

# AN ECO-FRIENDLY GUIDE TO RAISING A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG

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# An **Eco-Friendly** Guide to Raising a **Happy,** **Healthy Dog**



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# PART 1 HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

## CHAPTER 1 - ORGANIC, HOLISTIC, AND RAW DOG FOOD

### Organic Food

People around the world are switching to organic food and with good reasons. Organic food is known to be natural, pesticide-free, and overall better for our health. So, it would follow that if it's good for our health, then it must be good for our dogs, right? Well, that's the general idea. According to the Organic Trade Association, organic food sales for pets have grown 3 times greater than those for people! Like organic food for people, organic dog food is free of pesticides, preservatives, hormones, antibiotics, and other chemicals or artificial ingredients that may otherwise be toxic (and typically found in regular kibble). Personally, I prefer this option to the others in this list, and I'll get to why in a moment.

Now, aside from being a more natural and nutritious food source for your dog, I'm sure you may be wondering what else makes organic food so great. Well, in simple terms, it's a lot easier for them to digest and is a great boost to their immune system (including a decrease or disappearance in allergies). However, let's look at things a bit more in-depth:



## • No Additives or Chemicals:

Regular kibble brands contain a lot of extra flavors, chemicals, fillers, and other ingredients that are anything but healthy for your canine friend. In fact, that food can actually lead to kidney, liver, and other ongoing health issues, while organic food can give your dog a longer, healthier life. It should also be noted that natural, healthy food is better overall for health, mood, energy, and appearance—and this applies to all creatures, not just people.

## • Better Health:

As mentioned above, organic food is great for anyone's health, including dogs. As far as organic dog food goes, it is an excellent source of protein and grains, which help boost your dog's immune system and thus, lessen the need for trips to the vet. Health issues that may decrease significantly (or disappear entirely) include: allergies, digestive troubles, diabetes, itching and skin conditions, among others. Imagine: all those months (or years) of resorting to different medications, shampoos, creams and treatments—and all you had to do was change their diet! Sometimes the solution really *is* that simple.

## • Maintains Weight:

Bags of regular kibble (and even cans of it) have instructions printed on the label that indicate how much food we should feed our dogs every day, but how many people do you think actually bother to follow them? Most of the time, a dog will get a cup of food in the morning and a cup of food at night (give or take). While this may be the standard idea for feeding, since when did all dogs have the same feeding requirements? Dogs come in many different sizes and types, with many different health conditions and



preferences; thus, they need different types and amounts of food. Organic food allows you to give them a variety of food every day of the week and because of its greater nutritional value, your dog won't need to consume as much at a time. In other words, a smaller amount of organic food will help them stay fuller for longer and will also aid in their digestion and weight regulation, since it contains fewer calories.

Now, this brings me to why I like the organic food option so much.

The reason I prefer organic dog food is because it comes with the most options. First of all, you can buy organic dog food in a bag, or also canned. How is this different from regular kibble? Well, first of all, check the ingredients. Are natural foods and herbs listed, or are there a bunch of hard-to-pronounce scientific chemicals? Second, do your research. Check out the websites for different organic dog food brands and read about the company. What is their history? Do they mention how the food is harvested, or manufactured? There should be thorough information available on the organic quality of their food and the processes used to make it. Finally, check the packaging for an organic label, such as the USDA Organic symbol. This is a sign that the food can be trusted as a certified organic source.



The other option I like is that you can prepare fresh organic meals and treats for your dogs. Some people are against the idea of cooking for dogs, but I believe it's still a safer alternative than standard kibble. By preparing the meals yourself, you are fully aware of all the ingredients that go into it. You know that they'll be having organic chicken, rice, and applesauce tonight, and perhaps some ground beef with carrots and barley tomorrow. The ingredients are simple and

there are no extra chemicals or flavorings added. These meals can also be made in bulk and stored in the freezer, to preserve freshness (usually for up to a week). Another good thing about preparing the meals yourself is if your dog has food allergies, you can eliminate trouble foods from their diet a lot easier this way. There are many sites and books out there that offer food and treat recipes for dogs, and I highly recommend checking them out. I started cooking meals for my dogs last year, and there has been great improvement in their health since!

