

The New York City Veterinarian

VMA NYC Newsletter



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Photograph: Roy Mangersnes/
Rex Features



A pair of little owls (*Athene noctua*) get affectionate outside Lleida, Spain, with mating season now imminent

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President's Message

By Dr. Lisa Esposito

Spring heralds the time of the annual Veterinary Medical Association dinner dance and fund raising event. This year the gala was aboard World Yacht's 'The Princess.' The efforts of Dr. Sally Haddock made for an excellent evening. The band was outstanding and had the guests dancing all night. The award recipients this year were truly deserving of the description of 'outstanding, exemplary, and high caliber.'" We look forward to the dinner dance of 2012

The VMA's first digital newsletter received much applause. We are very grateful to our executive board member Dr. Sally Slavinski for taking the time to put the newsletter together. The association is saving a significant amount of money with the digital newsletter and the environment is smiling. Furthermore, we can put more copy and color photos.

The executive board has been busy on many fronts. There has been issues brought to our attention that necessitated dialogue with local organizations, and we have submitted a letter to the editor of the New York Times expressing our opinion on the clear value of an ongoing veterinary client/patient relationship. Dr. John Sykes has been diligently trying to achieve the almost impossible task of finding a new executive secretary for the VMA that may be able to fill Effie's shoes. Dr Mark Peterson and I are organizing an all day CE for VMA members at minimal charge November 13, 2011 at the Dr. Regina McGinn Educational Center at Staten Island University Hospital. The recipients of the VMA high school awards have been chosen for 2011 and will be given out to three worthy high school students this year.

The philanthropic arm of the VMA of NYC, NYSAVE, recently had a meeting and there is a need now more than ever for donations to this worthy organization. Almost of all the funds are designated to cases and sadly there are cases being turned down that are in need of help every day. Please remember to donate to NYSAVE and make memorials for one's beloved patients to NYSAVE.

Lisa A. Esposito, DVM

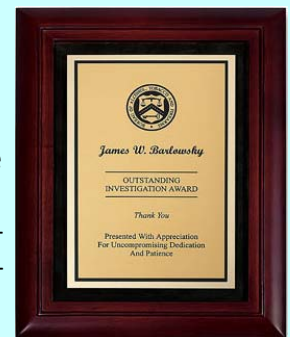


Dr. Lisa Esposito and her son Joseph

High School Awards 2011

By Dr. Lisa Esposito

The Veterinary Medical Association of New York City is proud to give this year's high school award to three deserving young women. Miss Victoria Ramos and Miss Gissele Cardenas are both students at John Bowne High School's Agricultural program, Queens New York. Miss Samantha Piggott is a senior at St. Joseph Hill Academy, Staten Island. All of these young pre-veterinary students have demonstrated a strong desire to pursue a career in veterinary medicine. Miss Cardenas and Ramos have acquired much skill and understanding of the veterinary profession through their work at Flushing Veterinary Medical Center and their school curriculum. Miss Piggott is an outstanding volunteer for P.L.U.T.O. Rescue of Richmond County. Samantha fosters animals, is adept at caring for orphans, facilitates placement of fosters and runs the H.O.P.E. program at her High School (Helping out paws everywhere) raising money for animal shelters. She does this while maintaining good grades in a High School known for its "academic rigor" and very selective admissions process. Members of our association will present a plaque and monetary award at the High School Graduation ceremony (when this is applicable).



Special Social Function for VMA of NYC Members and their Families

Mark your calendar!!! On Saturday September 10th we will have the opportunity to visit the Bronx Zoo before it opens to the general public. The Wildlife Conservation Society has graciously invited us to join them on this morning when the zoo opens at 8 AM for the exclusive benefit of their generous patrons. You are also invited to bring your families to enjoy all of the activities planned for this special day including breakfast and enjoy more personal time at the exhibits for two hours before the crowds arrive at 10am. Please note, family member can only attend in the presence of a VMA member. Of course, you are welcome to remain in the zoo for the entire day.

SEPTEMBER

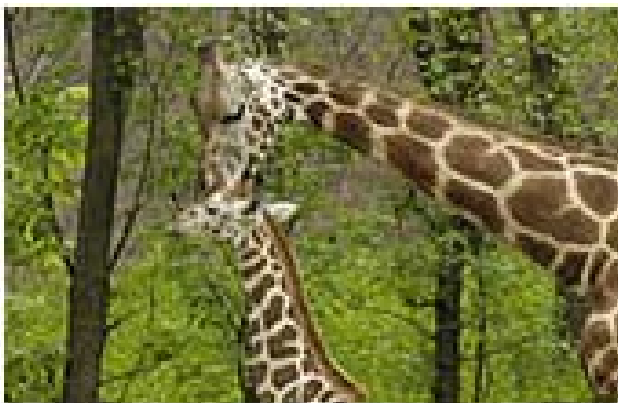


At 10AM for those veterinarians who are interested, we will be offering a tour of WCS's Wildlife Health Center, home base of the Global Health Program; this opportunity will be limited to veterinarians only. Although we all work in animal hospitals, this will be a unique opportunity to see how the Health Center handles the wide variety of their patients and their needs (think about doing endoscopy on a giraffe!). It is our hope that there will be no patients in hospital at that time since we prefer them all healthy and in their exhibits but despite that, I am sure that you will appreciate the unique nature of their facility.

