Workplace safety 4

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**Welcome** to part four of the Workplace Safety Certification Program.

Just a reminder that in order to get the certificate for this class, you must take the test and you must pass the test. Okay, so let's start with bites. How do bites happen?

1. We've moved the pet into pain, Arthritic joints, holding legs in a manner that is not consistent with their body structure, and injury.
2. Bad teeth. Touching a face with clippers that vibrates. Imagine you have a toothache and somebody comes over and starts massaging your face.
3. Why didn't we notice this pet was in pain. And this is where that snout to tail assessment during check in is so important. Watching them walk and looking for joint issues, running our hands over their bodies to look for sensitivity or anticipation. Checking gum color while looking at teeth will tell you this pet's face hurts right. Bites need immediate attention as they are risks of infection as well as transmission of any zoonotic disease. And we'll cover that shortly.
4. Behavioral issues this can result from any facility where the pet feels overwhelmed by his situation. Barking dogs, groomers walking back and forth, loud noises, and lots of smells.
5. High anxiety groomers. Pets don't necessarily read us very well, but they smell adrenaline on us causing them to ratchet up. Look at your environment. Look for ways to scale back any overwhelm your pet may feel. Compare to a day spa for us, will you be calmer and enjoy the process if the atmosphere is calm or chaotic?
6. Don't make you groomers groom or your facility accept pets that they are afraid of.
7. Behavioral issues always include aggressive pets. Pet bites can be career ending, disfiguring, damage nerves and tendons and can lead to PTSD.

The average insurance claim for a dog bite in 2018 was $39,017. Even if your insurance fully covers it, the premiums will go up. Is it worth $75 groom to this to groom this pet? No, it's a complete sentence and you do not have to groom every pet that books in appointment. Some pets simply need to be sedated at the vet in order to be safely groomed.

1. Not using proper humane restraint and muzzles when necessary.
2. Missing behavioral cues that are indicating this pet wants you to stop what you're doing. Most pets telegraph their moves. every bite I have personally received was telegraphed by that pet. I wasn't paying attention. Pay attention to their eyes, vocalization and body language. Take some behavioral and training workshops.
3. Distracted groomers answering phones, watching videos, not having full attention on the pet in front of them.
4. Know this pets limitations and stop before you exceed them. That 13 year old golden does not have the same stamina as a two year old cat simply have a timer when it runs down rooms over know when to stop a groom.
5. Cage aggression. Dogs that exhibit aggressive behaviors when they are behind a barrier such as a gate, fence crate or car window. Questions to ask the owner to make this determination beforehand is are they protective when in a fenced yard or in your car? Protective sounds better than aggressive and the owners are more likely to be honest. This dog needs training that is probably more than you could offer in a grooming environment. Letting this pet come out on their own when possible or cover smaller pets with a thick towel or blanket.
6. All the adages have their start in reality such as let sleeping dogs lie. So that dog that is sleeping in the crate you do not want to open up the door and grab them. You can startle them into a bite. Senior dogs tend to do this more so as their hearing may not be so good. They don't hear the door opening or calling their name. Wake them up before you open the door by banging on it until they are up and fully aware of you.
7. Bites aren't limited to the to the pets we groom. Spider insect bites as well as bites from vermin can occur at any grooming facility.
8. Aggression can be a serious problem in an enclosed space such as a mobile unit. There is not a lot of space to back away from an aggressive pet eating bent on eating your soul. Housecall groomers may encounter dogs that are protective of their homes and are looking to defend their property from the evil groomer.

Scratches, while not as problematic as a bite, still need to be addressed at the time of injury. Nails can be dirty. And depending on how deep the scratches is, may require medical attention or at least cleaned and dressed.

Protective equipment

Muzzles that are sturdy and fit properly. For cats, I prefer e collars, happy hoodies, and half air muzzles. Humane restraint systems such as Groomers, Helper, Trach savers, groomers wall and hanvey lift systems. All of these systems I personally use and I'm sure there are others.