### Holistic Food

Holistic living is another thing that's taken the world by storm. The idea behind being holistic (or holism) is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In terms of dog food, it basically means each ingredient contributes to the dog's health in a different way, but they also work together. So, when the right combination and portions of healthy, organic food is given to your dog, it will result in a balance between mind and body functioning, increasing their health and overall well-being.

Holistic dog food is pretty similar to organic, so I won't go into much detail about it here. In most cases, it will usually contain organic food and can either come pre-packaged, or be cooked like organic food, but the difference is the purpose it serves. When you use the organic food diet, you are feeding your dog simply for them to survive; there really isn't a particular point or purpose to the food you provide, other than it is healthy and makes them happy. However, a holistic diet is food with a purpose.

For example: one ingredient may help with digestion, another ingredient may help clean the teeth, and another ingredient may boost their immune system. Each ingredient

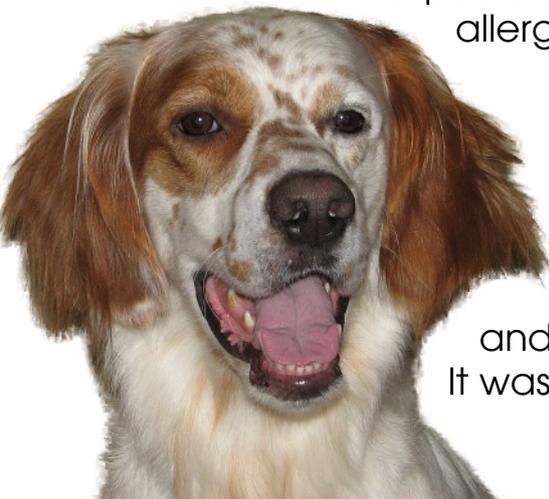
serves a different purpose, but they also work together—not only in function, but also in taste. It's also been claimed that holistic dog food has never been part of a recall, so that's another thing to consider if you're concerned about safety, or nutritional value.

### Raw Food

This is arguably the most natural diet for your dog. It basically consists of raw meat, bones and organs—all things your canine friend would eat naturally in the wild, in order to survive. It does not contain any grains, carbohydrates, chemicals, artificial flavors or coloring. Originally, this diet was known as BARF (Biologically Appropriate Raw Food, Bones And Raw Food, or Born Again Raw Feeders), but has since been shortened to the Raw name.



Some may argue that all that raw food is unhealthy, or unsafe, since it doesn't go through all the tests that processed kibble does. Even amongst Raw advocates, there is debate between proper diets. Do you include any vegetables or not? Should bones be eaten whole or ground up (some whole bones can splinter and cause internal damage)? Personally, I would suggest talking to your veterinarian, or a Raw expert on these points, as different dogs may require different diets, especially if they have any ongoing health concerns (like allergies or diabetes). But, I'm getting off track here.



More people are switching their canine friends to Raw diets these days. Why? Well, consider that before the dog was domesticated, they ate to survive. They hunted for their food when they were hungry and stored it away (or buried it) when they weren't. It wasn't until the last century or so that we started to

feed them processed food, and on a schedule at that! This throws their system all out of whack. Also, consider that even domestic dogs today are still great at hunting and tracking. This is because it's a natural, instinctual thing for them to do—to chase and catch (and eat) squirrels or birds or what-have-you.

If you still need more info, check out this list of pros and cons:

The Pros of Switching to a Raw Diet	The Cons of Sticking to a Kibble Diet
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Builds up the immune system</li> <li>2. Gives your dog a healthy coat and skin</li> <li>3. Aids in digestion</li> <li>4. Keeps the ears clean</li> <li>5. Cleaner teeth and healthier gums</li> <li>6. Decreases the chances of degenerative disease</li> <li>7. Great resistance to fleas and worms</li> <li>8. Reduces (or eliminates) dog odors</li> <li>9. Aids in weight control (less fat, more muscle)</li> <li>10. Increases energy</li> <li>11. Decreases trips to the vet (due to better health)</li> <li>12. Detoxifies your dog's body</li> <li>13. It's the closest thing to their natural diet</li> <li>14. Decreases stool production</li> <li>15. A lot cheaper than a processed kibble diet</li> <li>16. Allergies may disappear</li> <li>17. Arthritis may be significantly reduced, or disappear</li> <li>18. Longer life spans</li> <li>19. Higher survival rates in puppies</li> <li>20. Decreased itching/scratching</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dog breath (and other odors)</li> <li>2. Stained, tartar-covered teeth or gum damage</li> <li>3. Periodontal disease</li> <li>4. More frequent trips to the vet</li> <li>5. Premature aging due to immune system overload</li> <li>6. Development of benign, fatty tumors that thrive on the sugars provided by the food</li> <li>7. Itchy, unhealthy skin and coat (which requires more bathing/grooming)</li> <li>8. Less energy, more sluggish attitude</li> <li>9. A lot more expensive</li> <li>10. Overall increase in health issues</li> </ol>

