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No. 27 • MARCH/APRIL 2020

## **Barn Hunts & Lure Coursing**

**HUMAN DRUGS AND DOGS**  
**SPRING ALLERGY SEASON**  
**SCOOP THE POOP**

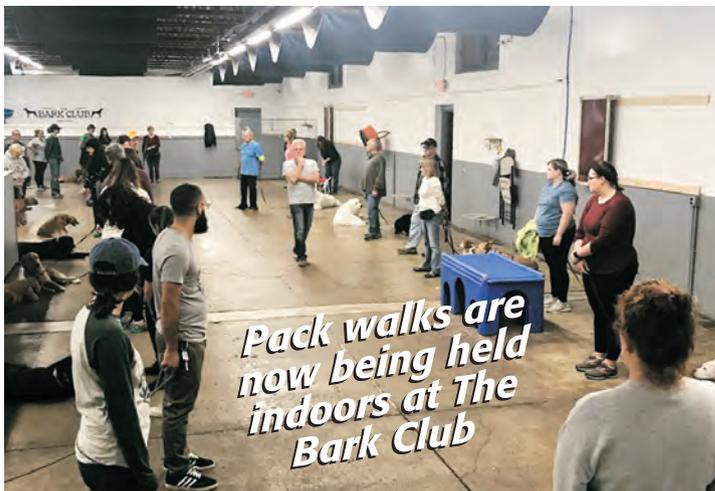


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MARCH / APRIL 2020

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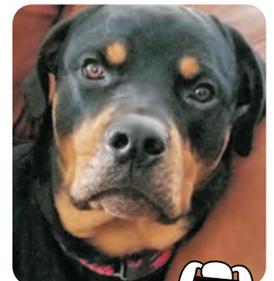
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# ..... ASK THE TRAINER .....

By John Thompson, CCPDT-KA, KSA

## Three ways to raise a healthy, active dog

**Y**our puppy is like a baby, and you want to do everything you can to make sure he grows up to be a healthy, active dog. So, what exactly does that look like? It's a lot like raising an actual human child -- with less talking and more attitude.

You're going to have to give your dog proper nutrition, make sure he gets lots of playtime and teach him right from wrong. It sounds like a lot -- and it can be overwhelming -- but if you follow these three guidelines, it'll be a piece of cake.

### STEP #1 MAKE SURE YOUR PUPPY HAS A WELL-BALANCED DIET

The one thing that can kill any amount of training and exercise is a bad diet. You have to make sure everything your dog consumes, at least the majority of the time, is composed of high protein and low-fat foods. Although dogs are not strict carnivores, they need to eat a lot of protein to stay healthy. You must be very careful about the type of dog food or even regular food that you feed your dog.

As a general rule of thumb, only give your dog foods that are wholesome in nature and do not contain a lot of fillers. The more whole foods you give your dog, the less health problems he will have in the future, and the healthier he will be overall.



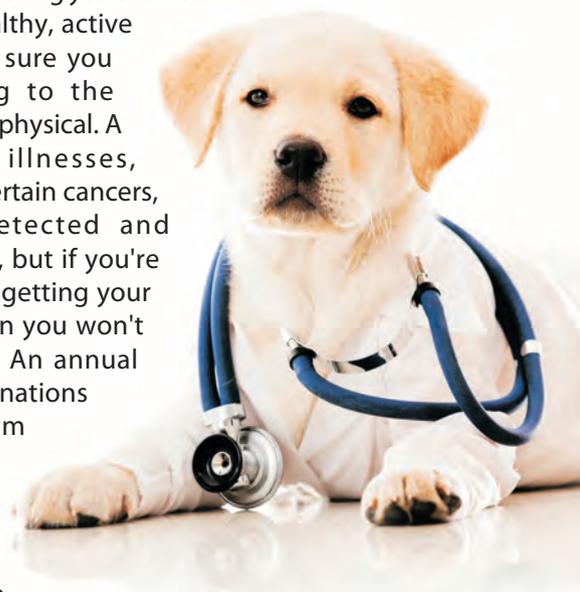
### STEP #2 KEEP YOUR PUPPY ACTIVE

Even though dogs are smart, there are some things they cannot do, like take themselves to the gym. Therefore, you have to take the time to make sure your

dog is getting proper exercise each and every day. I understand how difficult it can be to take time to walk your dog when you already have a very busy schedule, but it's crucial to raising a healthy, active dog. The younger your dog is, the more exercise he probably needs. The amount of time you need to walk your dog also depends on the breed. Labrador Retrievers have a lot of energy and will need more exercise than a Pug or a Chihuahua. The best thing you can do is pay attention to how your dog is behaving. If he is terrorizing your house, chances are he's bored and needs to expel some energy by going for a walk.