Frisk gloves. These are gloves worn by the police when they pat down people. It's to prevent being stabbed by hypodermic needles. I use them for cat grooming. I won't help with dogs. You can get them at a uniform or police supply store. Blauer brand is the best and that little tidbit comes from law enforcement friends. I also wear thick long sleeves and grooming cats. And if I'm grooming any dogs that are known scratchers.

Lifting.

It is probably fair to say that every worker lifts or does other manual handing handling tasks is at some risk for muscular skeletal injury. Low back injury is the most likely kind of injury. The complete elimination of this risk honestly is not realistic. However, you can reduce the number and severity of manual handling related injuries by using safe work practices.

There's some general lifting rules include, prepare to lift by warming up your muscles. Do some stretching exercises first, stand close to the pet facing the way you intend to move. Use a wide stance to gain balance. Ensure that you have a good grip on this pet. Keep your arms straight, tighten up those abdominal muscles. Tuck your chin into your chest and then initiate the lift with bodyweight. Lift the pet close to the body and lift smoothly without jerking. Avoid twisting and side bending while lifting. Do not perform the lift if you are not certain that you could handle the pet safely.

You can institute weight limits for both the single groomer to do a double lift for pets outside that weight range. Ramps and electric tables so the pet can walk on to the table is better. Wear back supports. Now just to reiterate, there are competing medical studies on whether back braces are good or not. That's probably a conversation you want to have with your medical doctor. And stay hydrated. Lifting while in a state of dehydration will lead to muscle cramps. I have a couple of videos up on proper lifting single and double.

Lack Of Control.

Let's move into specifically lack of control of the pets in your care. What I mean by this is best summed up by two personal experience. One when I worked at a shop I was manager at. One of the groomers did not have control of her dog and jumped the half gate, just as somebody was walking in. We were located alongside a very busy four lane road chase after that dog for about 30 minutes keeping him away from the road. He finally tuckered out enough for some people in the parking lot to grab ahold of him.

Now why is that a workplace safety problem? One, I nearly stroked out was hoping that someone knew how to use the defibrillator. That's the machine with the electric paddles to restart a heart. But what if that pet would have been killed? What if I needed to have therapy? Could I have been hit by a car keeping this dog away from the road?

The second incident is when I was mobile and the 14 year old English Setter, who could barely walk, sure could run. Same scenario, only this time I was by myself in the hills of Sherman, Connecticut. No one around should I have stroked out chasing after this pet or injuring myself running through the woods. Always take control of the pet. Use your slip leads. Don't rely on the pet collars. Most of the time they are too loose and the pet may slip out. I outright banned Flexi leads. They are trip hazards and cause can cause significant injuries. The thin rope like cord of the retractable leash can cause severe burns, deep cuts, entanglements or strangulations. It can even cause amputation to limbs and fingers of humans and pets. If the cord portion of the leash is grabbed while it’s being pulled, the chances of injuries greatly increases.

Back over to lifting.

These are some common occupational, improper lifting injuries.

1. Muscle and ligament sprains can be caused by a single instance of improper lifting, or by overstressing.
2. Weak back muscles. A chronic strain or sprain condition usually results from overuse involving prolonged, repetitive movement of the muscles and tendons.
3. Other factors that put an individual at risk and include excessively curving the lower back, being overweight, having weak back or abdominal muscles and or tight hamstrings.

Some signs and symptoms to be aware of: pain worsening with movement, muscle cramping, decreased flexibility, difficulty walking, pain when bending forward or sideways and discomfort when standing for long periods of time.

1. Lumbar vertebral disc herniations. Vertebral discs are made of soft and jelly like substance that sit between each spinal bone to absorb compression and movements forces placed upon the back. A herniation occurs when a disc slips out of place or ruptures because of a change in fluid pressure within the abdomen during improper lifting. Approximately 90% of all disk issues occur in the low back with a posterior bulge between the L four and L five vertebrae where most of the trunk flexion and extension takes place. That's where you're bending the most from.