Clearly, the pros of switching to a Raw diet outweigh the cons of sticking to kibble. However, if you decide to make the switch, you should do so gradually. Feed them sparingly the first few days, to get them used to the new diet, but do not mix the raw food with the kibble, as the difference in foods can make your dog sick. For more information, [RawDogFood.com.au](http://RawDogFood.com.au) offers a lot of great information and tips on how (and why) to switch your dog to a Raw diet.



# PART 1 HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

## CHAPTER 2 - DENTAL CARE FOR DOGS

This section basically goes hand-in-hand with the previous one. Dogs use their mouth for all kinds of purposes: eating and drinking, cleaning themselves, chewing on toys, and even biting (to defend themselves and their homes). All this use can—and does—cause a lot of wear and tear on their teeth and gums. Unless you clean your dog's teeth on a regular basis, most of them suffer through dental damage that may take a long time to repair.

### Take A Closer Look

To find out how healthy your dog's mouth is, go take a look for these signs:

- Clean, white (or very slightly yellow), unbroken teeth
- Smooth, light pink gums (some breeds are an exception to this, as their gums are naturally a different color)
- Very little to no bad breath

If your dog displays all of these signs, then congrats! They have a healthy mouth. However, here are some warning signs to keep an eye out for:

- Red, swollen (and sometimes bleeding) gums
- Excessive drooling (possibly with blood in the drool)
- Yellow-brown plaque and tartar around the gum line

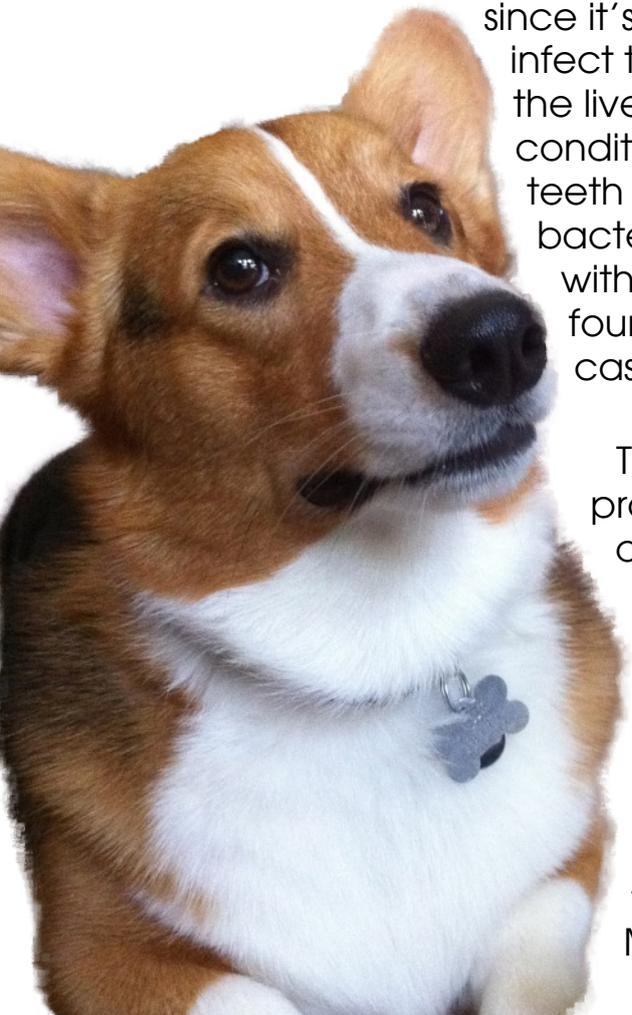
- Broken, or missing, teeth
- Bad breath
- Loss of appetite

If your dog displays any of these signs, it means they are in need of some serious dental—and possibly medical—attention.

