

# Derm Digest

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

November 2012



Animal Dermatology Clinic

Advancing the Art of Veterinary Dermatology

## Seborrhea sicca: AKA doggy dandruff



Looks like “snow” came early this year! Dry, flaky skin is a fairly common condition. When itching and scratching develop, it is advised to see a veterinarian.

Everyone knows what it is and probably has seen it: dead skin cells clinging on to your pet’s hair! While dry flaky skin on your dog is an indicator of some other skin ailment (either primary or secondary), the description of the scale itself is termed seborrhea sicca. Many people may refer to this as doggy dandruff (cats can develop this as well but less commonly).

On people, the skin cells of the entire body are constantly generating themselves as the old cells are shed. It is a normal and constant function of the body. For some people, over activity of this cell shedding (often noted on the scalp) may appear as whitish-gray flakes in the hair and often deposited on the shoulders and back. Selsun Blue® has made a fortune on this problem!

Pets can experience the same condition except, of course it can affect their entire body. There are multiple different primary and secondary diseases of dogs (and cats) that can stimulate either over production of these skin cells or a prolonged retention of the skin cells on the surface. Both of these situations result in excess scale noted to the skin. Additionally, environmental factors can exacerbate this condition as clients from our less humid dry areas can attest to. (continued page 2)

## Table Scraps Can Derail Food Allergy Trial

Holiday meals are an enticing event for pets but many veterinarians discourage pet owners from giving dogs and cats food from the “people table”. Much of our food is not fit for pets; it can cause stomach upset and long term contributes to pet obesity.

Certainly some human foods can be toxic to animals (chocolate) or can be dangerous such as chicken bones which can be a choking hazard. (continued page 2)



Whether or not your pet is undergoing a food trial, there are seven foods you should avoid feeding your dog or cat.

1. Xylitol-containing products (xylitol is an artificial sweetener often found in sugar-free candy and gum)
2. Chocolate (although some types of chocolate are not as toxic as others, it’s safer to keep your pet away from all types of chocolate)
3. Onions
4. Grapes and raisins
5. Fatty and fried foods
6. Macadamia nuts
7. Avocados

Source: American Veterinary Medical Assn.

## Doggy Dandruff, cont.



*A dark coat will highlight the effects of flaky dry skin as shown on this dog.*

Treatment can involve many different approaches to either reduce the rate of cell growth or to improve the elimination of the skin cells on the surface. Multiple different diagnostics may be needed to determine exactly the cause of the abnormality. Some simple things that can be done at home while the additional factors are identified can involve: brushing the coat regularly to remove flakes and may stimulate the skin to produce additional sebum (natural oils). A wide variety of shampoos are available to treat dandruff. These are generally designed to remove scale (sulfur based products) and sometimes can help to actually reduce the cell production rate. Be sure that you use a shampoo made for animals and recommended by your dermatologist. Most pet owners believe that too much bathing can be counter-productive, but by using the correct shampoo and catering that choice to the specific skin condition rarely results in a problem. Many of these dogs can be (and may need to be bathed multiple times weekly). Cool to tepid water (not too warm) should generally be used. Diet can affect your pet's skin and essential fatty acids added as a supplement or using a food that is fortified with omega-6 fatty acids may be very helpful.

As mentioned, seborrhea sicca is generally an indicator of other diseases, so if the condition persists or worsens or if itching and scratching develops, see your veterinarian for a thorough and appropriate workup and evaluation. 🐾

## Table Scraps, cont.

If your pet is undergoing a food allergy trial, please know that deviating from the prescribed diet can undermine the results of the food trial. Even a little bit of that turkey drumstick can cause an allergic reaction (assuming that the pet is allergic to poultry).

A food trial requires that a pet eat a defined and limited diet for a period of time to determine whether allergic symptoms diminish while on this limited diet. If the allergic symptoms cede, then a new food ingredient can be added, watching carefully for a possible allergic reaction.

Therefore, it will take extra care during the holiday season when pets are given the opportunity to join the buffet, invited or otherwise. Well meaning house guests may offer pets a nibble of food not knowing that a food trial is underway, so let visitors know that feeding the pets is not allowed.

Some pet owners believe that because the food is labeled "organic", then it is free of reactions in a food allergic pet. Not so. Regardless of the food source, if a pet is allergic to a particular food, there is little that can be done to remove that component from the food except to avoid it.

The common advice among many pet owners is that whenever a pet has a skin condition, change the diet; true food allergic pets are not as common as one would believe. But if your veterinarian has placed your pet on a food trial, it will take time and discipline to isolate the offending foods causing an allergy, so don't let a "little treat" ruin your efforts. 🐾



## Dog Escapes Home to Find Hospitalized Owner

Zander, a white samoyed-husky mix, navigated two miles of tricky neighborhoods and across a busy highway to find his owner who was in the hospital, and now he's not leaving his side.

As John Dolan lay in his hospital bed at the Good Samaritan Medical Center in Islip, N.Y., Sept. 27, he got a phone call from a hospital employee that he had to come get his dog. One problem, Dolan was inside the hospital and his wife, Priscilla, was asleep at home.

When Zander and Dolan were finally reunited, they couldn't be happier.

"He's my boy. He's been glued to me ever since," Dolan told (TV show) "Good Morning America" today.

Dolan called his wife last Thursday to tell her to come get Zander outside the hospital. She didn't know he was missing until she got the call.

"We couldn't believe it. I was sleeping and I was like, 'Oh my God, what is he doing there?'" Priscilla Dolan told "GMA."

While Dolan was in the hospital Zander was very sad and moping around the house, Priscilla Dolan said. He was missing his best friend.