We are invited to enjoy the zoo and tour the Wildlife Health Center free of charge. However, I encourage any of you so motivated to support the wonderful work done by WCS's Global Health Program by making a tax deductible contribution to support their program.

I will provide more information as we get closer and I will need to have you **R.S.V.P. by September 1st** to obtain parking passes and to arrange the Health Center tour. I am sure that it will be a terrific day!

Amy Attas
dramy@citypetsvets.com



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The Political Action Committee

Dr John Sangiorgio, Chairperson

The city council has been busy with some legislation recently. Intro #0425 enacted this year allows animals to be tethered for a maximum of 3 hours in any 12 hour period. It also outlaws choke collars and pinch collars within the city. Intro #0328 was also passed into law. This increases the licensing fee for animals that are not spayed or neutered. The increase in fees are directed toward more owner responsibility. The fees collected will be used for animal population control.

Two resolutions were also passed. These are basically advice to other government agencies. #0675 advised against the use of some antibiotics on farm animals, and #0677 advises against the use of "downed cows" for meat.

There hasn't been activity on the state level yet this year.

The VERT Committee

Dr. Mark Salemi VERT Liaison

During the summer months, VERT will continue to support the OEM in public messaging for Pet Preparedness. NYC VERT actively promotes owner-veterinary collaboration on planning for emergencies. In the assembly of a Pet Go Bag, an owner should consult their vet about medications, boarding, anxiety and many other issues. Veterinarians can initiate these conversations when addressing the upcoming summer travel season. Having a Go Bag is important, encouraging your clients to make one for their pets is easy, and makes you a valued resource for them. If the food or pharmaceutical companies have given you useful items like blankets, brushes, food samples, or toys, these can all be presented to a client as something to help start their Go Bag. See the VERT website for additional information.

www.NYCVERT.com/Go-Bag

And remember, your hospital should be prepared too. Consider a session with your staff about preparedness for your facility, specifically sheltering in place for a day or two if required.

Submitted by Pat Costello, NYC VERT

The Membership Committee

Alexandra van der Woerd

A total of 17 veterinarians were introduced as new or returning members of the VMA of NYC during the March, April and May meetings of 2011. They are as follows:

New members March 2011

Dr Matthew Hamilton
Dr Peggy Voss Hatzidimitriou
Dr William Gordon
Dr Judith Holman
Dr Courtney Maeda

New member April 2011

Dr Amy Baker
Dr R Avery Bennett
Dr Maria Camps
Dr Jennifer Good
Dr Kevin Kirk
Dr Naomi Slava Knox
Dr John McCue
Dr Diane Opperman
Dr Carly Tichner

New members May 2011

Dr Christopher Powell
Dr Mildred Richie
Dr Skye Stanley

As always, we welcome these new members into our association, and hope to see them regularly at our meetings.

Liaison Committee

Amy I. Attas, V.M.D.

The liaison committee interacts with our local specialty hospitals, educational institutions and not for profit organizations and lists in this column any information which is relevant for our membership. Please feel free to contact me if you or your hospital has information that would be relevant. Specifically, we highlight continuing education which is complementary to our membership and new hires in specialty areas. I invite you to contact me if your hospital has information that you would like to share with our membership at dramy@citypetsvets.com.

News from the Animal Medical Center (AMC):

The AMC has a full schedule of continuing education which is available to our membership free of charge. The lectures are listed at the AMC website www.amcny.org/lectures. There is also an upcoming full day seminar in the Partners in Practice Series scheduled for Sunday, June 19, 2011 entitled "Anesthesia and Your Practice: What You Should Know". It will be held from 8:00am-3:15pm at The Animal Medical Center

Speakers:

William J. Tranquilli, DVM, DACVA ; William Muir, DVM, PhD, DACVA; and Katherine Quesenberry, DVM, MPH, DAVBP (Avian)

Topics:

Injectable (IM, IV) "anesthetic" drug combinations for dogs; Inhalant anesthesia; Anesthetic and perioperative approach to exotic animals; Analgesic adjuncts to anesthesia (injections and infusions); The use of perioperative fluids and infusions effectively

Breakfast 8:00am - 8:45am

Lectures 9:00am - 3:00pm

Lunch will be served

You can register for the seminar through this link at the Animal Medical Center website: <http://www.amcny.org/node/337>.

