

Derm Digest

Indianapolis IN • Louisville KY • Marietta GA • Pasadena CA
Marina del Rey CA • San Diego CA • Tustin CA



Animal Dermatology Clinic

Advancing the Art of Veterinary Dermatology

May 2012

A Fungus Among Us: Molds May Cause Allergies

Molds are fungi. Fungus is a large group of organisms which are neither plant nor animal. A common fungus is the one that causes athlete's foot and another well-known fungus is the mushroom! We are pretty sure only one of these fungi will be found on a pizza.

Included in the group fungus are molds. There are a multitude of molds that have been identified, not all of them capable of creating discomfort for your pet (or you), some molds have been harnessed to be quite useful in the making of cheese and drugs, for instance. A moldy piece of fruit has no effect on your pet and the degree of impact of mold varies from benign to causing extreme unhealthful conditions like black mold (*Stachybotrys atra*). At Animal Dermatology Clinic the fungus of interest are certain molds that may be the source of allergens for pets with environmental allergies.

Many pets are unaffected by molds and certainly for pair of animals in a household, one may show no symptoms of the presence of a mold, while the other displays allergic symptoms of itching and scratching.

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A microscopic view of a mold spore, Fusarium. This is just one of many molds that has been identified to cause allergic symptoms in some pets. Photo: Center for Disease Control, Dr. Libero Ajello

Cat Saves Owners Life Just Hours After Being Adopted



Pudding, the cat who was recently adopted and credited to saving the owners life. Photo courtesy of Tina M. Gohr, Door County Advocate

Cats are often maligned and stereotyped as well, let's just say it's the opposite of most dogs. The heroics of Rin Tin Tin and Old Yeller have been written about and movies made. Instead of Lassie the Wonder Collie, can you imagine an orange tabby's response to the frantic cries of help from a hapless Timmy?

Well wonder no more, as a cat in Wisconsin is given credit for bringing attention when the owner started to seizure in her sleep.

Amy Jung and her son Ethan stopped into The Humane Society near their home in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin on Feb. 8 to play with the cats when an orange-and-white cat caught her eye and she ended up adopting the 21-pound feline named Pudding, along with his friend Wimpy. Jung learned that the laid-back cat had been in and out of the shelter since 2003 when she made the impulsive decision to adopt the pair.

Jung said the cats wasted no time fitting into their new home when they arrived. But hours later after going to bed, Amy Jung who has had diabetes since childhood, started having a diabetic seizure in her sleep.

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Heroic cat, *continued*

That's when Pudding sprang into action. The fast-acting feline sat on Jung's chest in an attempt to wake her up and when that didn't work, he nudged and nipped at her face until she briefly returned to consciousness.

In that moment, Jung was able to call out to her son Ethan, but he couldn't hear her calls. Pudding then ran to Ethan's room and pounced on his bed awaking Ethan and he was able to call for help.

Jung believes that she wouldn't have made it through the night without Pudding, an opinion that her doctors share.

Since that night, Jung said, Pudding has taken to yowling at Jung's feet when her blood sugar is dropping. She checks it every time he starts up, and without fail he has been correct. "Your body, when you're diabetic, gives off a smell that he is reacting to," Jung said. Pudding is now being registered as a therapy animal.

There have been a number of reports of dogs sensing impending seizures, but the same behavior in cats is much rarer, according to doctors who spoke to the BBC for a story about a cat who predicted a number of deaths at a nursing home.

No word on the actions of the other cat, Wimsy. It is believed that he continued to groom himself during the entire event then promptly took a nap.

Source: Green Bay Press Gazette



Amy Jung pictured here with Pudding claims that he saved her life when she had a diabetic seizure. Photo courtesy of Tina M. Gohr, Door County Advocate

Mold, *continued*



This Indiana patient was allergy tested and found to be reactive to three molds, including Fusarium, and some pollens.

Environment may play a part in the presence of mold since mold thrives in warm moist conditions. Animal Dermatology Clinics located in California see few mold allergic pets compared to our clinics in Indiana, Kentucky and Georgia, in part due to the higher levels and frequency of humid weather.

Like pollen, the spores of mold are microscopic, moving freely throughout the air and we are constantly exposed to them. It is a good bet that there are mold spores on you now! Molds can also be found in the ground and can be released from pets that dig.

Mold is difficult to eradicate because the spores are very resistant to many cleaners and typically require a minimum of ten minutes of saturation with a strong oxidizer such as chlorine bleach or peroxide. Lysol® or other similar phenolic compounds will work as well. Moreover, if you "see" mold, a colony has already been established and it was probably present long before that accumulation.

If the doctor suspects an allergy, an allergy skin test may be ordered to determine if the pet shows to be hypersensitive to a particular mold (in addition to pollens). Antigen injections may bring relief (70% success rate for dogs and 60% success rate for cats).

So if an allergy to mold is identified, treatments are available. If antigen injections fail to bring relief, the veterinary dermatologist may use other protocols and medications for specific treatments.

Update: Daisy the Dog Found on the Streets Needs Assistance



The March issue of *Derm Digest* sought to tell the plight of “Daisy”, a young dog found on the streets and needing medical attention; it appeared that a caustic substance was poured on her back and was abandoned. She was adopted and taken to a veterinarian for treatment and ultimately Daisy was referred to Animal Dermatology Clinic and Veterinary Surgery Specialists (Tustin, CA) to treat the infections and apply skin grafts for her wounds.