### STEP #3 MAKE SURE YOUR DOG GETS AN ANNUAL PHYSICAL

The third and final thing you should do to raise a healthy, active dog is to make sure you take your dog to the doctor to get a physical. A variety of illnesses, including certain cancers, can be detected and treated early, but if you're not consistently getting your dog checked out, then you won't be able to help him. An annual physical, proper vaccinations and heartworm preventative lay a good foundation for ensuring your dog stays healthy and active for years to come.



*John Thompson is owner and training director at Through The Leash Dog Behavior & Training. With a strong passion to keep dogs out of shelters and in homes, he began by vounteering in local shelters. Quickly realizing that most issues are created by mishandling and miscommunication on the owner's part, he created Through The Leash.*



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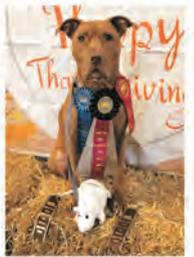
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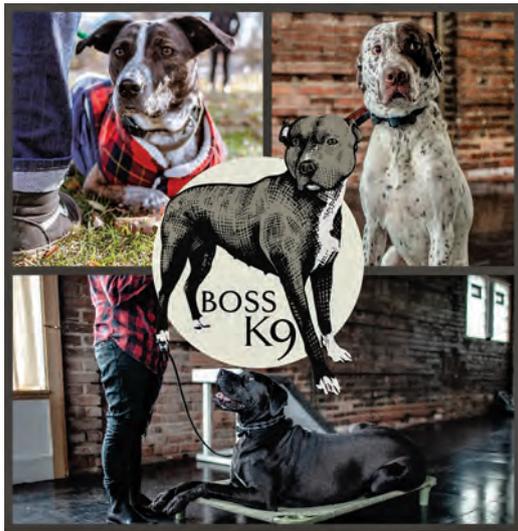
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# From the Cage to the Couch

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With a litter of pups in tow, 4-year-old Terra and her babies found themselves in a county pound. A rescue committed to taking the scared Pitbull Terrier mix and her pups, but broke that promise and left the new mom behind. When Berea Animal Rescue Fund's shelter manager heard of the pooch's plight, she immediately stepped in and brought Terra into Berea ARF.



During her 16-month stay at Berea ARF (yes, you read that correctly!), Terra loved all the attention, especially belly rubs, running in the exercise pens and going on walks. She had wonderful leash manners, and would happily curl up for a nap with her lovie after exercise time. So why did it take so long for this beautiful girl to get adopted? Unfortunately, Terra had a fear of (some) men, wasn't cat-friendly and was picky about other dogs. All this and a Pitbull. This could be a tough sell.

One man who didn't let Terra down was Cleveland native, Pitbull advocate and nationally known pet photographer Greg Murray. He did a photo shoot with Terra, and that attention, along with a story on long-term shelter dogs, found her a new mom. Volunteer trainers worked with Mom and Terra to provide them both with the confidence needed to live a new life in a cozy home in Wellington.



From the Cage to the Couch concept contributed by Partners With Paws of Lorain County, Inc.

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# ..... PICK OF THE PACK .....

BY JENNIFER BAKER

## TRAINING TOOLS

Whether you're interested in competing in dog sports or just want a well-behaved dog, training starts out the same: learn foundation standards (sit, leash walking and a solid recall) and have a well-stocked "go bag". This bag of tools will make training a lot easier.

A paw target helps your dog understand where you want him to be. In puppy or basic obedience class, it may be a large food bowl or squishy cushion. When you take your training on the road, a foam or rubber disc works well. **West Paw** makes a durable rubber "Zisc" disc that's also a good retrieving toy. **Star Mark** makes durable foam discs available in two sizes. Once your dog understands paw targeting, the disc also works as a pivot platform.



