

What's New in Veterinary Care? The Latest from Dr. Jean Oberg

Story and Photos by Frances Goodman

If you want to know what's new in medical care for pets, just ask Dr. Jean Oberg. The Wellington veterinarian not only can tell you, she has the technology to provide it.

Oberg owns and operates "My Animal Hospital" in Kobosko's Crossing Shopping Center on Forest Hill. She

designed it to provide both high-technology care and the personal touch.

"This hospital probably has more technology per square inch than any hospital in Florida," she says.

One thing that sets her apart is her digital radiograph machine.

"This is new veterinary technology that for many years was only used in human hospitals," she said.

"It cost almost \$100,000, but is worth every bit of

it. I can take a radiograph here and review it online with a specialist in five minutes, while the pet is still in the hospital.

"For my seasonal patients, I can easily give the owner a web ID and they can review the radiographs later at home or give the web ID to their veterinarian up North and get a second opinion in minutes."

Oberg, who is president of the Palm Beach County Veterinary Society, feels this type of tele-medicine is the wave of the future.

"Blood work, EKG's, radiographs, ultrasound, pictures of growths, and just about anything can be sent in minutes to consultants all over the country. It improves the diagnosis a hundred-fold."

Anesthesia-Free Dental

Along with technology, Oberg is serious about maintaining the personal touch in her practice. This is perhaps most evident in the anesthesia-free dental cleaning she offers for at-risk animals.

"We identify with the clients that are nervous about sedating an older cat or a tiny two-pound dog. Because of



Dr. Jean Oberg and her staff in front of the new My Animal Hospital at Kobosko's Crossing

this, a lot of clients elect not to do dentistry at all.

"This can be extremely dangerous for the pet. If you leave broken teeth, infected gums, or severe periodontal disease in a pet, you can expect that it will decrease the longevity of that pet.

"It predisposes them to various diseases and can cause premature death for some of them."

The anesthesia-free approach is new but, conversely, uses less technology.

"Basically we can take these very nervous dogs or cats and by positioning them a certain way, we become the leader of the pack, which is called the 'alpha.'

"They recognize that, and they lie down on our lap and allow us to clean their teeth.

"It is time consuming, taking extreme amounts of patience, but we can accomplish a great deal.

"Can the method be used on all patients? No, it's an individual issue. But this allows us to treat many pets that you cannot do under anesthesia."

Digital Otoscope

If you ask Oberg which of the high-tech equipment is her favorite, she is quick to list the digital otoscope.

"This is a digital camera that looks into the dog's ear and we can actually snap pictures and compare them. This way the client can see what we're looking at.

"After two weeks, they can come back and I can actually show them the pictures of before and after. They can see with their very own eyes why we may need to seek additional treatment, or that the ear is clear and we're done with the treatment."

Oberg said pet owners today are becoming more and more



**Dr. Jean Oberg, MS, DVM,
Owner of My Animal Hospital,
President of PB County Veterinary Society**

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Dr. Oberg and veterinary technician Erica check the heart rate on a four-month-old kitten. My Animal Hospital treats cats and dogs exclusively.

pro-active about their pet's medical care.

"The general public is becoming very educated about human and veterinary medicine, and the majority of people actually want to see what you're treating."

Former Equestrian

A native of Long Island, Oberg has been a longtime winter resident of Wellington. She recently moved here permanently in order to raise her son in Wellington.

A former equestrian, her hobby while growing up was showing horses in equitation, hunter and jumper classes.

As a child, she had a menagerie of pets and presently is "mom" to two toy poodles, Mimi and Fluffy, and a rescued kitten, Smoky.

Oberg has practiced veterinary medicine for 20 years and recently closed an award-winning practice in New Jersey to relocate to Florida.

She believes the level of veterinary care available today is approaching that of human medicine.

"And let's face it—an animal isn't just an animal. An animal is a family member and they should get the best care possible. Hence my mission statement, 'We pawsitively treat the best with the best'."

As part of her high-tech approach, Oberg's clients are given a link to their own portal on her web site at www.MyAnimalHospital.Info, with a private password.

"Clients can access all of their pet records online, when drugs are due, when to take the heartworm pill, and when they need to refill their medications.

"It's a great source, plus visiting the web site gives them more information about animal care," she said.

"This is for the person who likes to be on the internet. For those who don't, we still do it the old-fashioned way."

Frances Goodman is a professional obedience trainer and pet care writer who resides in Royal Palm Beach. Email questions to her at fhpettalk@hotmail.com.