website for details. Written by Sue Ratz/ January 2022 Motion to accept Awards Guidelines as submitted was made by Patti Henderson, seconded by Sonny Lelle. Passed unanimously.

##### Good Dog/AKC Marketplace – Kaye Kirk

Kaye has reviewed the Miniature Schnauzer breeders claiming to breed according to breed standards and have found the following do not do so and has informed Good Dog:

1. Schnauzer Society - Lindsay Bayles, St. George, UT - Shows a parti colored schnauzer as the "dad".
2. Shadow River Schnauzers - Jill Land - Magna, UT - Shows a white schnauzer as the mother.
3. Lindy Ferrell, Darling, GA - has white and liver schnauzers
4. MapleCreek - Rosilyn Shrayner, Woodland, WA - has parti schnauzers
5. Shannon Johnson, North Carolina - has white schnauzers
6. Schnauzer & Boston Terrier Pups - Connie Richardson, Whiteville, TN - has white schnauzers
7. Sassy Schnauzers - Kassadie Cardounel, Branson, FL has parti schnauzers
8. Mamie's Minis, LLC - Daphne Havis, Monticello, MS has parti schnauzers

**MINUTES...con't on p. 5**

**MINUTES...from p.4**

9. Tennessee Schnauzers - Savannah Mangus - has Liver, parti, maybe merle schnauzers

Good Dog acknowledged the receipt of the information and they will pass these concerns along to their team to look into and make any appropriate changes.

**Guidelines** – LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER!!!

**Health Committee Report: AMSC Educational Program on DNA Testing** – Patricia O'Brien

This will be an ongoing process and Patricia O'Brien will be the point person on this issue. Information gathering will be done and are trying to get information together and not recreate the wheel. Any recommendation from the Health Committee that goes out includes the verbiage that just because you have a carrier that does not mean that the dog needs to be removed from a breeding program. In fact, if not life threatening, even affected dog does not need to be removed as long as they are mated to clear dogs. Some information will be forthcoming. Donna Hills will be asked to help too. Veterinary AMSC members will be involved to as much as possible as consultants. Hoping to have YouTube videos with the information available in the future.

**Historian & Public Records** – LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEER!!!

**Publications & Literature** – Patricia O'Brien

As of December 31, 2021:

Inventory: Income: Expenses:

Grooming charts 33  
Grooming Charts \$ 126.00  
Postage \$ 20.80

Illustrated Standards 142  
Illustrated Standards \$ 36.00  
Grooming Charts 9@\$5.50ea \$ 49.50

CD 13  
CD \$ 20.00  
Illustrated Standards 3@\$2.40 \$ 7.20  
**Total Income \$ 182.00 T**  
**Total Expenses \$ 77.50**  
**Profit \$ 104.50**

**Ways & Means** – Carol Henning and Jackie Harris

Planning to do another apparel fundraiser this spring!

**Website/Social Media** – Jackie Harris

**Website:** Jackie is currently contacting web designers to get quotes on

overhauling the AMSC website. The main goals are to improve the usability of the website and to make it easier to make updates to the website that can be accomplished internally rather than having to outsource. The timeframe is currently unknown as the companies she reached out to in December asked her to reach out again in January and none would currently commit to a schedule. However, Jackie is hopeful she can get a budget and plan put together to present within the next couple of months.

**Social Media** – The overall response to the AMSC social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) continues to be positive. We currently have 66.7K likes to our Facebook page, with 67% of the audience being from the US.

**Special Committees**

**AMSCOPE Magazine** - Vicki Kubic, Kate McMillian, Krystal Mason

We have 2 issues under our belt. They have been extremely well received and financially successful! We will review the AMSCOPE magazine and 3 issue financials at our next Board meeting in April and vote on the continuation of the Magazine. We also need to consider raising dues to ensure the financial success of the Magazine. A complete proposal will be submitted prior to the April ZOOM meeting for questions and discussion. There is some confusion amongst members that to continue to get the magazine that they would need to pay more for the AMSCope newsletter whose fees are unrelated to the magazine.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS****New Members Application Approvals**

New membership was approved for Patricia A. Case-Standing, James Campbell & Kathy Tam, Sandra Peveto and Susan Coulter. Motion was made to approve new members by Carol Hafner, seconded by Patti Henderson. Motion passed unanimously.