Because of this pressure may be placed upon the spinal cord and nerves. This could result in the following symptoms: pain that runs down the buttocks and legs, tingling or numbness, muscle spasm. discomfort with movement, trouble sleeping in certain positions, bowel dysfunction and point tenderness over the effective area.

1. Abdominal hernias. They occur when the contents of the body cavity bulge out of an area where they are normally contained, most commonly seen in portions of the intestines. Hernias are most prevalent in men and can be caused by the following: heavy lifting with the weaknesses of the abdominal wall muscles, fluid displacement within the abdomen, prostate related problems and complications following a surgical procedure. It is not uncommon to be able to feel a lump over the affected area. But it is also important to be aware of full body weakness, fever, constipation, nausea, urinary problems and pains it also point towards an abdominal herniation.

How do we prevent this?

Stretch- shortened muscles can throw the spine out of alignment and cause back pain. Stretching lengthens shortened muscles, and can help relieve back pain and prevent an injury from occurring. Stretching exercises should focus on the low back, buttocks, hamstrings, quadriceps, hip flexors, abdominals and calves.

Each stretch should be done three to five times on each side and held for at least 10 to 15 seconds without pain. There will also be videos in another session regarding some lifting and stretching exercises,

Strengthening- an increase in muscular strength decreases the prevalence and severity of the pain. Improvements and changes from strength training can have long lasting effects that improve posture and decrease the chance of injury or re injury of the low back pain. For injuries associated with poor lifting techniques, the core will be the main focus. The core is made up of the back and abdominal muscles that primarily function to stabilize the body and build a foundation for upper and lower body strength. You can build upon your core by introducing a resistance training program. Your local gym can help design anexercise program for you. There's also will be a video from lare latchaw on foundation training which is helps to strengthen the core in another session of this workshop.

Back braces- there are conflicting studies and whether or not back braces help, you would have to have that discussion with your medical doctor.

 Physical Therapy-We'll cover this a bit more later and I've included an OSHA link in the resources for back injuries.

Let's deal with the injuries. In the workbook, there is a pet first aid kit checklist as well as a bleeding injury checklist. For every two to three employees you will need, according to OSHA, one first aid kit.

I'm going to go over first what specifically OSHA wants in it and then I will go over my suggestions and what item is used for. However, you need to make sure that what OSHA wants OSHA gets.

1. Gauze pads, at least four by four inches.
2. Larger gauze pads at least eight by 10 inches,
3. Adhesive bandaids.
4. Gauze roll bandage that's at least two inches wide.
5. Triangular bandages.
6. Wound cleansing agent such as those sealed moistened towelettes they they're usually alcohol based.
7. Blunt tip scissors.
8. One blankets.
9. Tweezers.
10. Adhesive tape.
11. Latex gloves.
12. Resuscitation equipment such as resuscitation bag, airway or pocket mask.
13. Two elastic wraps and splint.
14. Directions for requesting emergency assistance.