"He sleeps right next to John and John walks him a lot," Priscilla Dolan said.

Zander is a 70-pound, approximately 7-year-old samoyed-husky mix that Dolan and his wife had rescued from a shelter five years ago who has a history of escaping. The hospital isn't in the direction that he's gone before, so the Dolans aren't sure where he was heading this time.

"Was he on his way to Hollywood? I don't know," John Dolan joked. 🐾

*ABC News' Jennifer Abbey contributed to this report.*

Source: ABC News

## Opinion: Pet Survey Masks Cats Intentions

Petfinder.com displays a number of statistics about pets and pet ownership in the U.S. as collected from the American Humane Association. Under the heading of 'Americans treat their pets like family' they list the interactions that occur with pets and their owners. To wit:

- In 70% of feline households, cats are allowed to lie on the furniture. In 40% of canine households, dogs are allowed to do so.
- In 65% of cat-owning households, cats are permitted to sleep at night on some family member's bed compared with 39% of dogs.
- In 75% of the nation's dog-owning households, the dog is treated to rides in the family car compared with 8% of households with cats.

These are just a few of many interesting items listed, but some of these questions regarding cats were a bit rhetorical, if not absurd.

For instance, they state that 70% of feline households, cats are allowed to lie on the furniture. The operative word here is "allowed". The remaining 30% of cats are lying on the furniture when you are not around. In fact, those cats will hear you turn off the TV and that is their signal knowing that you will be vacating "their" space and can sleep on your Ming dynasty antique silk covered chair. Just be happy you don't find a hairball on it in the morning.

The survey says that 65% of cats are "permitted" to sleep on a bed at night. The other 35% have found a more restful spot without your thrashing about and talking in your sleep. See above.

Finally, a large majority of dogs are "treated" to ride in the car as compared to 8% of cats. Cats are control freaks and unless they are allowed to drive the car, they have little interest in being a passenger. Most often, those 8% of cats that are allowed in cars will always want to steer while you press the accelerator.

See the complete survey at [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com) and see how you match against fellow pet owners. 🐾

*Pet pictures needed! Have you submitted a picture of your pet? Go to our site at [www.animaldermatology.com](http://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.

### Pasadena, CA

**December 13 5PM – 10PM**

#### One Colorado

#### Pet Night with Santa

Bring your furry pals to sit with Santa and have the moment captured by their resident photographer. A portion of the proceeds to benefit the Pasadena Humane Society & SPCA. One Colorado is in the heart of Old Town Pasadena with many shops and restaurants to suit every taste.

### Indianapolis, IN

**November 10-11**

#### Great Indy Pet Expo

Exposition Hall, Indiana State Fairgrounds

1202 East 38<sup>th</sup> St, Indianapolis, IN 46205

Adults: \$7, Seniors: \$6, Children (6-12) \$4 and children under 5 are free.

The mission of the Great Indy Pet Expo is to promote the health and well-being of Indy's companion animals; to educate Indy pet owners on the importance of spaying, neutering, and regular veterinary care; and to encourage pet ownership as a lifetime commitment. The Great Indy Pet Expo shares the joy that our pets offer, while showcasing a variety of new products and services.

[www.greatindypetexpo.com](http://www.greatindypetexpo.com)

Information: [CathyErickson@mac.com](mailto:CathyErickson@mac.com) or call 515-778-4762

### Costa Mesa, CA

**November 3 – 4 7:00AM – 4:00PM**

Pet Days during the Swapmeet at the OC Marketplace

O.C. Fair and Event Center

88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Come to the fairgrounds and see exhibitors and vendors featuring Pet Wellness Information, Adoptions, Specialty Rescue Groups, Animal Welfare Education, Spay & Neuter Information, Pet-related Vendors, Photo Opportunities, Guest Speakers and Demonstrations, Non-Profit Orgs.

Save a pet...Adopt, don't buy!

Please, no personal pets permitted

**\*\*Food Drive for Homeless Animals\*\***

Bring two cans or any bag of unopened cat or dog food and you get into Pet Days FREE!!

Please see [www.ocmarketplace.com](http://www.ocmarketplace.com) for more information and details.

### San Diego, CA

**December 9, 2012**

San Diego's furriest festive parade returns to Downtown as the **Gaslamp Holiday Pet Parade presented by Downtown Ace Hardware** takes over the streets of the Gaslamp Quarter on **Sunday, December 9, 2012**. All pet owners and their furry, featured and scaled companions are invited to don their favorite costumes and put their best paw, wing and fin forward for this jolly promenade and pet expo, which starts and ends at **Gaslamp Hilton Park**, adjacent to the Hilton San Diego Gaslamp Quarter (401 K Street, San Diego, CA 92101) at Fourth Avenue and K Street. More info: [www.gaslamp.org](http://www.gaslamp.org)

### Marietta, GA

**November 4 1:00PM – 4:00PM**

Haven, The Dog Spot

The Fountains of Olde Towne

736 Johnson Ferry Rd. Marietta, GA 30068

Mutt Maddness will have a dog adoption day! Mutt Maddness is a no-kill rescue seeking responsible owners with loving homes for pet that needs a place to call home.

Info at [www.muttmaddness.org](http://www.muttmaddness.org)

### Louisville, KY

**November 30 – December 2 11AM – 5PM**

The Bow Wow Meow Boutique

4000 Collins Lane

Louisville, KY 40245

Holiday boutique to benefit the Animal Care Society. Purchased and donated items are artfully assembled into theme baskets. There are variety of baskets from which to select! Some have wine or liquor, baked goods, pet items and more. There will be a raffle and silent auction area as well. For more information, contact the Animal Care Society at 502-426-6303.