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Protect Your Pet and Keep LA Healthy

Today, dog owners must be extra careful about maintaining their dog's health and preventing their pet from being exposed to disease. There are two life-threatening diseases known as Canine Parvovirus and Canine Distemper that are increasingly reaching the digestive systems of our healthy pets. These diseases can cause dogs to have partial or total paralysis, irreparable nerve damage, vomiting and diarrhea. Without catching the disease early enough or providing your pet with extensive hospitalization, death may occur within 72 hours. There is also a parasite known as Giardia, which not only affects dogs, but also causes humans to have diarrhea and abdominal pain. Although Giardia is easier to treat, it also is more prevalent throughout communities.

Recently, the South Los Angeles Animal Shelter discovered a Giardia breakout, which resulted in 30-40 dogs being infected. Fortunately none of the pets had to be euthanized, as all infected dogs were promptly treated. Dr. Steven Feldman, of Los Angeles Animal Services, stated "The transferring of Giardia can be from animal to animal, person to person, animal to person or person to animal. Prevention is based on good sanitation practices to prevent ingestion of any feces, contaminated food, water, or objects. It is important to dispose of waste materials in such a way that they cannot contaminate surface or ground water."

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**UNTIL THIS IS A REALITY,
 PLEASE PICK UP AFTER YOUR PET.**

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The increased spreading of such diseases is in part due to pet owners not picking up after their dogs. That's right! When someone doesn't pick up after their dog, your pet's chances of getting infected with one of these diseases are increased.

As a matter of fact, not picking up after your dog is also very harmful to the environment. Unattended dog waste gets unintentionally washed down into our storm drain system when it rains. This toxic mix of dog waste and water then flows untreated into our local waterways and ocean. The bacteria found in the fecal matter affects our aquatic life, the tourism industry, our economy, and those who swim at our beaches. This is a consequence that can negatively impact not only our pet's health, but our own health as well.

Don't let what happened in the South Los Angeles Animal Shelter take place in your neighborhood. It is important that as dog owners, we do our part and pick up after our pet and remind our neighbors and friends to do the same. This is especially important because if your neighbor isn't picking up after their dog, you and your healthy pet has the potential to be affected by their negligence. Remember to do the right thing. Pick up after your dog and continue to protect our pets and the environment.

For more information on how you can help prevent Stormwater pollution, please call 1-800-974-9794 or visit www.lastormwater.org.

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