**Committee Chairs and Members** – Vicki Kubic

**AMSC Committee Chairs 2022**

**COMMITTEE NAME**  
**NAME**  
**POSITION**  
**EMAILADDRESS**

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Chair  
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AMSC-L Groups  
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Awards – Versatility  
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Breeder Referral  
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Amy Gordon  
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Companion & Performance Events  
Sue Ratz Chair  
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GoodDog/AKC Marketplace  
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**MINUTES...con't on p. 6**

**MINUTES....from p. 5**

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Website/Social Media  
Jackie Harris  
Chair  
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**TICK-BORNE DIEASES****Babesiosis**

Babesiosis is another disease caused primarily by the bite of a tick, but can also transfer from dog bites, transplacental transmission and possible through contaminated IV blood. The main issue associated with Babesiosis is "hemolysis," or the breaking down of red blood cells. Symptoms include lethargy, pale gums, dark-colored urine and jaundice (yellow/orange colored skin or sclera — the "whites" of the eyes).

**Bartonella**

Bartonella is an emerging infectious disease in dogs, as well as cats and humans. It has also been known as cat scratch disease (CSD). Most infections usually occur after scratches from domestic or feral cats who have been infected from fleas. CSD can occur wherever cats and fleas are found.

**Hepatozoonosis**

Hepatozoonosis is slightly different, in that the infection is acquired after a dog ingests an infected tick. This disease is not zoonotic; in other words, people cannot catch this from infected dogs. This disease is generally found in the southern United States. Signs of the disease are pain and reluctance to stand or move, fever, muscle wasting, and mild to moderate anemia. This disease is severely debilitating and often fatal.

These diseases can present a serious risk to the health of dogs and to people. It's important that dog owners talk with their veterinarian to determine the best approach to flea and tick control.

Further information can be found through the American Kennel Club's Canine Health Foundation.

A map showing the prevalence of Lyme disease can be found at the Center for Disease Control.

**Bouquets & Biscuits**

Breaker earned the final Qualifying run that he needed in the Barnhunt Open ring for his RATO Title today at the Rebel Ratter's trial in Castle Rock, CO

That title gives Breaker the last point he needed to qualify for the American Miniature Schnauzer Club Versatility Excellent Award - Have to wait for Barn Hunt certificate and then send in paperwork, but he has earned it as of today.

Breaker is now bred by Robert Reilly and Cindy Wallace (GCH CH Abacus Rainmaker x CH T-Lan's Something About Merri) and is owned, trained, trailed and loved by Linda Wahlquist-Soos



# Heartworm Disease: How to Protect Your Dog from Heartworms

The sun is shining brighter and the temperatures are rising. Our dogs are wagging their tails a bit more often because the outdoors feels great on their shiny coats compared to the cold of winter. However, nice weather can also invite some unwanted guests.

With spring in full swing and April being Heartworm Awareness Month, it's a good time to talk about this serious mosquito-borne disease. Prevention is the best medicine, so let's go through what heartworm disease is, some common questions about this disease, and what you can do to help protect your dog.

## What is Heartworm Disease?

Dirofilariasis, better known as heartworm disease, is a serious illness caused by a blood-borne parasite. According to the American Heartworm Society, "Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease in pets in the United States and many other parts of the world. It is caused by foot-long worms (heartworms) that live in the heart, lungs, and associated blood vessels of affected pets, causing severe lung disease, heart failure, and damage to other organs in the body."

## How Do Dogs Get Heartworm Disease?

In order for heartworms to get into a dog's blood system, they need an intermediate host. Mosquitos serve as this host after they bite an infected dog and ingest a baby heartworm known as microfilaria. The baby heartworm will develop in the mosquito's gut for 10 to 30 days until the mosquito finds a new host – your dog.

Once the mosquito bites a healthy dog, the infective larvae will develop for a couple of months before they make their way into your dog's bloodstream and grow into adult heartworms. The now mature heartworms can begin to reproduce within six to seven months after initial infection, adding even more parasites into your dog's system.

## How Long Can Dogs Live with Heartworms?

Dogs are natural hosts for heartworms, meaning that heartworms that live inside the dog mature into adults, mate, and pro-

duce offspring. If left untreated, heartworms can live and reproduce in dogs for five to seven years, causing them to potentially harbor several hundred worms in their bodies.