Treats are a very important part of training. Your dog might work for his regular kibble in the backyard, but at the park with other dogs and kids going by, you'll need a more tempting treat. Small, soft treats like **Happy Howie's Treat Rolls** or **Bounty Bites Jerky Trainers** are good choices. Freeze-dried foods like **Vital Essentials Niblets** or **Bixbi Rawbble** are nutritionally complete foods, so when you're doing a lot of training, just subtract from your dog's regular meals to avoid giving too many calories.



Teaching your dog a solid recall is very important, so practicing a recall with distractions is crucial, but your dog needs to be safe when doing it. I like the **Lupine Pet** dog training lead in 3/4" width and 15' length. This lead gives me enough distance for realistic practice, but not so much line it gets tangled. If my dog doesn't return, I can reel him in. While some people like using a retractable leash for this type of training, I like the long line because I can stand on it to free up both hands.

Don't forget poop bags and water, and you'll have a well-stocked go bag.



*Jennifer Baker is owner of The Grateful Dog Bakery, an all-natural dog and cat supply store featuring an in-store bakery. She is the proud dog mom of Golden Retrievers Beau, Ophelia and Magic and Standard Poodle Dash. To contact Jennifer, email [news@gratefuldogbakery.com](mailto:news@gratefuldogbakery.com) or follow [@gratefuldogbakery](https://www.instagram.com/gratefuldogbakery) on Instagram.*



# Are Human Meds Safe for Your Dog?

By Susan Spisak

Ever wonder if you can give your pooch over-the-counter (OTC), “people” meds and supplements? The correct answer is talk to your vet, but yes, there may be a few human meds that can help out in a pinch.

**M**My first venture in using an OTC medication happened when my will-eat-anything Golden boy, Brady, munched on a few ground-nesting bees. His throat and face swelled up like a balloon, and I panicked because I couldn't unclasp his collar and my vet was closed. A dog trainer friend suggested I quickly give him children's liquid Benadryl, which I had in the medicine cabinet, following the suggested dosage by weight. Thankfully, it worked. I mentioned this to my vet at our next appointment and he was OK with it.

Dr. Sharmyn Clark, owner and founder of Mobile Veterinary Care & Rainbow Bridge Pet Hospice, agreed that Benadryl can help with reactions to insect bites or stings, but said adult dogs like Brady need the adult version of the drugstore medication. (Children's Benadryl is OK for toy or teacup breeds.) Benadryl can also occasionally be used as a mild sedative for skittish or storm-phobic dogs. “It won't stop anxiety, but it'll make them sleepy,” Dr. Clark said.

When it comes to loose stool, Dr. Clark said Pepto-Bismol is safe, but adhere to directions on the bottle for proper dosage. She said only administer it twice, and closely follow the recommended time in between doses. If the problem persists or is accompanied with vomiting, call your vet immediately. “This is not a simple diarrhea,” Dr. Clark said.

If your pet suffers from car sickness, Dr. Clark said meclizine can be given. A name brand includes Bonine, which is available at your local grocery or drugstore. Same rule applies, dose by weight. A long trip may require a prescription medication, so check with your vet.

There are two OTC products that Dr. Clark opposes -- aspirin and CBD oil. The effective dosage of aspirin for low-grade pain can cause gastric ulcerations, according Dr. Clark, so it's best to avoid. CBD oil is often used to combat arthritis, anxiety and offset seizures in dogs, but Dr. Clark has concerns.

“I just attended a seminar on this (CBD oil), and I was shocked,” Dr. Clark said. She explained that 50 brands of CBD products were pulled and tested for levels, and “only one product had the amount of the CBD oil that the label stated.” She said that several had toxic levels, while others had low or nil levels. “It was frightening to me,” Dr. Clark said. “[CBD oil] can really hurt your dog, or it's like throwing away money.”

*(Note: If you're using CBD oil for your dog or feel it may have value for your pet, talk to your vet first. She may be able to confirm the brand you're using is appropriate, or recommend one that is tested by third-party labs with certifiable results.)*

Dr. Dustin Beauchamp, an emergency veterinarian and medical director for MedVet Cleveland Northeast and MedVet Mahoning Valley, offered a few cautionary notes on OTC meds for dogs. He said many websites provide dosing info for products -- including Ibuprofen -- that aren't written by veterinarians. “We definitely see a lot of people doing research, and they don't know good information from not-so-good information and give OTC medications.”