### Bad Teeth = Medical Problems

Why medical? Well, for a start, depending on how bad the damage is, they may need corrective surgery to take care of the problem. Like people, dogs can get gum disease (gingivitis), or need root canals. Second of all, an unhealthy mouth can sometimes be an indicator of a more serious health issue. If your dog has a chronic oral infection, this makes it easier for them to swallow harmful bacteria, since it's already in their mouth. The bacteria can infect the immune system, causing damage to the liver, kidney, lungs, and other organs. Heart conditions have also been linked to infected teeth and gums. According to recent studies, bacteria found on the heart valves of animals with heart disease tend to be identical to that found on damaged teeth and gums. Worst case scenario: this can be fatal.

The good news is: if you take care of the problem sooner than later--and continue ongoing dental care afterwards--you won't have to worry about the more serious health issues (or pay expensive veterinary bills). Yes, there are a variety of organic canine dental products out there, from toothpaste to mouth sprays. If your dog is extremely fussy and does not like having their teeth brushed, using a spray once or twice daily may be the better way to go. Make sure to check the ingredients of the



spray—they should primarily consist of plant extracts and other natural ingredients.

Did you know that maintaining proper dental care for your dog can extend their life by as much as 20%? I don't know about you, but I'd sure like my dogs to stick around for a bit longer. And here's a scary fact: 80-85% of dogs between the ages of 2 and 3 already show signs of Periodontal Disease. This means if you're going to take care of their teeth and gums properly, then you need to start when they are young. Yes, this includes puppies, too!

### How To Brush Canine Teeth

So, how do you brush a dog's teeth? You really should ask your vet about techniques, but here are some steps to get you started:

1. They will need their own toothbrush and canine toothpaste. Do not use human toothpaste or one of your old toothbrushes on them, as these can cause more damage.
2. Now, you'll want to briefly hold and look into your dog's mouth—do this often, to get them used to it.
3. Once your dog is comfortable with step 2, start to massage the gums (with your hand/fingers, not a brush). Move in gentle circles around the outside of the gums and teeth. Do this quickly at first, and then extend the time a little more with each attempt.
4. Now, you can finally use a toothbrush and a dab of toothpaste. Use the same technique as in step 3.

That's it! Well, almost. There are few things you need to remember:

- Be patient—it can take weeks for a dog to get used to brushing.

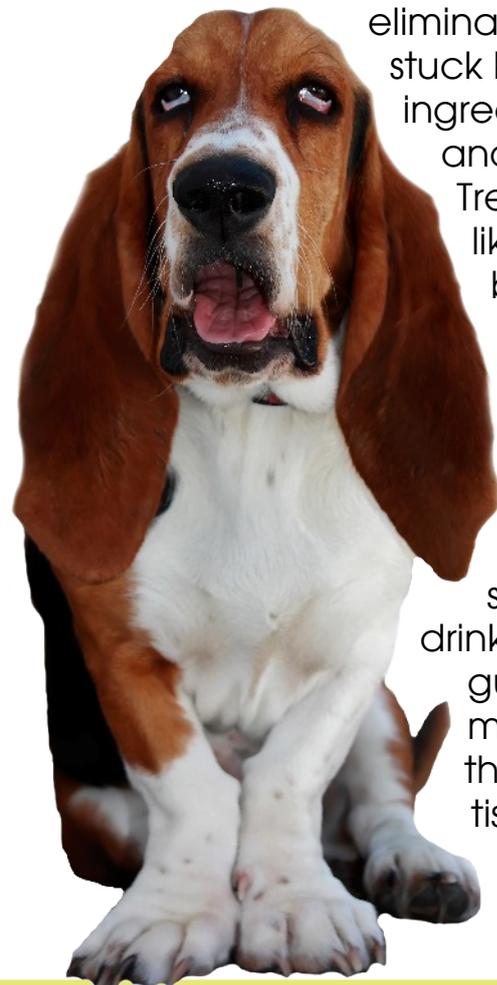
- You need to brush their teeth every single day.
- Be gentle—you don't want to hurt, frighten, or anger your dog.
- Go at a pace your dog is comfortable with
- Reward your dogs with organic treats, or some play time afterwards.

I'm sure you're wondering if there's anything else you can do, apart from using the typical teeth brushing and mouthwash methods. The answer is: yes! Canine dental care doesn't end with brushing their teeth; their diet also plays a role in things.

