

Derm Digest

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Animal Dermatology Clinic

Advancing the Art of Veterinary Dermatology

January 2012

New Year's Resolutions for Pets and Their Owners



The New Year invites the inevitable resolutions to be made, to “clean the slate” and start anew. Janet Tobiassen Crosby, DVM lists ten resolutions to kick off the new year for people and pets for a healthier lifestyle and helping pets in need. See the list at vetmedicine.about.com

- 1. Exercise** Regular exercise benefits both pet and owner and provides good quality time.
- 2. Health Check Up** Annual examinations are less costly than waiting for a problem to develop.
- 3. Good Nutrition** A poor diet affects the skin, coat and muscle tone. Obesity may be the result of a poor diet. Table scraps are not part of a healthy diet.
- 4. Good Grooming** Regular grooming: bathing, nail clipping, teeth cleaning, parasite control contribute not only to overall appearance, it is much healthier for the pet.
- 5. Safety** Ensure that toxins are not accessible by pets. Check enclosures and fences to see that they are secure and that a pet cannot get caught or hooked up on the fence.

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Myth Buster: Derm Edition

The internet is a good source of information on nearly any topic one can think of. When is Justin Bieber's birthday? March 1. What country produces the most copper? Chile. How do you treat a hot spot? It is amazing how many people ask about treating their pets' ailments in a public forum without thinking about who is giving the response.

If this were a relative would you do the same thing? 'My uncle is bleeding from his ears and nose. He is feeling weak. Can anyone tell me how to treat him?' Pretty ridiculous, isn't it?

One of the pitfalls of this plethora of information is the originating source. Yes, there is plenty of bogus information posted on the internet and sadly, well-meaning but usually unqualified people make erroneous and unfounded statements that others may accept as fact. Some have earned the status of “urban myth”.

Here are a couple of pet stories that have been floating around and you may have received as an email.



Listerine® for hot spots. FALSE.

Hot spots are areas of irritation on the skin produced by self-trauma. Although it is important to address the affected area, the underlying cause of the irritation must be found. This could be allergies, ear disease or parasites.

Listerine was once sold, in distilled form, as both a floor cleaner and a cure for gonorrhea. In the 1920s it was marketed as a solution for bad breath and achieved its success. (source: *Freakonomics*, Levitt, Steven d.; *Dubner, Stephen J. 2009, p. 87*)

Now some are touting its effectiveness for treating hot spots on pets. While being possibly effective for its antibacterial properties, it contains a high level of alcohol which can cause “stinging” on broken skin. *cont. page 2*

Myth Buster, continued

Says Dr. Rusty Muse, one of the dermatologists in our Tustin California office, "Certainly some of the ingredients in typical over the counter commercial products have some benefits to the skin. For example menthol and thymol produce a cooling effect to the skin which can be a "substitute" sensation and decrease the level of itching or pruritus that is felt. Some of the other ingredients in these products can have astringent or drying effects on exudative skin. But the levels of the antiseptic products are not generally high enough to have substantial effects on bacterial organisms which may be colonizing or infecting the tissue and the high levels of alcohol could be quite irritating on open wounds. However there are many products available to pet owners to treat pyotraumatic dermatitis ("hot spots") effectively that are designed specifically for the unique properties of the canine skin and improve the quality of the skin and barrier function that it provides and these would in most cases be better options."

So while the internet may be able to provide insight into "alternative" therapeutic options in the short term, it is recommended that professional guidance, other than consulting "Dr. Google" should be sought. It is nearly impossible to make an accurate assessment of a pet's condition over the internet and impossible to give medical advice for a condition that has not been adequately diagnosed."

Save your Listerine to use as it was sold: mouthwash!

Swifters WetJet® kills pet. FALSE.

The story was that the neighbor reported that their pet passed away from liver failure. It was an indoor dog and always in the presence of another person when outdoors. So when the dog died rather suddenly, the owner went through the trash cans and found that the housekeeper had recently cleaned the floors with the purported offending product. Then the housekeeper's two cats died supposedly after cleaning her floors at her own home. The cautionary label on the package allegedly stated to 'keep away from children and animals'. The owner then correlated the floor cleaning with the dog's death and the unknown author of the story spread it far and wide.