News from NYC Veterinary Specialists:

NYCVS will be hosting monthly continuing education seminars. Topics will be repeated at each of the three hospital locations whose addresses are listed below. Dinner and refreshments are served. All seminars are free and begin at 7 PM. To rsvp for any of these evenings, please contact Dr. David Wohlstadter at drwdvm@nycvs.com.

Manhattan
410 West 55th St
(Bet 9th and 10th Avenues)
New York, NY 10019

Queens
107-28 71st Rd
(Bet Austin St and Queens Blvd)
Forest Hills, NY 11375

Brooklyn
32 4th Ave
(at Pacific St)
Brooklyn, NY 11217

NYCVS announced two new recent hires. Nicole Pacifico, DVM, ACVIM is a graduate of Ross University and she did her internship and residency at Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston. She was a staff veterinarian at Red Bank Veterinary Hospital from 2008 to 2011. Dr. Amy Baker has also joined NYCVS. She is a graduate of Tuskegee University and did both a general medicine and surgery internship at Florida Veterinary Specialists as well as a special internship in ophthalmology/oncology. She did her residency in ophthalmology at the University of Florida.

Continuing education:

Dr. Elise Christenson will be lecturing on behavior at each of the three hospital locations in June. Dinner is served at 7 pm and lectures begin at 7:30pm. The title of her lecture is: "Rowdy Rovers; Tips for Training Wayward Pups". For more information you may contact Dr. Dave Wohlstedter at drwdvm@nycvs.com or by calling 212 767 0099. The lecture will be given on June 14th in Queens at 107-28 71st Road (between Queens Blvd and Austin St), June 15th in Manhattan at 410 West 55th Street (between 9th and 10th Ave) and June 16th in Brooklyn at 32 4th Ave (at Pacific St). Lectures and dinner are free of charge. Please rsvp to drwdvm@nycvs.com.

Liaison Committee continued on page 7.....

Liaison Committee continued.....

Amy I. Attas, V.M.D.

News from Fifth Avenue Veterinary Specialists:

FAVS has announced two additional members to their staff. Lisa Mahlum, MS, DVM, DACVECC will be joining the critical care service providing seven day coverage in that area. Mr. Mahlum received her degree from Oregon State University and an internship and residency in emergency and critical care at Angell Animal Medical Center in Boston. Following her residency she joined the Red Bank Veterinary Hospital. Her interests include management of trauma, anesthesia, pain control, transfusion medicine and blood banking. She has a special interest in international medicine and is active in the World Vets Organization.

Dr. Skye Stanley will be returning to the internal medical service in late June. Dr. Stanley received his veterinary degree from Kansas State University. He then did a rotating internship at the Animal Medical Center followed by a residency in internal medicine there. Dr. Stanley was a staff internist at FAVS and then became the head of the internal medicine service at FAVS. In 2010 Dr. Stanley became a faculty lecturer at the Veterinary Hospital at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to his clinical and teaching responsibilities, Dr. Stanley was involved with committees that focused on maintaining and improving relationships with referring veterinarians and the community.

The Animal Endocrine Clinic

The Animal Endocrine Clinic operated by Dr. Mark Peterson, is open on the Upper West Side of Manhattan at 21 West 100th Street, between Central Park West and Columbus Avenue. The Animal Endocrine Clinic is the only clinic of its kind in the country that specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of cats and dogs with endocrine disorders.

This Clinic is separated into three divisions: the Endocrine Clinic, dedicated to diagnosing and treating dogs and cats with endocrine disorders; Hypurrat treatment center designed for treating hyperthyroid cats with radioactive iodine (I-131); and; Nuclear Imaging for Animals, a state-of-the-art medical imaging facility where we use radioactive tracers to perform nuclear scanning (scintigraphy) for diagnosing of thyroid, bone, liver, and kidney diseases in dogs and cats

The Animal Endocrine Clinic is a referral-only hospital, and does not offer prophylactic or routine care. Contact information: web site, www.animalendocrine.com; phone (212) 362-2650; email, info@animalendocrine.com.

News from Veterinary Emergency and Referral Group (VERG):

VERG has announced two new specialists to their staff: Dr. Dennis Slade, Diplomate ACVIM and Dr. Andrea Lantis, Diplomate ACVIM (cardiology). Dr. Slade is a graduate of Cornell University and did his internship at Long Island Veterinary Specialists and a residency in internal medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. His professional interests include endocrinology, hematology, nephrology, endoscopy and ultrasonography

Dr. Lantis completed her veterinary training and internship at Oregon State University and her residency in cardiology at North Carolina State University. She spent the past two years as an Assistant Professor of Cardiology at Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine. Her professional interests include cardiac emergencies, anti-arrhythmic therapies, pulmonary hypertension and interventional procedures.

