

Contents

	Acknowledgments	ix
	Foreword	xi
	Introduction	1
	Note to the Reader	2
0	Medical Advocacy 101	7
	Why Your Dog Needs a Medical Advocate	9
	Why the Advocate Needs to Be You	13
	Advocacy Starts Early	14
2	Medical Decision-Making You and Your Dog Can Live With	25
	How to Make Choices	25
	Your Dog's Best Interest	28
	What Are the Facts?	28
	Does the Medical Plan Make Sense?	28
	Does Your Dog's Personality Play a Role?	29
	What Is Your Dog's Job Description?	30
	How Does Your Dog's Age and Overall Health Play a Role?	31
	Can You Change Your Decision if You Don't Like What You See?	31
	What Does Your Dog Think?	32
	What Best Serves Your Peace of Mind?	32
	When Costs Get in the Way	34
	When No One Knows What's Truly Best for Your Dog	34
8	Finding Dr. Wonderful and Your Mutt's Mayo Clinic	39
	Getting Started	41
	In Search of the Ideal Veterinarian	43
	Figure Out What's Important to You	44
	The Importance of Communication	45
	Paternalistic and Relationship-Centered Care	46
	Veterinary Communication Styles	46
	Time to Pay a Visit	48
	Finding Your Mutt's Mayo Clinic	53

4	The Office Visit: What You Can Do to Help Your Dogand Your Vet	59
	What to Expect During a Routine Visit	59
	Your Dog's History: What Your Vet Needs to Know	59
	What's Involved in a Physical Exam	64
	The 10 Commandments of Veterinary Office Visits	65
	I: Thou Shalt Push Thy Veterinarian off Her Pedestal	66
	II: Thou Shalt be Present	66
	III: Thou Shalt Let the Staff Know if Thy Dog Is Aggressive	67
	IV: Thou Shalt Provide Information	69
	V: Thou Shalt Confess Everything	70
	VI: Thou Shalt Pause for Confusion	70
	VII: Thou Shalt Share Thy Concerns	71
	VIII: Thou Shalt Ask Questions	72
	IX: Thou Shalt Treat the Entire Staff Well	73
	X: Thou Shalt Always Come Away with a Plan	73
6	Wow, I Didn't Know You Could Do That on Dogs!	77
	Veterinary Specialists	79
	Ultrasound	81
	CT and MRI Scans	83
	Digital Radiography	84
	Nuclear Medicine	85
	Fluoroscopy	87
	Interventional Cardiac Procedures	88
	Endoscopy	89
	Laparoscopy, Thoracoscopy, and Arthroscopy	91
	Chemotherapy	92
	Radiation Therapy	92
	Cancer Vaccine	93
	Blood Transfusions	94
	Amazing Surgical Procedures	95
	Lithotripsy	96
	Pain Management	96
	Physical Rehabilitation	98
	Advanced Dental Procedures	99
	Prescription Diets	100
	Dialysis	100

CONTENTS

	Stem Cell Therapy	101
	The Wave of the Future	104
6	The Vaccination Conundrum	107
	Vaccinating in the 21st Century	107
	AAHA Vaccination Recommendations	109
	Available Vaccines	110
	Vaccination Adverse Reactions	119
	Vaccine Serology	121
	Vaccination Clinics	127
	Vaccinating Your Own Dog	128
0	Important Questions to Ask Your Vetand How to Ask Them	131
	General Recommendations	133
	Universal Questions	135
	Questions on General Topics	139
	Newly Prescribed Medication	140
	Special Diagnostic and Therapeutic Procedures	146
	General Anesthesia	148
	Surgery	152
	Spaying and Neutering	156
	Breeding Your Dog	157
8	When the Diagnosis Is Cancer	165
	What Causes Cancer?	168
	Cancer Lingo	170
	Preparing to Make Decisions about Your Dog's Cancer	173
	The Three Levels of Decision-Making	176
	Level One: Diagnosing Your Dog's Cancer	177
	Level Two: Staging Your Dog's Cancer	181
	Level Three: Treating Your Dog's Cancer	186
	Surgery	187
	Chemotherapy	188
	Radiation Therapy	191
	Complementary/Alternative Therapy	193
	Dietary Therapy	193
	Final Words of Wisdom	199

9	A Second Opinion Is Always Okay	207
	The Courage to Talk to Another Doc	207
	When to Get a Second Opinion	211
	Where to Get a Second Opinion	214
	Second Opinion Etiquette	217
•	Money Matters	225
	Money Talk	226
	Price Shopping	227
	Cost Estimates	229
	Financing Your Dog's Veterinary Care	230
	A Line of Credit for Medical Expenses	232
	The World of Pet Health Insurance	233
	The Money-Savvy Advocate	243
0	Euthanasia: Making the Best of a Difficult Situation	245
	Who Should Make the Decision?	245
	When Is the Right Time?	247
	"Closure Time"	249
	Choices to Consider	250
	What Actually Happens When a Dog Is Euthanized	254
	Alternatives to Euthanasia	255
Ар	pendix I: Common Symptoms and Questions	
•	Your Vet Will Ask about Them	259
•	pendix II: Common Diseases and Questions	
•	You Should Ask Your Vet about Them	283
Resources		373
	Monitoring Your Dog's Vital Parameters	373
	Toxic Substances	374
	Recommended Reading	376
	Forms and Charts	376
Illustration and Photo Credits		377
Inc	lex	378