### Change Their Diet

I shouldn't have to say this again, but regular kibble is bad for your dog—this includes for their teeth. I don't care if the commercials claim that it will whiten their teeth or eliminate dog breath. Regular kibble tends to remain stuck between the teeth longer, and the bad ingredients it contains can also increase risk of tartar and plaque buildup, which leads to dental trouble. Treats that claim to be good for their dental health, like Greenies, should also be avoided, as they've been known to cause allergic reactions. Organic and Raw food diets are definitely the way to go, if you want to keep your dog's mouth happy.

Fresh, leafy greens will improve their diet and raw vegetables, like carrots, will help clean their teeth. Adding 100% pure cranberry juice (no sugar or artificial sweeteners of any kind) to their drinking water will keep bacteria from taking over their gums. A tincture of Oregon grape, goldenseal, or myrrh will also help to inhibit bacterial growth, as these herbs are antiseptic and promote new gum tissue growth. A tincture of Calendula (marigold) will



help heal bleeding gums. Other foods that will help to strengthen and fortify dog teeth include:

- Carob powder
- Cheddar or Swiss cheese
- Collard greens
- Kelp
- Pumpkin, Squash, or Sunflower Seeds
- Wheat bran or wheat germ

Giving them a raw, meaty bone to chew on a couple times a week will also help, as it provides them a form of dental exercise and removes plaque and tartar build up during the process.

These tips should help you keep your dog's mouth clean. However, if there are already signs of damage or infection, make sure to take your canine friend to the vet for a thorough examination—you never know what other health risks could be lying under the surface.



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# PART 1 HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

## CHAPTER 3 - GREEN DOG CARE PRODUCTS

In the last few decades, alternative medicine and therapies have been on the rise. More and more people are developing an interest in spas, massage therapy, acupuncture, aromatherapy, and other holistic or homeopathic remedies. It's generally believed that these natural "cures", or treatments, work far better than their traditional, scientific counterparts, and who's to say that's wrong? For thousands of years, cultures around the world have relied on essential oils, herbs, and similar things to treat sickness—both of the mind and the body. Considering how long these methods have been in use, they certainly must be doing something right!

Did you know these same methods can also be used on your dog? Yes, that's right: your dog can be just as pampered as you these days. There are canine spas, massage therapists, acupuncturists, herbal remedies and organic products available in many places and the industry is growing. Even veterinarians are now using holistic practices to treat their animal patients! (You can find an extensive list that compares traditional veterinary practices to that of a holistic vet [here](#).)



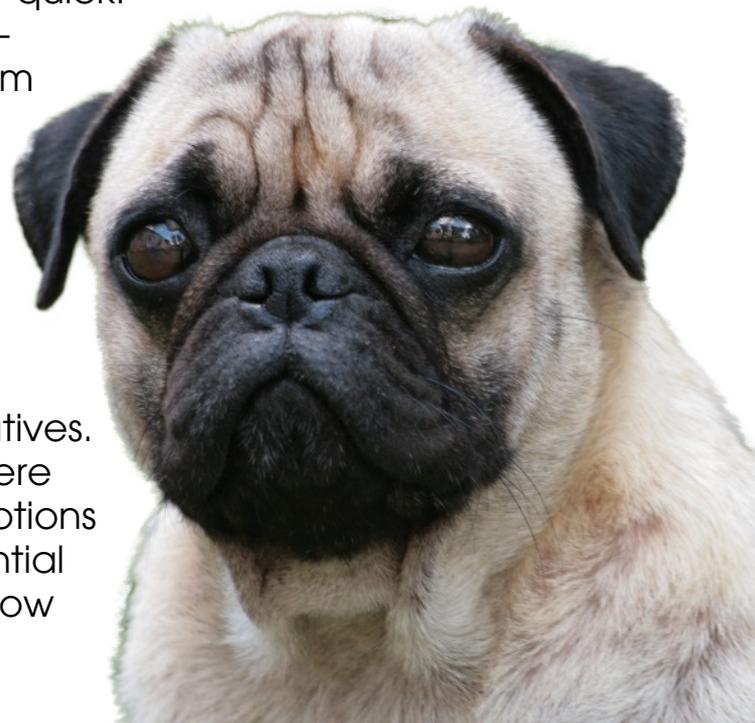
Yes, I will admit, all these natural remedies and holistic care treatments can be more expensive. Some of you may wonder: “Why should I bother to pay more for natural remedies, when cheaper, traditional treatments work fine?” There are many answers to this question, but I will cover the most important ones for now.