The Social Committee

Dr Mari Morimoto, Chairperson

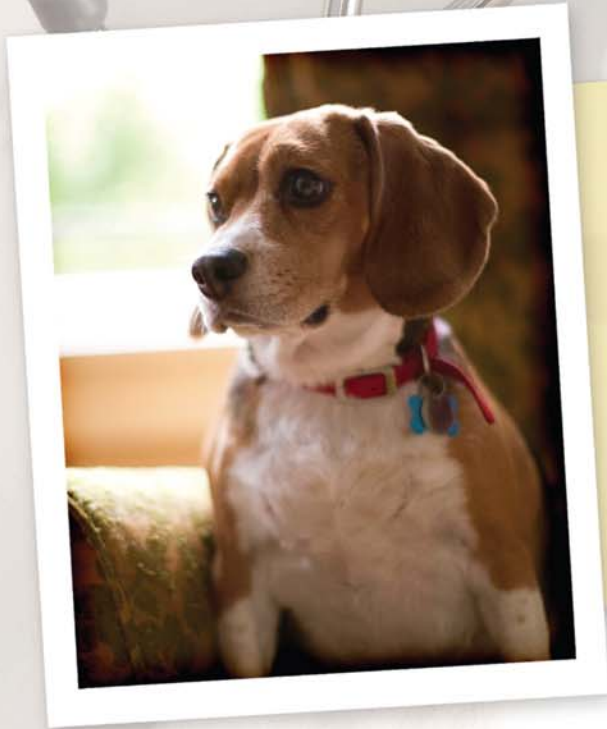
It was a Dark and Stormy Night... 2011 Dinner Dance Recap

Despite terrible weather conditions, over 120 veterinarians, staff, family, friends, and sponsors gathered on the night of April 16th at World Yacht's Pier 81 on the west side for our annual Awards Dinner and Dance. With only a 2% rate of cancellation, the Princess set sail for a brief jaunt down the Hudson to New York Harbor and back while everyone wined, dined, and danced the evening away. Partway through the festivities, Sponsorship Chair Dr. David Wohlstadter thanked our sponsors and President Dr. Lisa Esposito handed out plaques to this year's award recipients: Drs. Mark Salemi and John Sykes for Merit, Dr. Eric Bregman for Veterinarian of the Year, Dr. Alexander Miller for Distinguished Life Member, and Dr. Sam Soliman for Outstanding Service. In addition, Dr. Mark Peterson was also recognized as Past President. Fortunately, even though Dinner Dance co-chair Dr. Sally Haddock brought an entire bottle of Meclizine with her, no one got seasick. Everyone had a great time, and the event raised over \$1,800 for our philanthropy, NY-SAVE. See pictures from the Dinner Dance on page 17.

Take Me Out to the Ball Game—Event Announcement

On the evening of Saturday, August 13th, the VMANYC will once again be descending upon the Richmond County Bank Ballpark for our annual field trip to the Staten Island Yankees! At 7pm, they'll be taking the field against the Auburn Doubledays, and we'll be back on the Picnic Deck with a country-style BBQ buffet, free baseball caps, and our name in lights. As always, those who can stay to the very end will be treated to a spectacular fireworks display and kids running around the bases. Tickets will be \$15 per person, and can be reserved through Dr. Mari Morimoto (nycfishgirl@aol.com).





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-Matt T. from Green Bay, WI



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*A Veterinarian's Guide to Pet Health Insurance, National Commission on Veterinary Economic Issues, 2009.

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3rd Annual CE and the City- A growing success

Dr. David Wohlstadter, NYC Veterinary Specialists

On May 7, 2011, the third annual CE and the City was held at the Marriott Marquis in Times Square. Over 150 veterinarians attended the day long CE event. All proceeds went to NY S.A.V.E. CE and the City began in 2009 and has grown to include speakers from NYC Veterinary Specialists, Fifth Avenue Veterinary Specialists, The Animal Medical Center, and Veterinary Emergency and Referral Group. Sponsorship was generously provided by: Platinum- Pfizer and Antech/Sound-Eklin Gold- Stokes Pharmacy, Novartis, Webster Veterinary/Bank of America, and ASPCA Pet Health Insurance. Stay tuned for the 2012 date!

Dr. Joshua Lachowicz 's talk on mast cell tumors packed them in.