So what's in my first aid kit,

1. Activated charcoal that's used to absorb ingested poisons. And any item that is in my kit that is intended for poisoning will not be used unless directed by a medical professional. Protocols vary and what will help in one instance can cause harm in another.
2. Antibiotic cream for wounds. And I don't use triple antibiotic as I groom cats. While it is rare, if the cat is allergic to the combination of the three ingredients, it may cause a fatal reaction.
3. Anti-histamine with a safety pin for minor allergic reactions. I specifically look for a dyphenhydramine gels that have the liquid center. The safety pin is used to puncture the gel cap and squirt the liquid directly onto the tongue. It is the fastest way for an anaphylactic person to absorb the antihistamine. Consult a medical professional for proper dosing.
4. Baking soda to absorb any topical poisons or chemicals.
5. Band aids for myself.
6. Bandanas from have they have multiple uses. They can replace the splints and the triangular bandages that OSHA wants. They can also be used as slings to take the weight off an injured limb.
7. Expired gift cards. The cards can be used to flick out and be stingers place the card at the base of the stinger where it meets the skin and just lifted just flick it out.
8. Eye wash serves double duty as it can be used to flush out both eyes and wounds.
9. Gauze comes in three varieties: gauze roll, gauze pads, and nonstick gauze pads. The gauze roll is wider and is good for larger wounds. The nonstick gauze is more expensive, but I will use it as the first pad on the wound and then place the cheaper gauze or on top of it. The nonstick gauze will not remove the scab when it is time replace the bandaging.
10. Hydrogen peroxide to induce vomiting. As this is used for poisoning consult a medical professional first. Dosage will vary. Vomiting is not a given for poisoning. If it is caustic, it'll burn the throat on the way out again.
11. Ice will constrict blood flow and slow bleeding. Obviously, I do not keep ice in my pet first aid kit. If you have a freezer in the shop, then add ice.
12. Liquid bandage is an asset if you know how to use it properly. Used incorrectly, it can damage surrounding tissue as well as trap bacteria and the wound. Your medical professional can instruct you on the proper usage. Do not use superglue or Krazy Glue. It is not manufactured for medical use and as such, the manufacturer can change ingredients and formulation without consideration for safety on the wounds.
13. Rubber gloves to protect you from any zoonotic or contagions and also to collect vomit or fecal samples.
14. Sanitary napkins will absorb blood.
15. Teabags bags because they contain tannic acid. It is effective in stopping bleeding. While sugar is also effective. I don't recommend it because somebody may be diabetic or pre diabetic.
16. Vet wrap is wonderful. It helps keep the wound secure and dry. However, it will also self tighten. Elastic bandage needs to be changed on a daily basis.
17. Wound cleanser. you have a couple of options here. The first is a sterile saline solution, also known as eye wash. The second is a chlorohexadine based cleanser. This one is really easy to find. Almost any store that sells first aid items carries it. Don't use alcohol as it stings, or hydrogen peroxide as it can damage surrounding tissues and slow healing. Don't use sterile tap or bottled water as it disrupts the salt balance of the cells and slows healing.

Most of the items in my pet/human first aid kit, have expiration dates and should be checked periodically.

Let's talk about wound care. Most likely this happened because of a pet. So secure that pet in a crate. Take a deep breath. Emergency situations release endorphins such as adrenaline. It is responsible for the fight, flight, or freeze syndrome. You react instead of thinking, taking a deep breath forces oxygen backup to your brain helping to dissipate the adrenaline.

Go get your first aid kit. wash out the wound with a wound cleanser. Add the antibiotic cream, cover first with a nonstick gauze pad and then pad it with regular gauze. Don't use surgical glue unless you are certain on how to use it. Butterfly band aids may be a better option. Wrap with the rolled gauze or the elastic bandage and then send to the urgent care/ambulance/emergency rooms depending on the severity. Document the injury and create a record if it was more than minor first aid. Heading to Urgent Care fits that criteria.

Let’s move on to repetitive injuries. A repetitive injury to the body is caused by performing the same motion over and over again, thereby straining a body part/ Scissoring, brushing, washing, and combing. Repeating that same motion over and over again at high speeds with little rest and applying force to muscles, joints and tendons, while in an awkward angle maybe putting more stress on those body parts than is necessary and can increase the chances of developing repetitive motion injuries.

Repetitive motion injuries are sometimes called repetitive stress injuries. These injuries can cause temporary or permanent injury to muscles, nerves, ligaments and tendons caused by performing that same motion over and over again.

A common repetitive motion injury is carpal tunnel syndrome. This disorder occurs when the median nerve, which travels from the forearm to the hand through a tunnel, and the wrist, is compressed by swollen and inflamed ligaments and tendons.