### The Cost of Your Dog’s Health

If your dog has any kind of condition—be it diabetes, arthritis, or just an itching problem—you probably find yourself at the vet, or the pet store, more often than not. How often do you need to take your dog in for a checkup, or to get a refill on her medication? How many times have you switched medications because they either weren’t working, or caused some nasty side-effects? And how much do you spend at the pet store for flea collars, shampoos, creams, spot-on treatments, eye care, ear care, and many other costly products?

Typically, medications need to be refilled every couple months, and store-bought treatments need to be replaced even more frequently. If you have more than one dog, those bills can rack up pretty quick. Add to that the issues of side-effects, which can range from a short-term rash to something long-term (or even fatal), like tumors, or liver and kidney failure. Is the cheaper cost really worth it?

Now, consider the alternatives. First of all, for medication, there are a variety of treatment options available. You can use essential oils, herbs (which you can grow yourself), or even vitamin



supplements from the grocery store. Because these come from nature, their natural healing properties are less likely to cause any damaging side-effects and they are more easily replenished. Also, consider that they work with your dog's entire immune system and will actually give them a healing and energy boost, whereas traditional medicines tend to only treat one problem and the side-effects may cause additional problems elsewhere.

The second thing to consider is that all those shampoos, flea treatments, and other products you buy from the store can actually be made right at home, using basic ingredients found in your kitchen. For example: treatments for fleas can use a variety of ingredients, including: water, oatmeal, lemon, vinegar, and (organic) dish soap. Many websites have additional resources for recipes on how to treat a number of conditions including: skunk spray, dry skin, ear infections, arthritis, and the list goes on. All you need to do is gather the ingredients, mix them and store them in a reusable bottle. Any remaining ingredients can then be used for cleaning (the dish soap) or even cooking (the herbs)! You can also give your dog a massage (which is particularly helpful to those with arthritis or other joint problems), or simply offer them some organic treats to give them a mood boost.

So, even though the initial costs for alternative treatments may be more expensive, the fact that they are safer for your dog, needed less frequently, and can (usually) be easily replenished by common household products makes them the best choice for your canine friend.



### Just Say “No” To Chemicals

How many times have you picked up a box of spot-on flea treatment, or anti-itch shampoo, or similar products and you couldn't pronounce half of the ingredients listed? This is a red flag indicating that you should put down the product and walk away.

Many store-bought products contain ingredients that actually do more harm to your dog—and yourself—than any good. Sure, at first it may seem like they are doing their job—they keep fleas and ticks at bay, your dog isn't having digestion troubles anymore, and maybe they seem more energetic, but that's where it ends. A lot of these products use ingredients that are actually toxic to dogs and people. Consider that flea collar, or perhaps a daily oil or cream treatment of some kind. That gets into the dog's skin, their blood stream and their organs. It also gets into your system from touching them, or even from inhaling the aroma these products tend to emit. Toxins aren't simply digestible; they can also be inhaled or absorbed through the skin. This can lead to allergies, tumors, and even death (in some cases).

As mentioned above, there are many organic treatments and home remedies available, which are a much safer alternative for both you and your dog. Be careful though: some products will masquerade as organic or “natural”, when they really aren't. This is called “greenwashing”. To avoid this issue, do your research on different products. Check their labels: are the ingredients all natural things, or are there chemicals listed? Also, check for any organic labels, like the USDA Organic symbol. [This site](#) contains a list of labels and information on what each of them mean.

If you're curious about what chemicals (and even plants) are toxic to pets, you can find a lot of information on the [ASPCA's website](#). They also include information on what to do if your pet is poisoned.

Another fantastic site to check out is [GreenPaws.org](http://GreenPaws.org). This site is specifically focused on flea and tick treatments and similar products. Check out their Product Guide for the latest information on these products: is yours safe or not?

Combined with a healthy, organic diet and good exercise, the use of alternative treatments on your dog will have them feeling, acting, and looking better in no time.