Dr. Suliman Al-Ghazlat prepares for his talk on canine insulin.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

All Day CE with Shawn McVey on November 13th

The NYC VMA is sponsoring an all day continuing education seminar with Shawn McVey of McVey Management Solutions and developer of integrated veterinary management solutions (IVMS). Members and their staff including hospital managers, technicians and assistants are invited to participate. Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided. The event will take place at the Regina McGinn Conference Center at Staten Island University Hospital. A small fee of approximately \$25 per person will be charged to each participant. According to his website, the goal for IVMS in providing management services is to improve the bottom line for the practice owners, enrich the experience of the employees, elevate the quality of care available to the patients, and reduce the stress that all involved can feel when systems are not running smoothly. Here is what others have said, "Shawn McVey is a credit to the veterinary industry. His insight and expertise is professional and effective. Shawn has the ability to help practice owners review the strengths and weaknesses of their business and then implement a strategy to improve overall success" **L. Lee Richter**CEO, Montclair Veterinary Hospital Oakland, CA . "As always a fabulous job on Saturday! I've seen your presentation 7 times and yet I always learn something fascinating about you, and always leave empowered to work harder and do better!" **Emily Prascher** AAHA



Calendar of Events

Committee Report

Program Committee

Dr. Mark E. Peterson, Chairman

The schedule of the VMA of NYC Continuing Education meetings for the 2011 calendar year is listed below, including the speakers and topics.

All 2011 evening meetings will be held at the Pfizer Headquarters Building, 235 E. 42nd Street, NYC, in the Tudor Room located on the 2nd Floor. The meetings will start at 7 PM. Please bring photo ID with you to allow entry into the Pfizer facility.

Members of the VMA of NYC are automatically registered to attend the meetings, but guests need to be added to the attendance list in advance of each meeting date.

Please note that we have added an extra all-day meeting scheduled for Sunday, November 13, 2012. This meeting will be held at the Regina M. McGinn, MD Educational Center at Staten Island University Hospital, 475 Seaview Avenue, Staten Island, NY.

We are pleased to have Shawn McVey, owner of McVey Management Solutions, as our speaker for this special all-day seminar. Shawn will speak to us about a variety of practice management topics, including communication and teamwork, leadership, and financial issues. He is a graduate of VMI (Purdue's Veterinary Management Institute) and serves as a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of Veterinary Economics and First Line magazine. Shawn has been named Speaker-of-the-Year at both North American Veterinary Conference (NAVC) and the Western Veterinary Conference (WVC).

June 1, 2011

Speaker: C. Guillermo Couto, DVM, Dip. ACVIM, College of Veterinary Medicine, The Ohio State University
Topic: Coagulopathies

September 7, 2011

Speaker: Candace A. Sousa, DVM, Dip. ACVD, ABVP (Canine & Feline Practice)
Topic: What About Methicillin-Resistant Staph?

October 5, 2011

Speaker: James Flanders, DVM, Dip. ACVS, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University
Topic: Soft tissue Surgery

November 2, 2011

Speaker: Thomas Graves, DVM, PhD, Dip. ACVIM, College of Veterinary Medicine
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Topic: Insulin and Diabetes

November 13, 2011 – Special All-Day Seminar

Speaker: Shawn McVey, MA, MSW
McVey Management Solutions, Chicago, Illinois
Topic: Practice Management (more information will be provided soon)

December 7, 2011

Speaker: David Twedt, DVM, Dip. ACVIM, College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
Colorado State University
Topic: Feline Pancreatitis and Hepatic Disease

Remember, our Continuing Education program is meant for our VMA of NYC members, so please do not ever hesitate to provide your input and suggestions for great speaker or timely topics to make our C.E. program the best it can be. I can always be contacted via email (mark@animalendocrine.com). Or feel free to call me in my office (212.362.2650) or on my mobile phone (646.415.4131) if you have any suggestions.

This information is taken from the Worms & Germs blog website which can be found at www.wormsandgermsblog.com. It is a wonderful resource for veterinarians offering information and guidance on several infectious diseases many of which are zoonotic.

This educational website is coordinated by Dr. Scott Weese and Dr. Maureen Anderson.

What Are MRSP & *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius*?

- *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* is a bacterium that is commonly found on the skin or in the mouth, nose or intestinal tract of 50% of more of healthy dogs, and a smaller percentage of healthy cats. Typically it causes no problems at all, but it is an **opportunistic pathogen** - if an animal gets injured or sick for another reason, *S. pseudintermedius* can take advantage of the body's weakened defenses and cause infection and illness.
- This bacterium can infect almost any tissue, but **skin and soft tissue infections** are more common, particularly when the skin has been damaged by something else (e.g. allergies, scratching, chronic wetness, wounds, surgery). **Skin and ear infections** are also very commonly caused by *S. pseudintermedius*. Infections of other body sites and organs are much less common, but can be very severe.
- *Staphylococcus pseudintermedius* can also be found in the nose of up to 4% of healthy pet owners.
- **MRSP** stands for methicillin-resistant *S. pseudintermedius*, which is a form of *S. pseudintermedius* that is highly **resistant to many antibiotics**, including most of the drugs that are commonly used to treat bacterial infections in dogs and cats. Non-MRSP forms of *S. pseudintermedius* are methicillin-susceptible (MSSP).
- People and animals that carry MRSP without any signs of infection at all are said to be **colonized**. When **infection** with *S. pseudintermedius* (either MRSP or MSSP) occurs, this causes signs of inflammation (e.g. heat, pain, swelling, discharge, fever).