Through the kind generosity of friends and strangers alike, donations were made to pay for Daisy’s medical expenses. According to Animal Assistance League of Orange County, the target goal was exceeded although as Daisy grows, additional surgery may be required to work on the skin grafts that were placed on her back.

You may still make a contribution to the “Daisy Fund” at any time by visiting www.aaloc.org and using Paypal or mailing a donation to PO Box 38, Midway City, CA 92655.

In response to last month’s Lessons from a Dog, an alternate view is offered.

Following are:

Life Lessons from the Cat



- Always give generously. A small bird or rodent left on the bed tells them you care.
- Climb your way to the top. That’s why the drapes are there.
- Curiosity never killed anything except maybe a few hours.
- Find your place in the sun. Especially if it happens to be on that nice pile of warm, clean laundry.
- Life is hard, then you nap.
- Variety is the spice of life. One day ignore people, the next day annoy them.
- Never sleep alone when you can sleep on someone’s face.
- When eating out, think nothing of sending back your meal twenty or thirty times.
- Make your mark in the world. Or at least spray in each corner.

Pet pictures needed! Have you submitted a picture of your pet? Go to our site at www.animaldermatology.com and upload a picture into our Pet Gallery. We would love to have your pet included in the gallery! Problems uploading? Send a message via the Contact Page and we’ll help you out.

Pet Events in Your Area

The following events are listed for informational purposes only. Please contact the organization prior to attending as schedules may change without notice. Animal Dermatology Clinic has no affiliation with these events.

Lexington, KY

Lexington Humane Society Mutt Strut

Saturday, May 12, 7:30a Keeneland Barn at the Keeneland Race Course, Lexington, KY

Snag your tennis shoes and your four-legged friend for the 15th annual Mutt Strut (sponsored by PetSmart and Raising Cane's)! Make plans to walk with your pup on May 12th to benefit the nearly 5,000 animals LHS cares for each year and start raising pledges now to make even more of an impact. Every dollar makes a difference and we need your help. There are great fundraising prizes available as well—and the more you raise, the better the prize! Visit www.AdoptLove.net for all details and to register today.

Visit some of our local vendors, adoptable animals and meet lots of other animal lovers.

Irvine, CA

6th Annual Super Adoption

6443 Oak Canyon Rd, Irvine, CA 92618

Sunday June 3 10am - 4pm

Entry fee \$1, free parking

Orange County's Largest Pet Adoption Event! 800+ adoptable animals, vendors and exhibitors, food and bake sale, ask the Vet and Trainer booths, silent auction and drawings. Low-cost microchips. Well behaved and leashed dogs are welcome. More info: info@irvineshelter.org or call 949-724-7740

Los Angeles, CA

Saturday May 19, 11am - 2pm \$25 per dog

American Cancer Society Bark for Life honors the caregiving qualities of canine companions and is a non-competitive walk event for dogs and their owners to raise funds and awareness in the fight against cancer. By supporting Bark For Life, you help the American Cancer Society save lives and help us move closer to a world with less cancer and more birthdays. Bring your best canine friends and join us for a fun-filled day starting with a walk, and then continuing with demos, contests, games and activities. Form a team, join a team, or walk as an individual.

For more information, please call 626-848-8329 or email andrew.dean@cancer.org.

Indianapolis, IN

American Working Dog Federation Championship May 11, 2012 to May 13, 2012

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Admission: \$7 per day, \$15 for 3 days

Benefiting: Local K9 Teams

The 2012AWDF is an all-breed working dog competition showcasing the finest working dog teams in the country. Food and drink will be available at the event, so bring the whole family and spend the day watching these highly trained canines do what they do best! Shop for a new ball or leash for your own canine companion at our many sponsoring vendors' booths. Proceeds from the event go to help support local K9 teams in their training and equipment purchases. * to ensure the safety, health and security of the canines competing in the event, we ask that you not bring your pet. For more information, please email 2012awdf@gmail.com.

San Diego, CA

4th Annual Doggie Street Festival

June 10, 2012 9am to 4pm

Admission: N/A

Southern California's Largest Dog & Cat Adoption-Focused Festival - Good Eats - Music - Pet Products - Kids Art Area - Photo Booth - Fun for the entire family. This non-profit Festival celebrates our pet companions while providing information on pet care, training and well-being. Join us and together we can advocate to help end pet homelessness. Rescue groups from throughout San Diego County will be in attendance with adoptable dogs & cats. All dogs must keep their humans on leash! More information: www.doggiestreetfestival.org or call 6192764142 or email doggiestreet@gmail.com.

Lawrenceville, GA

Saturday May 5 10am - 4pm

Pawfest 2012 at Tribble Mill Park

2125 Tribble Mill Pkwy SE, Lawrenceville, GA

Goal: Raise \$5000 for Gwinnett Humane Society's programs and service to help, unwanted, unloved and animals and our community. Register online \$20 at www.firstgiving.com.gwinneethumane \$25 at PAWfest. Lots to do and see! Contests and silent auction, kids activities. For more information visit PAWfest.com