Swifters contain mostly water and scent. It would require ample consumption of the liquid to harm a pet. Furthermore the labels on Swifters Wet Jet says "AVOID ACCIDENTS: KEEP OUT OF THE REACH OR CHILDREN AND PETS". The pet owner in this story is also unknown and has never stepped forward. If you were looking for excuse not clean your floors, you can't use this one anymore.

This last story is not about pet health, but about helping to feed homeless and abused pets. **Perhaps you have received the chain email asking you to go to a website to "click and give free food donations for abused and neglected animals". TRUE!**

Essentially this is an advertisers website. They donate a portion of their sales made from the website to buy food for shelters with homeless and abused pets, but you don't have to buy anything, just go to www.theanimalrescuesite.com and click on the button. The enticement is that if you buy their products, they will donate more. And they know that pet owners are "softies"...

Although this last story was true, please look a little deeper to unsolicited well-meaning warnings or anonymous advice. When pondering the steps to take when your pet is not feeling well, replace "pet" with "family member" and see if the answer becomes clear.

Resolutions, continued

- 6. Information** Keep a medical log of your pet's visits, medications, special needs, etc to keep track of your pet's medical history. Knowing what is normal and not normal for your pet will help your veterinarian figure out what is wrong in the case of illness.
- 7. Love and attention** Take time to focus on your pets to create and build that human-animal bond.
- 8. Volunteer** Nearly every city in the U.S. has a shelter or rescue that can use your assistance: financial, donation of supplies or your time is always appreciated.
- 9. Maintenance** Keeping the litter box clean, yard tidy, cage cleaning and fish tank maintenance. Poor sanitation can lead to behavior problems (i.e. litter box avoidance) and health problems such as skin infections and the spread of communicable diseases.
- 10. Be a Voice** Speak up when you notice neglected or abused pets in your neighborhood. If you can help even one animal escape a painful life, it is worth it. Shelters and rescue groups will accept an anonymous tip to help animals in need.

(Source: *About.com Veterinary Medicine, Janet Tobiassen Crosby, DVM*)

Employee Spotlight: Janet Lampe



Janet is one of the long-time employees of Animal Dermatology Clinic. She is a Registered Veterinary Technician and was looking for a different path as a technician when she discovered dermatology in January of 1998. It was the change that she was looking for and has been with us since then. In 1999 Janet worked at the satellite clinic in Temecula and watched it grow to a very busy two-day a week clinic. She now utilizes her skills in the Palm Springs satellite clinic two days a month and at general practice in the Temecula Valley.

In her spare time, Janet and her daughter show, breed and do agility with Great Danes in addition to participating in fund raising for Great Dane rescue. When not at a dog event, she is watching her son play Lacrosse.

She is now learning how to paddle board with her husband of 24 years who is an L.A. fireman.

"If you can't decide between a Shepherd, a Setter or a Poodle, get them all ... adopt a mutt!"

~ ASPCA

Dog Power Dog Food on Recall

Advanced Animal Nutrition recalled several lots of its dry Dog Power Dog Food due to aflatoxin levels above the acceptable limit.

The company is the third to recall food due to aflatoxin in the past week, following recalls from [Procter & Gamble](#) and [Cargill](#).

The affected products were manufactured between Jan. 4, 2011, and Nov. 18, 2011, and include:

- Dog Power Adult Maintenance Formula 21-12 Dog Food, 50 lb. bags;
- Dog Power Hunters Formula 27-14 Dog Food, 50 lb. bags;
- Dog Power Hi-Pro Performance Formula 26-18 Dog Food, 50 lb. bags.

The recall applies to the above products with Packaging Date Codes [lot numbers] K0004 through K1322. The affected products were distributed in Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana. Retailers have been instructed to remove the affected brands and products from their shelves.