What Are MRSI & *Staphylococcus intermedius*?

Staphylococcus intermedius is a bacterium that is **very closely related** to *S. pseudintermedius*. MRSI stands for methicillin-resistant *S. intermedius* which, similar to MRSP, is an antibiotic-resistant form of regular *S. intermedius*. *Staphylococcus intermedius* was previously considered to be the most important *Staphylococcus* species in dogs and cats. In the past few years, it has been determined that what has typically been identified as *S. intermedius* in these species is truly *S. pseudintermedius*, and that ***S. intermedius* is actually extremely rare**.

- Molecular tests are required to tell *S. intermedius* and *S. pseudintermedius* apart. Because identification is so difficult, some diagnostic laboratories still report isolation of *S. intermedius* from dogs and cats. It is almost certain that these bacteria are actually *S. pseudintermedius*. Fortunately, **this distinction does not have any impact on how to treat infection** with either bacterium.

How Is MRSP Different From MRSA?

- Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is the antibiotic-resistant form of *S. aureus*. Although *S. aureus* and *S. pseudintermedius* are related, MRSA and MRSP are very different.
 - **In people, MRSA is a huge problem, but MRSP in people is only a minor concern.**
 - **In dogs, MRSP is a major health problem but MRSA infections are much less common.**
 - MRSA can infect both people and animals, and can be transmitted between people and pets relatively easily, in both directions. It appears that MRSP can also be transmitted from pets to people, but this seems to be quite uncommon.
- Therefore, the zoonotic disease risk from MRSP in animals is low.**

How Common Is MRSP In Dogs & Cats?

- Healthy animals can carry MRSP. One study found MRSP in 4.5% of healthy dogs and 1.2% of healthy cats. More recent studies indicate that a greater percentage of healthy dogs and cats are now carrying MRSP.
- MRSP infections appear to be increasing substantially in animals, particularly dogs. Veterinary dermatology specialists are reporting very large increases in MRSP skin infections (often called **pyoderma**). Infections after surgery are also becoming increasingly common, and they can be very difficult to treat.
- Anecdotal evidence indicates that MRSP infections are being identified in dogs and cats throughout the world, although published data to support this perception are not currently available.
- Risk factors for MRSP in pets are unknown. Antibiotic treatment is a potential risk factor.

Can people get MRSP infections?

Yes, but this seems to be quite rare. There are only a couple of reported MRSP infections in people worldwide. Human infections with methicillin-susceptible *S. pseudintermedius* is also very rare, despite the fact that dog owners are probably exposed to the bacterium on a regular (if not daily) basis. This bacterium is apparently not well adapted to cause disease in people. While the risk is not zero, it's not a major concern.

How Do Animals & People Get MRSP?

- MRSP is probably transmitted to pets by direct contact between animals. Healthy, colonized animals with no signs of infection are probably the major source of MRSP. Indirect transmission, which occurs when a person or animal gets MRSP from touching an object or surface that has been contaminated with MRSP by another animal, is theoretically possible but probably uncommon if it occurs at all.
- People most likely get MRSP from direct contact with an infected or colonized pet. It has been shown that people who regularly wash their hands after touching their pets less commonly carry *S. pseudintermedius* compared to people who don't regularly wash their hands. Transmission of MRSP from people to pets can also occur, although the risk of this is probably very low because MRSP in people is so uncommon.
- MRSP can survive **in the environment** for a limited period of time, but it's susceptible to most commonly used disinfectants, if the surface/equipment is cleaned properly first.

What Happens If A Pet Gets Infected With MRSP?

- In dogs and cats, MRSP most commonly causes skin and ear infections. Wound infections, surgical site infections and other types of infection can also occur.
- Rarely, MRSP can cause severe disease like necrotizing fasciitis ("flesh-eating disease").
- While MRSP infections can be hard to treat, available evidence indicates that the outcome should not be any different for an MRSP infection compared to an MSSP infection *if* MRSP is promptly diagnosed and proper treatment is started right away. If MRSP is not diagnosed quickly and ineffective antibiotics are used, it is possible that more serious disease will result.

How Is MRSP Diagnosed?

It is impossible to tell for sure what kind of bacteria are involved in any type of infection based on how the infection looks. MRSP is diagnosed based on bacterial culture, which takes a few days to complete. MRSP infections do not look any different from infections caused by MSSP or other staphylococcal bacteria. The only way to tell them apart is to culture the bacteria and test their susceptibility to antibiotics in a laboratory.

How Is MRSP Treated?

