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## **Prevention is Key**

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” this famous quote by Benjamin Franklin holds true today for pet care. With new medical technologies, pets are living longer happier lives. Below are a few examples of how being proactive and taking preventative measures upfront can be better for your checkbook and your pet.

Disclaimer: Prices listed are an approximate and vary based on services, tests and medications performed.

### **Lyme Disease**

Lyme vaccination is very important in Minnesota to prevent Lyme disease in dogs. A tick preventative product should be used year round, but most importantly anytime temperatures are above freezing. Pets that contract Lyme Disease have a wide range of symptoms, ranging from joint inflammation and limping to kidney failure. The cost of a Lyme vaccination is generally around \$30-\$40 per year. The cost of tick prevention averages around \$150-\$200 per year, if given year round. The cost of treatment and testing for Lyme Disease can start around \$250, which generally includes an initial exam, tick test, antibiotics, pain medication, titer and further blood screening. Depending on the symptoms and if your pet develops kidney failure, the treatment could run into the \$1,000s of dollars, and may not cure the pet. Current statistics in Minnesota show that 1 in 10 dogs are infected with Lyme Disease. The types of soils and environment in the Zimmerman area probably put us at an even higher risk than the state average for Lyme Disease in Dogs. Besides the added cost of Lyme Disease contracted by your dog, you and your pet have to deal with the agony caused by this preventable disease.

### **Dental Disease**

For a professional veterinary dental cleaning when extractions are not needed, the cost is around \$200-\$300 per pet. For advanced dental disease in cats and dogs, x-rays, extractions and antibiotics treatment can be \$500 to over \$1000, depending on the situation. Besides the cost of treating dental disease, your pet will have permanent loss of teeth, pain and damage to other organs that may not be immediately evident and will affect their lifespan.

### **Ear Infections**

As soon as you start noticing an odor or discharge from your pet's ears, a visit to your veterinarian should be scheduled. For the exam, ear cytology (looking at a sample under the microscope) and ear medication, the cost will be approximately \$120-140. Ongoing ear infections, when left untreated, can lead to bacteria that can be resistant to common medications. These infections require topical and oral medications, special lab tests and cultures, multiple rechecks and additional medication treatments. The cost goes up to \$300 or more for infections that are not treated quickly. In very severe cases, surgery may be required and is over \$2000.

### **Skin Infections**

Skin infections are common, especially with pets that have allergies. If caught early, treatment of skin infections and itching may cost approximately \$150-\$200. If the infection has progressed, the cost can be \$300 and up, and may require multiple rechecks, follow up appointments and additional testing.

### **Heartworm Disease**

Heartworm disease is a prime example of prevention costing a lot less than treatment. A year supply of Heartworm prevention ranges from \$60-\$100 per pet. The cost for treatment of heartworm disease is usually over \$800. Heartworm can cause permanent damage to the lungs and heart. In addition, Heartworm treatment is very painful for the pet.

Disclaimer: This written content is meant to be educational and is not medical advice. Always consult a veterinarian about medical advice for your pet.