

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

REMEMBER: Your veterinarian is always your best source of information when questions arise regarding your dog's health.

1. Does spaying or neutering my dog make it gain weight?
  - A. Too many calories and lack of exercise cause your dog to gain weight.
  
2. At what age do most veterinarians recommend spaying or neutering my dog?
  - A. Most vets spay or neuter around five or six months of age. There is information in recent literature regarding the practice of doing this at a much earlier age. A female should be spayed before her first heat cycle.
  
3. Should I brush my dog's teeth?
  - A. Dogs should get their teeth brushed every day but a few times a week is usually enough to prevent problems. Use toothpaste developed especially for dogs.
  
4. Why is it not a good idea to feed my puppy milk?
  - A. Dogs and puppies do not have the proper enzyme, lactase to properly break down lactose in milk. Undigested lactose (sugar) tends to ferment in the intestine and cause diarrhea. If you should see milk or milk by-products listed as ingredients in pet foods, lactose bacteria have been added to break down the sugar into a more digestible form.
  
5. Is it true that chocolate is toxic to dogs?
  - A. Chocolate contains a lethal ingredient, methylanthine, called theobromine. Baking chocolate contains 10 times more of this lethal ingredient than milk chocolate. Some pets appear to tolerate chocolate better than others. If you suspect your dog has ingested chocolate, call your vet immediately.
  
6. Are onions toxic to dogs?
  - A. Onions can cause hemolytic anemia, a condition in which red blood cells are destroyed, says Kathy Michael, D.V.M, a clinical assistant professor of nutrition at the University Of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine in Philadelphia. Be careful what falls to the floor when chopping onions. Make sure your trash is secure and do not give your dog onion-flavored food.
  
7. I was told not to leave food out all day and let my puppy eat whenever it wants to. Why?
  - A. Feeding your dog on a set schedule will let you know when it is "off its feed." It will be easier to predict potty habits and make housetraining easier and faster. Mealtime can also be used to require Fido to comply with your request to "work for your dinner."
  
8. What is the best way to change my puppy's food?
  - A. Mix a small amount of the new food with that previously fed. Gradually increase the amount of the new food each day. Sudden changes in diet could cause stomach upset or diarrhea.

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9. Can I feed my puppy raw eggs?
- A. Adding raw eggs can cause deficiency of the vitamin, biotin. As a general rule, there is no good reason to add raw eggs to your puppy's already balanced diet.
10. I was told not to let my puppy get too fat? Why?
- A. Dogs that get too heavy start feeling uncomfortable. They also have a higher risk of getting diabetes and arthritis. If you can't see or feel the ribs, then your dog is carrying too much weight. Ribs that are too prominent, by contrast, could mean that your dog is underweight. Too much weight could cause problems with joint and bone development.
11. How do I remove urine odors & stain from my carpet?
- A. There are several commercial products you can purchase from your vet and in pet supply stores. Simple Solutions and Nature's Miracle are just two products that contain enzymes that eat away or digest the odor-causing bacteria and help remove discoloration. Never use ammonia since pet urine contains this odor and could cause the animal to return to the same spot.
12. What types of First Aid products should I have available at my house in case my dog is injured or ill?
- A. Talk to your veterinarian about what over-the-counter medications you should keep on hand for your dog, such as Antibiotic ointment, Pepto Bismol or Kaopectate for upset stomachs, Benedryl for itching or insect bites, Pedialyte (used to replenish fluids after diarrhea, Ice packs, Tweezers, Hydrogen peroxide, Needleless Syringe (to give liquid medications), Cotton balls, tape, Gauze rolls, Ace Bandage, Digital Thermometer and something that you could make a muzzle with such as a man's necktie. Keep these items in a container that is meant just for your dog so that you may take it with you when you go on trips.
13. What should I do if my dog has an encounter with a skunk?
- A. Treat immediately before the spray dries. Flush the eyes with an over the counter eye wash or common saline solution. Next, neutralize the spray by mixing two pints of hydrogen peroxide, a quarter cup of baking soda, and two or more teaspoons of dishwashing liquid. It is best to bathe your dog outside to prevent the odor from lingering in your house. Start by washing your dog with his regular shampoo (wear rubber gloves). After rinsing him, lather him up again with the home made shampoo. After you rinse him, you may have to repeat this several times. Be careful not to get the shampoo in his eyes. Your vet may also have a product, Skunk-Off, which he may recommend.
14. What is the best and safest way to remove a tick from my dog?
- A. Remove the tick as soon as possible since so many types of ticks transmit serious diseases such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and encephalitis. Immobilize the tick by dabbing it with rubbing alcohol. Grasp the tick firmly with a pair of tweezers, getting as close to the head as possible. Pull slowly and steadily. Within five to ten seconds you should feel the tick loosening its grip. The head should come loose along with the body. Dab the area with an antiseptic such as Betadine.

15. Why does my dog eat grass?

- A. Dogs occasionally get a craving for greens, and will contentedly munch on grass or green weeds for as long as you let them. Dogs are omnivorous animals, which means they need plant as well as meat based foods. Dogs often eat grass when their stomachs are upset, which suggests it plays some sort of medicinal role. With today's pesticides and chemical sprays, grass isn't always safe for your dog to eat. Instead, give your dogs some clean fresh vegetables on occasion.