# PART 1 HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

## CHAPTER 4 - NATURAL LAWN CARE

Everyone who lives in a home with a yard wants their landscape to look nice. Maybe you're the type that likes flower beds and shrubs. Maybe you'd rather have some herb and vegetable gardens. Maybe you'd simply like a nice, green lawn with some trimmed hedges. Whatever your preference, I'm sure you're more than aware of all the hard work that goes into maintaining a lawn and garden. There's trimming and mowing, weeding, sowing and harvesting, dealing with pests, fertilizers, mulch, compost, and more. You need to check the pH balance of the soil, figure out what plants are native or invasive, and plan everything just right, so the plants get the right amount of sun/shade, while attracting helpful critters (like bees), but deterring others (like hungry rabbits).

### The Dangers Of Gardening Chemicals

Did you know that all those chemicals you use on your lawn and garden—those fertilizers, pesticides, anti-fungus sprays, and others—can actually cause more harm than good? This includes harm towards both people and pets. Over the years, numerous studies—such as those conducted by Purdue University, The Journal of the National Cancer Institute, and even the EPA—have shown that exposure to chemicals in lawn and garden products can lead to a number of health problems, including: cancer, birth defects, and skin conditions. The National Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides offers the following statistics (in regards to the 30 most commonly used pesticides):

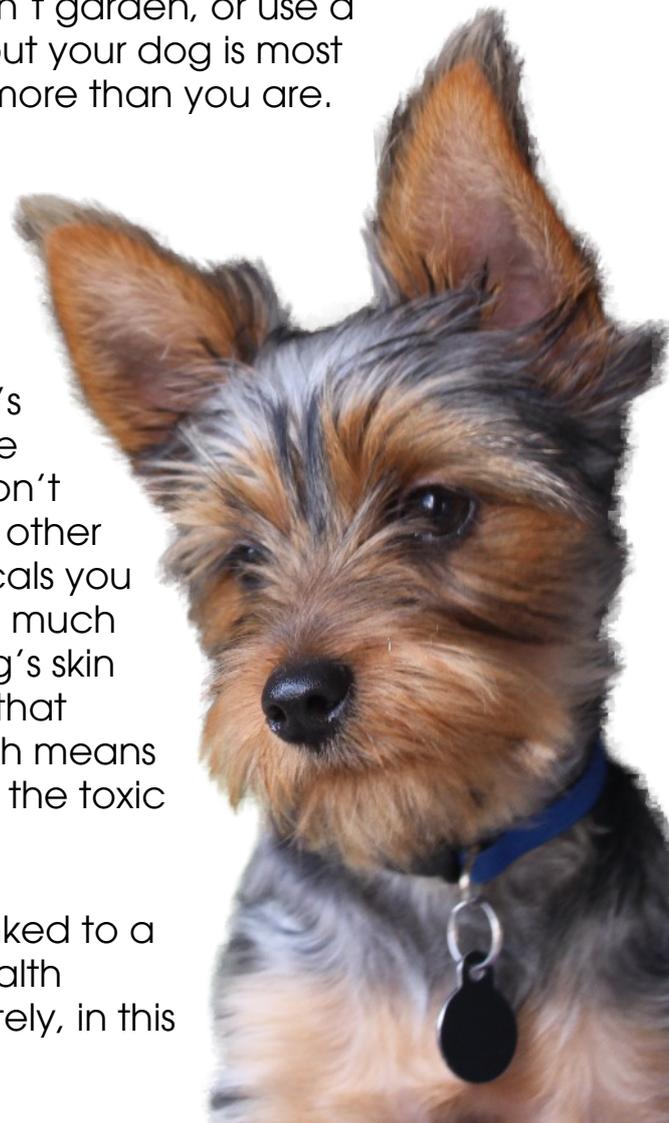
- 28 are sensitizers and/or irritants
- 20 are linked to kidney or liver damage
- 18 are linked to neurotoxicity and reproductive effects
- 14 are linked to birth defects
- 13 are possible carcinogens

Given that information, it makes you wonder if using those chemicals is really worth the dangerous side-effects they can cause.

Does this mean you have to give up gardening and let your yard turn into a barren wasteland? Of course not! It simply means that it's better for you (and your dog) to use safer, organic methods. You may wonder: "What does this have to do with my dog? She can't garden, or use a lawn mower." This may be true, but your dog is most likely exposed to your yard a lot more than you are.