But the most common type of repetitive motion injuries are tendinitis and bursitis. These two disorders are difficult to differentiate and sometimes may coexist.

Tendinitis. A tendon is a white fibrous tissue that connects muscles to bone and allows for the movement of all the joints throughout the human body. Because tendons must be able to bear all of the way that attach the muscle. They're very strong. Tendinitis is an inflammation of the tendon, wherever you see itis at the end of the word, think inflammation. Common sites of tendinitis include the shoulder, the biceps and the elbow. Males are actually slightly more likely to have this disorder. The inflammation of the tendon usually occurs at the site of the insertion into the bone.

Tendons run through a lubricating sheath where they connect into the muscle and this sheath may also become inflamed. That condition is known as tenos synovitis. It is almost identical to tendinitis because both have identical causes symptoms and treatment. Tenosynovitis may be involved in carpal tunnel syndrome, the most common compression nerve disorder, but this cause and effect relationship has never actually been proven.

Then there's bursitis. Bursa is this small pouch or sac that is found over an area where the friction and may develop and serves to cushion and lubricate the area between the tendon and the bone. Bursitis is an inflammation of a Bursa sac. We will have over 150 bursa in the body. Most are present at birth, but some come into existence as a result of repetitive injuries.

Common areas where bursitis can occur includes: the elbow, knee and hip. Different types of bursitis include traumatic, infectious, and gouty. Traumatic bursitis is the type involved with repetitive motion injuries. It is the most common in people that are younger than 35 years old.

The most common symptom associated with tendinitis is pain over the site involved. Tendinitis is made worse by active motion of the inflamed tendon. The skin overlaying the inflamed tendon may be red and warm to the touch. On the biceps the painful spot is usually in the groove where the arm meets the shoulder. You can reproduce this pain by flexing your elbow at 90 degrees and then trying to turn your palm up against resistance.

Tennis Elbow this pain is located in the lateral elbow and is reproduced by cocking your wrist back and forth as if you are bringing a tennis racket back up to hit the ball.

Golfer's elbow. This pain occurs in the medial elbow but is made worse by flexing the wrist forward as if you're hitting a golf ball. And the rotator cuff. Raising your arm out to the side reproduces this pain. This painful area is usually over the affected shoulder.

Common symptoms of bursitis include pain, tenderness, and decreased range of motion over the affected area, redness, swelling and a crunchy feeling when the joints is moved may also occur.

Knee the condition involves swelling over the bottom part of the kneecap that is red and warm to the touch. Usually the range of the motion will be less because of the pain that bending and straightening the knee causes.

Elbow- pain, swelling and redness are found over the elbow. This pain gets worse when you flex and extend your arm at the elbow.

Hip- your pain is increased by walking or lying on the affected side. Bringing your leg away or towards the midline of the body can also reproduce the pain.

Homecare for a painful or swollen joint should include elevation, and not moving it until your doctor can be contacted. You can use ice for relief of pain and swelling. Most authorities recommend icing two to three times a day for 20 to 30 minutes each time. You could also wrap ice or bag of frozen vegetables in a towel and place it on the area. If your shoulder is involved, you should not keep it immobile for more than 24 or 48 hours because your shoulder may become frozen and you will have a decreased change a range of motion. If this does not offer you relief, you need to see a doctor.

The prevention of tendinitis and bursitis is similar in most respects, Do adequate warm ups and cool down maneuvers. Do those stretching exercises before and after. Avoid activity that makes your injury flare up to help speed up healing. If using a clipper csuses you pain, avoid that activity and others like it.. So whatever it is that is causing it, you need to stop doing it.

You can practice range of motion exercises, which are really helpful with tendinitis. They're really important to ensure minimal decrease in function. You could also use splints or bands to decrease the strain on the tendon that occurs with sporting activities such as grooming. You can buy these generally over the counter or you can obtain them for your doctor.