The company said consumers should return affected products, whether opened or unopened, to their place of purchase for a full refund. They can also call 1-866-648-7646 for more information.

Advanced Animal Nutrition said it implemented the recall as a precautionary measure, and no adverse health effects related to these products have been reported.

Aflatoxins are produced by toxigenic strains of *Aspergillus flavus* and *A. parasiticus* on peanuts, soybeans, corn and other cereals, either in the field or during storage when moisture content and temperatures are sufficiently high for mold growth, according to the Merck Veterinary Manual. High doses of aflatoxins result in severe hepatocellular necrosis, and prolonged low dosages result in reduced growth rate and liver enlargement. Pets that have consumed the affected product and are exhibiting symptoms of illness including sluggishness or lethargy combined with a reluctance to eat, vomiting, yellowish tint to the eyes or gums, or diarrhea should be seen by a veterinarian, the company said.

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.

Arcadia, CA Jan 21 - 22

Purr Pourri of Kats: Cats on Cloud 9
10-Ring Championship & Household Pet Show
The Masonic Center
50 W. Duarte Road Arcadia, CA 91007
Cat admirers will see beautiful specimens at this event with judging in many categories. Please call 760-412-2289 for information.

Pomona, CA Jan 7

Reptile Super Show
Pomona Fairplex
1101 West McKinley Avenue
Pomona, CA 91768
The Reptile Super Show is the world's largest reptile show and breeders expo. The largest selection and meeting spot of captive bred reptiles and reptile breeders.
Reptile Super Show offers thousands of lizards, snakes, turtles, frogs and all the supplies and accessories on sale at SUPER low prices. A fun and educational event for the whole family. More than 200 vendors from all over the world will feature the largest selection of captive bred reptiles and amphibians.
Hours: Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sunday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Adults \$10 / \$6 kids (12 & younger)
Two-day pass: \$20 adults, \$12 ages 12 & younger
For more information please visit:
reptilesupershow.com

Louisville, KY Jan 17

10206 Westport Rd, Louisville, KY
Animal Care Society Day at Buckhead Mountain Grill on Westport Rd. 20% of your check will be donated to Animal Care Society. All are invited to stop by Buckhead Mountain Grill, Tuesday, January 17.
Animal Care Society is a private no-kill shelter located at 12207 Westport Rd, Louisville, KY. For more information about the event or to learn more about ACS, please call 502-426-6303.

Lawrenceville, GA Jan 28

Repticon Atlanta Reptile Exotic Animal Show
Gwinnett County Fairgrounds
2405 Sugarloaf Parkway
Lawrenceville, GA 30045
Cost: Payment required - Admission: Adults - \$10, Children (5-12) - \$5, 4 & under - Free
Repticon Atlanta is a reptile event featuring vendors offering reptile pets, supplies, feeders, cages, and merchandise. Participate in free raffles held for enthusiasts, animal seminars, and kid's activities.

San Diego, CA Jan 15

Walk.Run.Wag 5K9 Pet 5K/1-Mile
Sunday, Jan 15 (2012) 6:00a to 12:00p
at the Del Mar Fairgrounds, Del Mar, CA
Walk or run 5K or 1 mile with your dog, or do it solo.
Sign-up and get coaching and training program for you and your pet. Benefiting San Diego community Animal Welfare through Petco Foundation. Pet & Fitness Expo for everyone.
www.walkrunwag.com to register and get more information.

Indianapolis, IN Feb 9

Indy Winter Classic Dog Shows
Indiana State Fairgrounds
1202 E 38th St, Indianapolis, IN 46205
Considered one of the most prestigious dog shows in the country, and ranked by the AKC as one the Top 10 dogs shows in the country. Come see 2,500 dogs representing over 135 breeds, compete for the highly coveted Best in Show Award.
Cost: Thursday - Free admission and parking. Friday through Sunday \$5.00, under 12 yrs, free. Military and First Responders free with ID.
Fairgrounds parking is \$3.00.
Info: 317-861-6937 or
www.hoosierkennelclub.org