As an ER vet, he's seen many patients who were given incorrect doses of OTC meds. “The margin for error is so small for certain medications. What

would have been a minor situation can be made significantly worse, even with a single dose,” Dr. Beauchamp said. “The last thing anyone in a partnership would want is to have a situation that was entirely preventable, end up with serious consequences.”

Dr. Beauchamp added that an ER staff cannot legally give medication dosing advice over the phone for animals they haven't seen before. “If you have concerns about your pet, whether he is in pain, not eating, vomiting, limping, etc., it is far better to see a professional for help than trying to guess things on your own,” Dr. Beauchamp said. “Veterinarians spend their entire careers learning how to interpret signs of illness, behaviors and the physical exam to aid in diagnosis.”

If you have a senior canine, supplements may help in supporting her health. Veterinarians at Avon Lake Animal Clinic recognize the importance of supplements for dogs, and recommend canine Dasuquin Advanced Chews (prescription only) and Phycox Soft Chews for orthopedic and cartilage support. These supplements will not reverse conditions, but can provide relief.

Another supplement to consider is Free Form Snip Tips Fish Oil capsules to support sensitive skin, eyes, joints, brain, heart and kidney health. I give human-grade fish oil with Omega-3 to my senior dog, Bo. I've cleared the milligram level with my vet, and buy it at a local discount store. If you think your dog won't swallow this pill, cut it open and sprinkle it over his food.

Human meds and supplements may help you care for your dog, but be sure to do your homework and talk with your vet before introducing over-the-counter products to your fur baby. 🐾

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*By T.L. Champion*

*Does your dog love to chase squirrels and birds? There are sports for that! Barn Hunt and Lure Coursing are two safe and fun activities your prey-driven pooch can participate in -- and even train competitively for.*

**B**arn Hunt is a newer sport, created to allow any canine (mixed breed or pedigree) six months or older to participate in an activity that tests his hunting skills. The sport features hiding healthy, pet rats in hard, plastic, ventilated tubes between bales of straw in a barn, or indoor or outdoor fenced-in arena. The maze course stacks the straw

your dog must be able to fit through an 18" opening in between two straw bales, which is the width of the tunnels. The height of the straw bales is approximately 22". There are three height groups and five levels of difficulty - instinct, novice, open, senior and master - with top dogs awarded with medals and ribbons at the different championship levels.



# BARN HUNT

## FOR SCENT-DRIVEN DOGS

bales to create climbing and tunneling obstacles for dogs to navigate through. The goal is to find the rat hidden in the hay in a specific amount of time.

The sport was created by Missourian artist and animal lover Robin Nuttall, who was inspired by her Min Pin named Zipper. Nuttall, who has trained and shown dogs in conformation, obedience, rally obedience, agility, dock diving, lure coursing and schutzhund, wanted an "above ground" sport similar to Earthdog trials that any dog could participate in. (Earthdog is geared for "go to ground" purebreds in the Terrier Group, who are bred to root out small prey from underground dens.)

Dogs are off leash during a Barn Hunt, and are trained to signal the handler when they find the rat. Some will bark and some will paw at the tube, while other signals are more subtle, so the handler must know her dog. Handlers have no idea where the tubes are hidden or which ones contain a rat. Dogs are tested on speed, agility and the ability to keep their footing.

Although the event is called Barn Hunt, rats are not hunted to kill. Pet rats are safely and humanely contained in aerated PVC tubes that are hidden in the straw. No rats are hurt during the event. The tubes are large enough for the rats to turn around in, and contain bedding. Rats enjoy dark and small spaces, and many spend their time grooming or sleeping. Great care is taken to make sure the rats stay safe. To make the hunt more challenging, empty tubes and ones with bedding but no rats are also hidden along the course.