Infection: All MRSP strains are **resistant to beta-lactam antibiotics** (e.g. penicillins, cephalosporins), but because different strains may be resistant to other antibiotics as well, the bacteria must be tested in order to choose the best antibiotic. Automatically choosing the most powerful antibiotic to treat the infection when a more common drug will do can be very dangerous (and expensive), because the MRSP, or other bacteria in the body, may become resistant to it, and then there may be no drug that can effectively treat the infection. Local treatment of skin and soft tissue MRSP infections (e.g. lancing and flushing an abscess) is often very effective as well, and should not be overlooked, even if the person or animal is also treated with antibiotics. Sometimes a strain of MRSP may be resistant to almost all available antibiotics, making selection of an appropriate antibiotic extremely difficult. In these cases your veterinarian may need to consult an infectious disease expert or pharmacology specialist to determine the best treatment.

Colonization: There is no information about when or how to eliminate MRSP from colonized animals. Because *S. pseudintermedius* evolved to live on dogs and cats, decolonizing these animals may be difficult or impossible.

Decolonization therapy with antibiotics is not recommended for animals colonized by MRSP - it is highly unlikely to be effective and may lead to further bacterial antimicrobial resistance.

What Should I Do If My Pet Has An MRSP Infection?

- **Relax.** Although MRSP infections can be very serious, most animals with MRSP infections can be treated quite successfully.
- **Follow your veterinarian's instructions.** Proper treatment right from the start is very important. Make sure you follow all treatment recommendations. Always ensure that dosing and timing of medications are followed exactly. It is especially important to **completely finish any antibiotic prescriptions, as directed**, even if your pet seems to be better before they're done.
- **Avoid contact with the infected area** of your pet. If possible the area should be kept covered or bandaged to reduce the risk of transmission and contamination of the environment. Follow all bandaging instructions from your veterinarian very carefully. If you need to change a bandage, wear gloves and put the dirty bandage directly in the garbage.
- **Wash Your Hands!** Hand hygiene, using **soap and water** or an **alcohol-based hand sanitizer**, is the simplest and most practical way to prevent transmission of MRSP between animals and people. In general, MRSP colonization is

uncommon in healthy pets, but it is possible that any given animal is carrying MRSP at any time. Therefore, *hand hygiene is important for everyone after handling any animal*, but it is particularly important for individuals who may have a weakened immune system. It is also especially important after handling an animal with an active MRSP infection, because the risk of contamination with MRSP is greater.

- **Strict quarantine is not necessary.** MRSP is widespread in the dog population, so really aggressive measures to restrict contact with an infected animal in the community aren't indicated. However, use common sense to help reduce the likelihood of transmission of MRSP to other dogs (and people) by:

- Avoiding dog parks, puppy classes and other similar events while the infection is still active.

- Not letting your dog off-leash, as it may then have uncontrolled contact with other dogs.

- Promptly removing any stool that is passed, particularly in public places, since MRSP can be shed in stool.

- Keeping your dog away from people with compromised immune systems.

- **Assume that your pet is also carrying MRSP at other body sites**, not just where it has the infection. You should therefore also following the basic practices recommended below for colonized pets.

What Should I Do If My Pet Is Colonized With MRSP?

- Avoid contact with the pet's nose, mouth or bum, as these are the most likely areas to harbour MRSP.
- Don't let your pet lick a person's face, or any area of broken or damaged skin.
- MRSP-positive dogs should be walked in low-traffic areas, where they are not likely to encounter other animals or people to which they may transmit MRSP through direct contact. MRSP-positive cats should be kept indoors.
- MRSP can be found in the stool of colonized animals, so stool should be collected as promptly as possible and disposed of directly into the garbage. Cat litter boxes should be scooped out daily.
- Although the importance of the environment in transmission of MRSP is unclear, MRSP can survive in the environment for some time. The toys and bedding of an MRSP-positive pet should regularly be changed/cleaned to reduce the exposure of both the animal and people to MRSP. Contaminated laundry should be washed separately and dried in a hot air dryer (such as most normal clothes dryers).
- It's probably also a good idea to keep MRSP-positive animals off of people's beds.
- **Hand hygiene remains the most important means of preventing transmission.**

How Long Will My Pet Be Colonized With MRSP?

There is no information about how long animals remain colonized with MRSP, but long-term colonization is likely possible, because we know *S. pseudintermedius* is well adapted to live on pets (especially dogs). This is quite different from MRSA, which pets only seem to carry for a short period of time if they become colonized.

How Do I Prevent My Pet From Getting MRSP?

- It's impossible to completely prevent exposure to MRSP in pets because it is carried by so many healthy animals (and a few healthy people).
- Risk factors for MRSP colonization and infection in pets are not well known. One important step for preventing MRSP from emerging is using antibiotics responsibly.

- Always follow prescriptions (for you or your pet!) as carefully as possible. Give the right dose at the right time, and finish the entire prescription, unless directed otherwise by your veterinarian.

