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Speice

Independent Study and Mentorship

26 September 2018

Common Diseases

Assessment 4 - Research

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2018.

**Assessment:**

One of the most important aspects of being a veterinarian includes being able to differentiate and identify diseases present in animals. Additionally, it is imperative to understand how different aspects of a veterinarian's job work such as vaccination protocols and diagnoses of

animals. These were the topics of research this week in the Independent Study and Mentorship program.

Researching canine viral hepatitis helped to learn more about diseases common in dogs that I have not encountered before. Learning about things such as common warning signs, symptoms, treatment and prevention aided in furthering knowledge over helpful veterinary assistant techniques. Being able to differentiate between diseases that are seemingly common such as canine viral hepatitis and canine distemper will not only expand the necessary knowledge and vocabulary needed in order to become a veterinarian, but also further helpfulness in a veterinary clinic later this year. Reading over common treatments and prevention methods for this illness opened up a new research question over what vaccines are given as puppy boosters when puppies are first born and which are given on a yearly or a biannual basis in order to prevent such diseases.

Additional research into canine and feline distemper offered insight into the importance of vaccinations in animals. Mortality rates for distemper in both dogs and cats are very high. Even with treatment, the body's white blood count level is too low to fend off anything else. This means that an animal's best chance at surviving is vaccinations at an early age so that they never contract this disease. This research led into research over mange, which is common among street and shelter animals. Expanding previous knowledge over mange will prove to be incredibly beneficial when finding a mentor later on due to the hopeful focus on rescue work this year. Because this disease is common among animals involved in rescue, it will be an invaluable asset to have a working understanding of this disease later on.

Researching diseases common in rescue work and shelter work led to research over canine parvovirus disease. Canine parvovirus disease proved to be especially interesting because there is no known cure for this disease. Survival of animals diagnosed with this is solely dependent upon the strength and resiliency of the animal's body and proper veterinary care as soon as possible. Learning about common symptoms of this disease and comparing them to other symptoms that have been previously researched for different illnesses reinforced the necessity of being able to group and correlate symptoms to diseases in order to diagnose an animal correctly and treat it as soon as possible since many of these diseases are fatal. Additionally, researching items such as vaccine protocol for canine parvovirus disease gave a glimpse into how vaccines work. The parvovirus is given as a puppy booster shot and then again, annually. It can be inferred from this information that puppies are given shots first for diseases they are most susceptible to and which they have the lowest chance of fighting off. It can also be inferred that after puppies receive their booster shots, they receive shots annually for diseases that can be easily spread to them through contact, fecal matter, or urine, or are fatal or serious illnesses. This insight into how vaccinations work helps put in perspective how animals are treated by veterinarians in order to prevent them from all diseases that are most common or fatal to them.

Researching different common illnesses in canines and felines opened up many new avenues of research into treatment and prevention of these diseases and others. Additionally, it provided a chance to further expand knowledge and understanding of the most important aspects of working with a veterinarian such as identifying symptoms and developing diagnoses.