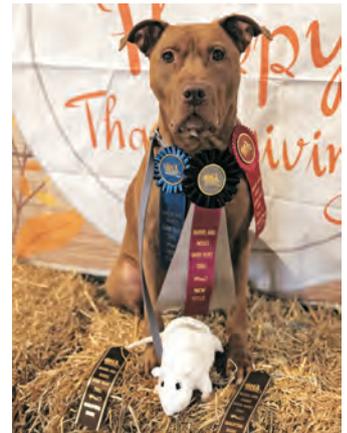
This national sport, which draws many spectators, celebrates the working ability of dogs and the bond and communication between a dog and his owner. No ratting experience is necessary to compete, but

Abbe Moen, owner of Affinity Canine dog training, likes to take her dogs Gemma and Tango on Barn Hunts.

"This activity gives scent-driven dogs a biologically fulfilling outlet to find prey, even if a dog is goal-oriented rather than prey driven," said Moen. "Once my dog Gemma is told to find the rats, she's very focused because she's task oriented. This can be a fun activity for your dog, or you can train them competitively. It includes play and social interaction."

If you're interested in learning more about Barn Hunt, visit [barnhunt.com](http://barnhunt.com). Locally, Kirtland-based Barns and Noses offers Barn Hunt classes and sessions.

*continued next page*



Abbe Moen's dogs Tango (top) and Gemma



Gyr the Vizsla loves barn hunting

## SIGHT HOUNDS LOVE

# THE LURE

Traditionally, sight hounds -- Greyhounds, Whippets, Afghans and others -- love lure coursing, chasing an artificial lure "rabbit" across a big, open field. Pulleys are placed into the ground, forming a pattern for the course the dog will run. A wire is wrapped around the pulleys, which holds the lure in place. The wire is pulled around the pulleys by a motor and is controlled by the lure operator, who adjusts the speed, depending on how fast the dog keeps up. Also on the field with you and your dog is a judge who will judge how well your dog ran it. A typical lure course is 610 yards.



Since lure coursing is only for pure-bred sight hounds, the American Kennel Club (AKC) created a new event that allows all dogs to discover the excitement of lure coursing. The Coursing Ability Test (CAT) is for any dog (mixed or purebred) who is at least 1 year old. To pass the test, the dog must run alone, pursuing the lure, completing the course with enthusiasm and without interruption within a given time.

CAT lure doesn't require dogs to run as far as the original lure coursing, and they don't have to execute extreme turns. Dogs under 12" at the withers participate in 300-yard courses, while dogs more than 12" race about 600 yards, completed within 1.5 minutes and 2 minutes respectively.

Locally, Janet Malecki and Mary Engelhardt, owners of Red River Dog Farm in Wakeman -- a fenced-in, 5-acre dog park -- have a 600-yard CAT course on their property.

"My dogs love the lure," said Malecki. "It's great exercise and connects them with their instinctual prey drive. It also works their mind. We have a big field, which is used for the course.

"Lure coursing is an AKC event that attracts thousands of people," Malecki said. "We do a smaller-scale version of it here, offering it to our members who bring their dogs. The activity lasts about two minutes. It fosters good behavior and allows dogs to fill their genetic and biological role of hunter."

If you're not ready for the lure, Red River Dog Farm also has agility equipment, mowed fields and a wooded area by the onsite pond to enjoy a spring outing with your dog. Red River Dog Farm is open from sunup to sundown, 365 days a year. The venue also has an onsite, temperature-controlled barn for dog birthday parties. Monthly and annual memberships are available. For more information, visit [redriverdogfarm.com](http://redriverdogfarm.com).

.....  
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*Karen Uthe-Semancik, co-publisher and editor of CLE DOG, contributed to this article.*





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Angie's list



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# DOGS IN THE CITY

BY AMANDA ROUSH, BELLA & MIA  
from *Dog Life in CLE*



**EGG HUNTING** isn't just for kids; bring your dogs to the **3rd Annual Dog Easter Egg Hunt** hosted by **Dog Life in CLE!** This year's event is from 12-3 p.m. on Sunday, April 5 at Market Square at Crocker Park. This is our annual fundraiser for City Dogs Cleveland and last year, we raised nearly \$2,000! The event brought more than 400 dogs out to hunt for Easter eggs filled with dog treats. This annual event also features vendors, raffles and photos with the Easter bunny. This is a rain or shine event, and the egg hunts may be brought inside if the weather is not cooperating. Follow @doglifeincle on Facebook for more information and updates about this event.



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# Spring Allergy Season and Dogs: What To Do

For humans, spring is notorious for allergies. But is spring also a bad allergy season for dogs? According to veterinarians, the answer is yes.