- Only use antibiotics when they're really needed, and only if your veterinarian advises their use.

What Is The Risk?

The zoonotic risk to the general population posed by MRSP in *healthy* house pets such as dogs and cats is extremely low.

Individuals with compromised immune systems (e.g. HIV/AIDS, transplant and cancer patients) are more susceptible to many kinds of infections, including those which may be transmitted by pets. While these individuals are not advised to get rid of their pets, precautions should be taken to reduce the frequency of contacts that could result in pathogen transmission (e.g. avoiding contact with open wounds, feces), as well as the ability of infectious agents to survive in the household (e.g. prompt and thorough disinfection of potentially contaminated surfaces).

- Immunocompromised individuals should avoid contact with any pet that is colonized or infected with MRSP.

Infants and young children (less than 5 years old) are more likely than adults to extensively handle animals if given the opportunity, more likely to touch their faces or mouths, and less likely to wash their hands after handling an animal. Children may "snuggle" with pets; this very close contact can increase the risk of disease transmission.

- Young children should be supervised when playing with animals, and an adult should ensure that they wash their hands afterwards, and especially prior to handling food. Older children should be taught to do the same.

VETERINARIANS AVAILABLE

-Per Diem or Steady Part-Time Work. Available most Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Excellent people skills. Good practice builder. 35 years experience. References available. Contact Dr. Tobias Jungreis at 516-295-1125.

-Relief - Per Diem. General practice. Orthopedic and Soft Tissue Surgery. DVM, Cornell. Internship Oradell. Residency in Small Animal Surgery, Cornell. Phone Dr. Kathy Sevala at 1-718-267-6489 or 1-718-578-9085.

-Relief Veterinarian. Experienced with excellent medical, surgical and client skills. Contact Dr. Christine Asaro at (631) 806-9343 or (718) 238-2513, or e-mail: chrisasaaro@hotmail.com

-Donald W. Stremme, VMD. Experienced veterinarian (34 years) available for small animal and exotic relief work in Manhattan. Licensed (including DEA and USDA) in PA, NJ, and NY. Please send inquiry via e-mail to CCAC-DWS@aol.com

-Experienced veterinarian available for relief work including surgery. Please call Shirley Koshi 212-288-9088 or Email: kitydogdoc@gmail.com

-Relief/per-diem veterinarian: experienced, capable, personable. Dan Grayson, DVM. 917-755-1615.

-Full or part-time Dr. Eduarda Krieger. NY Licensed. Seeks work at small animal practice in NYC. Phone: 917-239-3377.

-Veterinarian available for permanent Per Diem any weekday except Friday. Experienced LI vet with strong medical, surgical and people skills seeks position in Queens 2-4 days per month. Call Dr. K. at 516-374-5050.

-Relief/Per Diem General practice and emergency. Internship trained. Please contact: Dr. Marion Pattillo at docmane0523@gmail.com or 646-963-5648.

VETERINARIANS NEEDED

Animal Care and Control (ACC) of NYC is seeking full-time, per-diem and on-call veterinarians to work in our Care Centers in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island. Join a team of dedicated and caring professionals who provide veterinary care for homeless and abandoned animals. You will work with a wide variety of species, medical conditions, emergency and public health issues. Volunteer opportunities are also available. Competitive Salary, full benefits. See www.nycacc.org for a full description. Send cover letter and CV to hr@nycacc.org or 212-442-2066. Call 212-442-2061 for more information.

LVT DESIRED

LVT needed in SW Nassau County, 5 miles east of Kennedy Airport. 2 Dr. practice. FT weekdays 11-7. Strong dental and surgical skills a plus. Fax resume to Abby 516-374-6817.

FOR SALE

One year old Veterinary Practice for sale. Good for a retiree or a new graduate. High potential – very reasonable. Please contact Kay at 917-751-1906

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

ASPCA Pet Health Insurance- Director of Veterinary Marketing: The Director's role will be to marshal the company's array of veterinary marketing resources (including online and offline veterinary related collateral, customer-clinic database, field representatives, and industry outreach) to provide new avenues for reaching pet insurance customers. Ideal candidate will be a leader in the profession, have experience in veterinary practice, marketing, and/or management of field staff. Application Deadline June 15, 2011. For application information, contact Amanda Piccari at amanda.p@hartvillegroup.com

Photograph: FRANCIS R. MALASIG/EPA



Filipino port workers unload seized dried sea turtles in Manila, Philippines. The WWF said marine species illegally captured by poachers end up as delicacies in Chinese restaurants and as medicines behind drug counters in Hong Kong, China, Philippines,



Dr. Patrick Hopper and Dr. Jackie Nenner



Dr. Phil Fox and Dr. Lisa Esposito



The WONDERFUL Effie Cooper



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