



## Cats, Dogs and Breed-Specific Wellness

**+** Did you know that some pets could be at risk for breed specific ailments? Experience and science tell us many cat and dog breeds, just like varying human races, are often genetically prone to certain medical conditions. "Understanding which breeds are most at risk can be very useful, especially when selecting a new pet," says West Chelsea Vet practice manager Liz Luboja. "I love Labradors, despite knowing that they may be prone to specific health conditions. While that wouldn't deter me from owning a lab, I believe being educated about the breed you choose is essential. Vets and responsible breeders know to look for these traits and can help your pets enjoy a healthy, happy life."

Early diagnosis through regular wellness examinations, laboratory testing, dental cleanings, the prevention of parasite carried diseases and staying up-to-date on vaccinations are the keys to preventing common diseases in our pets. If you have any questions concerning your pet's health, please call us at (212) 645-2767 or visit us online at [www.westchelseavet.com](http://www.westchelseavet.com) and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/westchelseavet](http://www.facebook.com/westchelseavet).

### 1 Heart Disease

From Congestive Heart Failure, Feline and Canine Dilated Cardiomyopathy, Hypertrophic to Restrictive Cardiomyopathy, cats and dogs are both at risk for heart disease. Symptoms can include coughing, lethargy, panting, rapid breathing and a poor appetite.

**+** *Exercise and a healthy diet, medications, surgery and some non-evasive treatments can greatly improve a pet's quality-of-life.*

**DOGS** Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, Dobermans, Great Danes, Boxers, Bull Dogs, German Shepherds, Rottweilers and Golden Retrievers

**CATS** Domestic Short and Long Hair Breeds, Siamese, Burmese and Abyssinian

### 6 Cancer

Involves a lesion or swelling caused by an abnormal growth of cells; Many canine tumors are considered non-cancerous and can be removed surgically after biopsy. Cancerous tumors are often successfully treated.

**+** *Avoid exposing pets to cigarette smoke and other environmental toxins. Provide them with plenty of exercise and a healthy diet.*

**DOGS** Boxers, Pointers, Chinese Crested, Golden Retrievers, German Shepherds, Poodles, Rottweilers, Shetland Sheepdogs, Cocker Spaniels, Doberman Pinschers, Beagles, Shih Tzus, Giant and Miniature Schnauzers, Bernese Mountain Dogs, Irish Wolfhounds, Newfoundlands, Saint Bernards, Great Danes and Greyhounds

**CATS** Purebred cats, cats with white faces and ears, Persians, Siamese and Bengals

### 2 Gastric Dilation-Volvulus (GDV) or "Bloat"

Made famous in the movie "Marley and Me," canine Bloat is considered to be one of the most critical ailments in veterinary medicine. Bloat occurs when gases, food or fluid build up, rapidly expanding a dog's stomach and preventing normal circulation of blood to the heart and organs. Stomachs twist and turn, further blocking blood flow. This can lead to shock, cardiac arrest and death in a short amount of time. Symptoms include bloated stomach, lethargy, excessive vomiting.

**+** *Should bloat occur, dogs can undergo a preventative measure called Gastropexy, which surgically attaches the stomach to its normal position*

**DOGS** Large and deep-chested breeds such as German Shepherds, Boxers, Dobermans, Great Danes, Standard Poodles, Rottweilers, Labrador Retrievers, and Weimaraners

### 7 Oral Health Issues; Periodontal Disease, Missing and Crowded Teeth

Periodontal Disease involves the inflammation or infection of the gums and bone around one or more teeth, bad breath, yellowish/brown stains on teeth, difficulty chewing and decreased appetites.

**+** *Regular oral examinations and veterinary teeth cleanings, along with at-home brushings*

**DOGS** Small dog breeds, Greyhounds, Brachycephalic (short nosed) breeds

**CATS** Siamese, Abyssinian, Domestic and Maine Coon

### 3 Hip Dysplasia

Leg and hip joints do not rest in the correct places, causing legs to slide partially out of socket, resulting in pain and lameness. The disease can affect both hips, leading to progressive osteoarthritis, which can be painful, but managed with pain medications, an exercise regimen, weight loss or surgery. The disease can be caused by various deformities of the hip and the development of degenerative joint disease.

**+** *Proper nutrition and plenty of exercise; X-rays can be used to find deformities or degeneration of hip joints.*

**DOGS** German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers, Rottweilers, Great Danes, Golden Retrievers and Saint Bernards

**CATS** Maine Coon, Persian and Devon Rex

### 8 Renal and Urinary Issues-Bladder Stones

The formation of "stones" that can cause the blockage of a pet's urinary tract.

**+** *A chemical and microscopic analysis of the pet's urine called urinalysis and also ultrasound imaging*

**DOGS** Bulldogs, Dachshunds, Dalmatians, Miniature Schnauzers and Shih Tsu's

**CATS** All cats, but male cats tend to be more susceptible

### 4 Susceptibility to Parvovirus- (Considered a disease of dogs)

Primarily transmitted through feces of infected dogs and from one dog to another; It is highly contagious and can live on inanimate objects for long periods of time. Symptoms can include vomiting, diarrhea, fever, lack of appetite and lethargy.

**+** *Vaccinations during puppyhood, and in regular intervals throughout a dog's life, are recommended along with frequent hand washing*

**DOGS** Rottweilers, American Pit Bull Terriers, Doberman Pinschers, and German Shepherds

### 9 Hyperthyroidism and Hypothyroidism

**CONDITION:** Common in cats, hyperthyroidism is caused by the over activity of the thyroid gland, which can cause an increased heart rate, heart failure, kidney damage, high blood pressure and blindness. Hypothyroidism is the most common endocrine (hormonal) disorder in dogs. It usually affects castrated male and spayed female dogs.

**+** *A simple blood test can analyze a pet's thyroid hormone range. Medication, surgery and radioactive iodine are most frequently used to treat this condition.*

**DOGS** Golden Retrievers, Doberman Pinschers, Greyhounds, Irish Setters, Dachshunds, Cocker Spaniels and Airedale Terriers

**CATS** No specific breeds determined

### 5 Allergies

Allergic reactions occur when a pet's immune system overreacts to a substance that is ingested or airborne. Symptoms include intense itching, face rubbing, paw biting, ear infections and respiratory conditions (asthma, sneezing, nasal discharge and watery eyes).

**+** *Immunotherapy is often recommended for several years in addition to receiving injections.*

**DOGS** Retrievers, Boxers, all terriers, Shih-Tzus, Dachshunds, Setters, Bulldogs, Cocker Spaniels, Collies, Dalmatians, Lhasa Apsos, Miniature Schnauzers, Pugs, and Shar Peis

**CATS** Siamese are believed to lead the list for cat breeds susceptible to allergies

### 10 Cataracts

Cataracts are a blue-gray clouding of a pet's lenses inside of the eye, which is the most common cause of pet blindness in pets.

**+** *An eye exam should be performed at every wellness visit to check for signs.*

**DOGS** Retrievers, Spaniels, Poodles, Miniature Schnauzer, Afghan Hounds and Sheepdogs

**CATS** Birman, Himalayan, Persian, British Shorthair