By Ann McDonald



**D**ogs suffer from allergies in the spring just like people, often due to trees, grass, weed pollens, mold, mildew and house dust mites.

If you catch your dog licking or chewing her feet excessively, or if she's itchy/red on her underside and rear end, she may be dealing with allergies. "The symptoms of allergies in dogs are skin related; they are rarely upper respiratory like they are with people," said Board Certified Veterinary Dermatologist Dr. Alice Jeromin.

If you see these signs or your dog rubbing her face, it may be time to see a vet about allergies. Other symptoms can include skin infections, seizures or recurrent bladder infections. The skin infections often are a result of the dog licking too much, since when they have allergies, the bacteria on the skin can overgrow when they lick excessively. A less common symptom for some dogs is developing "hot spots" anywhere on the body. These spots are red and inflamed and can appear oozing or moist. Dogs often make the situation worse by licking and chewing these areas, so spot them early and see your vet.

Frequent paw washing, bathing and ear washes may help remove grass, pollen and outside debris, but if the allergy symptoms persist or worsen, it may be time for allergy testing.

However, before you have your dog tested for seasonal allergies, it's best to rule out potential food allergies, according to Dr. Brandt Athey of Lakewood Animal Hospital.

"The only way to rule out a food allergy is by feeding a veterinary-grade diet for 8 to 12 weeks," Dr. Brandt said. "Once this has been done and the doctor is sure the allergies aren't related to food, allergy testing can be done in order to design a 'vaccine' against particular allergens."



Dr. Alice Jeromin's rescue dog dog Cindy before her allergies were treated.

Allergy testing can be done via skin or blood tests, and should only be done on dogs two years or older. Dr. Jeromin also recommends doing the testing in the fall after the dog has had exposure to all three seasons -- spring, summer and fall.

"Allergies are not curable, as it is a genetic disease; it is only controllable," Dr. Jeromin said. "Treatments include desensitizing with allergy shots or oral allergy drops after the dogs is allergy tested. Testing needs to be done to know what to put in the allergy solution."

Other treatments may include antihistamines, omega-3 fatty acids or medications like Apoquel, Cytopoint or Atopica. Dr. Jeromin said it's not advised to use long-term steroids, as there can be side effects with continued use. Keep in mind, as a dog ages, allergies can become worse, so a new treatment plan may need to be hatched as your pooch enters her senior years.

With the wide range of treatments and medication options now available, your dog doesn't need to suffer through spring allergy season any longer.

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*Ann McDonald is a writer, dog foster and dog mom to two rescue dogs. You can find her writing about her dogs, dog-friendly activities and dog rescue at [dogsinthecle.com](http://dogsinthecle.com).*

# Reasons Why Dogs Compulsively Scratch, Lick or Chew

By Trina Urban of A Brush Above Pet Grooming

Dogs scratch, lick or chew for a wide variety of reasons, ranging from allergies to boredom to parasite infestation.

## ALLERGIES

When dog scratching gets out of hand, it's often the result of allergies to food or environmental triggers, including mold and pollen. Dogs may also develop a skin irritation called contact dermatitis when they encounter substances like pesticides or soap.

## BOREDOM OR ANXIETY

Just as people with anxiety might bite their nails or twirl their hair, dogs can have physical responses to psychological upset, too. In fact, some dogs develop a condition to human obsessive-compulsive disorder. It can manifest itself in scratching, licking or chewing behaviors that can cause severe damage.

## DRY SKIN

A variety of factors, including winter weather and fatty acid deficiencies, can cause dry skin in dogs. Your pet may respond to the discomfort by scratching or licking at her skin or fur.

## HORMONAL IMBALANCES

If your dog's body is not producing enough thyroid hormone or putting out too much of the hormone cortisol, superficial skin infections can occur. You may notice bald spots, and your dog may scratch or lick as if bothered by allergies.

## PAIN

When trying to determine why your dog is licking or chewing excessively, be sure to consider the possibility that something is making her physically uncomfortable. For instance, if you notice your dog biting her paw repeatedly, she could have a thorn or sharp stone stuck in her foot pad. Compulsive chewing or licking can also be a response to orthopedic problems, including arthritis and hip dysplasia.

