Sacramento Cat Hospital Newsletter

Your Cat's Health, Our Passion. **June 2009**

The Dangers of Yarn

Have you ever given your cat a ball of yarn to play with, because you thought it was cute? Or given them a toy hung on an elastic string? If so, then there are a few things we think you should know.

Yarn and other forms of string can actually be very hazardous to a cat's health. The two most common problems we see from strings are choking and obstruction.

Choking can happen in two ways: the cat can become entangled in the string or, if they swallow it, the string can get wrapped around their tongue or caught in their throat. Either situation is dangerous and can result in the death of your cat if not handled appropriately.

If the cat does swallow the string, they can become obstructed; which means they develop a blockage in their digestive tract and are unable to digest or pass food and water. This most commonly happens, because the string has become tangled and twisted inside their intestines.

This is 'Tina', a sweet 1yr old neutered male who became seriously ill due to swallowing a piece of yarn.

His mom had seen other cats playing with yarn in various media and had never been told it was dangerous. Therefore, she used to let 'Tina' and his brother 'Ike' play with balls of yarn around the house as if they were toys.

Then, one day 'Tina' swallowed a long piece of yarn. Over the next few hours, he began to be unable to keep food down and his mom saw the end of the string hanging from his mouth when he began to vomit that same day. Luckily, she did not pull on the string and so did not cause any further internal trauma (***NEVER*** pull on the string if this happens to you!!!).

She brought him in to see us here at the Sacramento Cat Hospital the next day. Since she caught the problem early, 'Tina' was still in fairly good health and we were able to get him into surgery later that same day.

It's very important to make sure that any toy your cat is playing with is considered safe.

If you are ever unsure whether a toy is safe for you cat, please ask one of our knowledgeable staff for more information.

Chris's Corner

Whew…it sure is getting hot! I like to be as well groomed as the next cat, but sometimes a fur coat can be a pain in the paw.

I'm pretty lucky when it comes to hot weather, because all my technicians and doctors make sure the temperature in the hospital is nice and comfy. Not all cats are as lucky though. Some don't have A/C or they spend a lot of time outside where it's much warmer.

If your kitty falls into one of these categories, then there are some things you should do to keep them well hydrated and cool.

It's important to make sure you cat always has plenty of water to drink when the weather heats up. Leaving out multiple water bowls is really a good idea if they have free run of the house or go outside. Don't forget to fill and clean them daily though.

If they stay outside all day, then you also want to make sure they have some sort of shelter from the sun. A covered porch, large covered dog crate, or shade under some trees works pretty well.

It's also really important to keep them hydrated so that medical conditions, such as constipation, aren't worsened due to weather. Older cats are especially affected by any extreme weather conditions.

Please ask my technicians or doctors for more information on how to help your Cool Cat "chill out" for the summer.

-Chris