While dogs can live with heartworms for years, these parasites can take a toll on your dog's health. The American Heartworm Society notes that heartworm disease can cause lasting damage to your dog's heart, lungs, and arteries, with some symptoms persisting even after the parasites are gone. Advanced heartworm disease can even be fatal without proper care, making prevention and treatment essential.

## Heartworm Prevention for Dogs

Since there's no way to tell if a mosquito is infected, prevention is absolutely critical. It can be easy to prevent heartworm in dogs, but treatment is both difficult and costly. As such, it's important to practice heartworm prevention year-round, even outside of mosquito season. Here are a few ways that pet parents can practice year-round prevention.

**Annual tests** – Many dogs show few to no symptoms in the early stages of the disease. Yearly blood tests can help spot heartworm disease early on while it's still preventable and easy to treat.

**Heartworm prevention medications** – Monthly oral pills and six-month injectable shots work to eliminate immature stages of the heartworm larvae before it develops into an adult.

**Your veterinarian** – It's always good to talk to an expert about your dog's health. Speak to your veterinarian to see which heartworm prevention method is best for you and your pup.

## Symptoms of Heartworm Disease in Dogs

Even if your dog is regularly tested for heartworm and you practice regular preventative care, it's best to know how to spot signs of heartworm disease. There likely won't be any initial symptoms of heartworms in your dog. However, as more worms populate in the heart and lungs, your dog will start showing symptoms, including:

- Mild, persistent cough
- Fatigue after moderate activity
- Unwillingness to exercise
- Weight loss
- Decreased appetite

Dogs with more advanced heartworm disease may also start to exhibit other warning signs. For example, the American Heartworm Society notes that more serious cases can lead to heart failure and make your dog's belly swell due to excess fluid in the abdomen. The sudden onset of labored breathing, pale gums, and dark-colored urine is also a sign of a heartworm blockage.

If your dog experiences any warning signs, contact your vet and seek medical attention right away. This disease can cause serious harm the longer it has affected your best friend.

## How to Treat Heartworm Disease

If your dog does have heartworm disease, they can often be treated successfully depending on the state of the dog and the stage of the disease. The earlier it's caught, the better. Treatment can cause some side effects and can also be costly, so you'll want to consult with your veterinarian to confirm the diagnosis and ensure the treatment is necessary.

Once heartworm has been detected, your veterinarian will first focus on stabilizing your dog. Then, they will start a treatment plan to eliminate the existing heartworm and keep adverse effects to a minimum. According to the American Heartworm Society, it is also best to restrict your dog's exercise during this process, as physical exertion can speed up how quickly heartworms can damage your dog's heart and lungs. Your dog will need to be tested six months after completing the treatment to be sure there is no more infection.

## More Ways to Keep Your Best Friend Happy and Healthy

Heartworm prevention is one of many ways that pet parents can help support their best friends. Keeping your furry friend happy and healthy is the key to a smiling face and adorable puppy dog eyes!



# AMSCOPE

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## *New Applocants*

### **John Sheldon**

228 20<sup>th</sup> St. NE  
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251-533-6031

John is a Echocardiographer. He would like to become a member of AMSC to better the Miniature Schnauzer breed and extend awareness into Alabama. He has read the Code of Ethics and the Breed Standard and agrees to comply with to support both. He is a breeder of Minis from the Repetition line and has raised two litters in the past five years and has been active in Obedience and Conformation for approximately three years. He attends about eight events per year. John is in the process of joining Birmingham KC.

Sponsors:

Kurt Garmaker  
Beverly Barrone

### **John Schauer**

19870 Welch Rd  
Milan, MI 48160 9249  
734-344-1203  
[Jschauer344@gmail.com](mailto:Jschauer344@gmail.com)

John was an AMSC member for several years, but let his membership lapse by missing the deadline. He is retired and shared the following about himself and his dogs: "I have had Schnauzers for 40 years. I trained and trialed in Agility after I was 65 years old. My young bitch motivated this old geezer. She earned her MACH". John has been a member of The Miniature Schnauzer Club of Michigan for many years and Treasurer for several years.

Sponsors:

Debbra Herrell  
Beth Santure

**FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE:** The following information is given to help conduct AMSC business more efficiently. Please remember that the Secretary and the AMSCOPE editor should **BOTH** be notified of address changes, club officers and specialty results.

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