## PARASITES

Among the most common causes for compulsive licking, chewing or scratching behaviors are fleas, ticks and mites. Although ticks are often visible to the naked eye, fleas often go unseen until there is a large infestation, and mites are microscopic. Don't assume that your dog isn't suffering from parasites just because you can't see them.

Talk to your groomer about medicated shampoos that can help with dry skin or flea infestation. Always keep fresh water out for your pets, and for those breeds that need their water intake monitored, make sure they're hydrated. Regular brushing and combing helps the natural oils in the skin. And of course, always consult with your veterinarian for skin and allergy issues.



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# SCOOP THE POOP

## TO PROTECT WATERWAYS. PREVENT DISEASE



By Karen Uthe-Semancik

If the spring thaw has revealed a stockpile of dog piles in your backyard, it's time to take back your yard. Scooping the poop can protect our waterways, prevent disease, save your lawn and keep your neighbors neighborly.

According to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, when it rains, bacteria from dog poop can soak into groundwater or be carried to storm sewers, which move that fecal flow to nearby streams. Neither is a good thing for the environment since that water isn't treated at a wastewater treatment plant.

To encourage dog owners to pick up their pooch's poop, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District has created its "Pick Up Poop" campaign, or P.U.P. for short. Jennifer Elting, senior public information specialist with the sewer district, encourages owners to visit [dogscantflush.org](http://dogscantflush.org) to take the P.U.P. Pledge and learn important facts about the importance of scooping poop.

Elting said if all the dogs in Cuyahoga County pooped twice a day, that creates more than 45 tons of dog waste every day...and that's only one county.

"Dog poop is not a fertilizer," Elting said. "Bagging it really is the best option, as it eliminates the direct

contribution of bacteria to local waterways. And biodegradable bags help the situation further."

Elting said due to dogs' high-protein diets, their waste is highly acidic and can contain 10 times as much fecal coliform bacteria as cow manure. Plus, a whole lot of other nasty stuff like e.coli, salmonella and giardia. (Yuck!)

Logan Miklosovic of Dog Waste Management, a professional pooper scooper service in Northeast Ohio agrees.

"Not picking up after your dog regularly can bring on a multitude of different health risks," Miklosovic said. "Keep in mind that their waste has a lot of different kinds of bacteria, and can also be carriers of diseases and viruses like roundworms, parvo and salmonellosis."

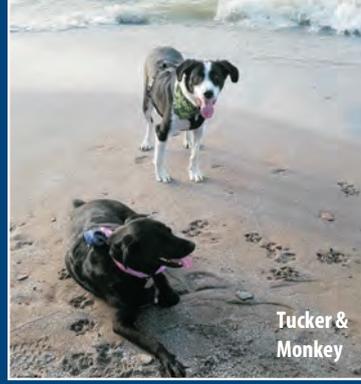
Miklosovic said the more waste that's in the yard, the greater the chance your dog will track bacteria into the house. Keeping your yard clean will greatly reduce the risk.

**National Scoop the Poop Week is April 26 through May 2, and National Don't Step in Dog Poop Day is Tuesday, April 28. How will you be celebrating?**





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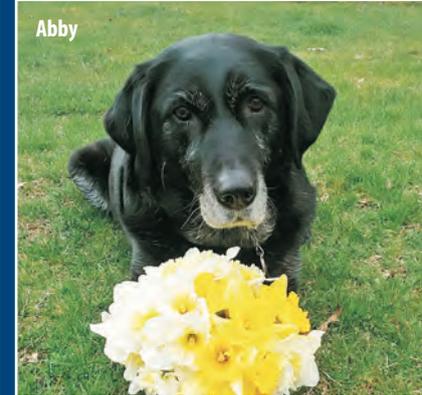
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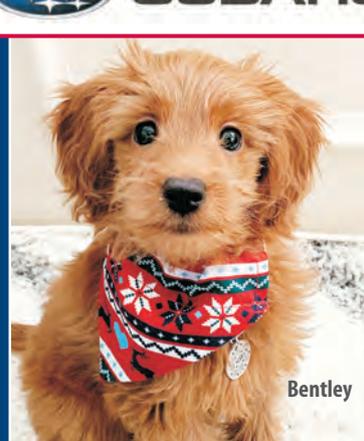
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