How often is your dog outside? This can include playing, going to the bathroom, or simply lazing about—all of which (usually) take up a considerable amount of the dog's time each day. Now, consider the fact that they are naked. They don't wear shoes, protective gloves, or other clothing. Therefore, those chemicals you spray or sprinkle on your lawn are much easily absorbed through your dog's skin and feet. Also, consider the fact that many dogs like to eat grass, which means they're also exposed internally to the toxic chemicals, via ingestion.

These chemicals have been linked to a number of cancers and other health concerns in dogs, and unfortunately, in this



case size does not matter. It does not matter if your dog is small like a Beagle, or a big German Shepherd, these chemicals are still highly toxic to all dogs, regardless of their size or type. So, what can you do to prevent exposure?

### Organic Lawn Care Methods

The first (and most obvious) step to take is to stop using those pesticides and switch to an organic alternative. As with all other products, check the labels. Are there any trustworthy symbols listed? Are more than half of the ingredients from plants, or are they hard-to-pronounce chemical names? Also, another good thing to do is call the company and ask for a full list of ingredients. Their number should be listed on the product somewhere. The reason you should call them is because not all lawn and garden companies list every ingredient included in their products. While they may list “active” ingredients, it’s the “inert”

(unlisted) ingredients you need to worry about,

as those are most likely to include

carcinogens and other toxic

substances. If the company is

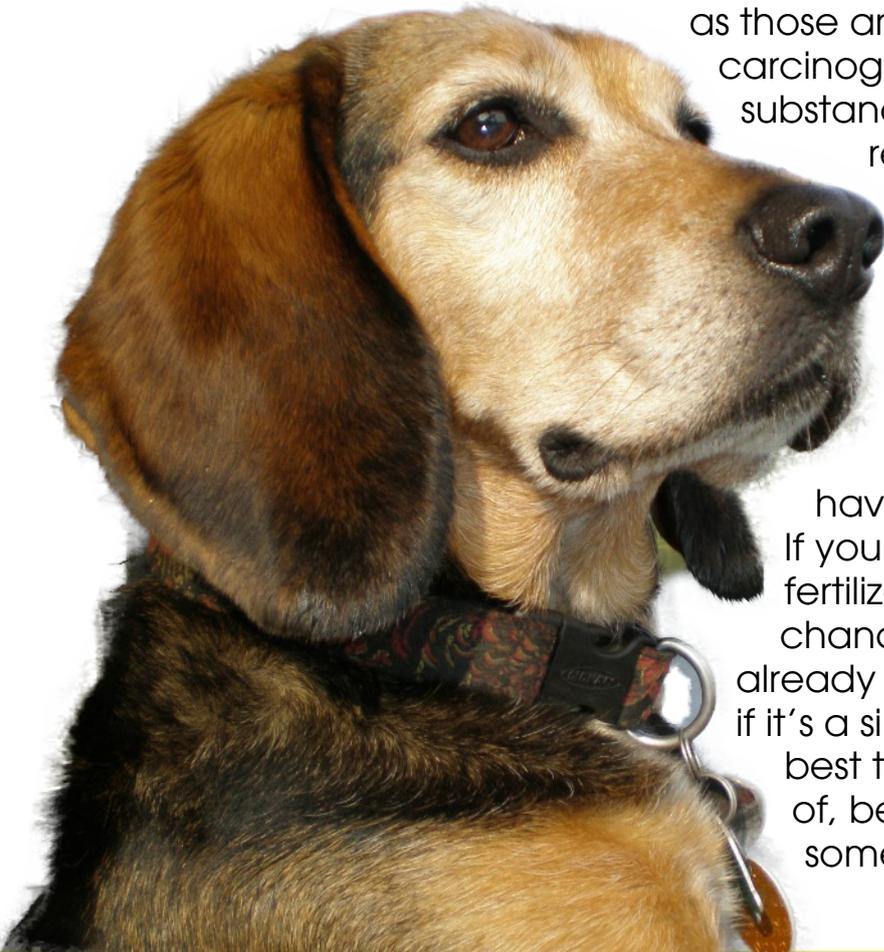
reluctant to share ingredient

information, it may be a

good idea to move on to

another product.

The next thing to do is take your dog (or other animal friends) to a vet and have them thoroughly examined. If you were using commercial fertilizers or pesticides for a while, chances are your dog may already have a health problem. Even if it’s a simple skin condition, it’s still best to have your dog taken care of, before things evolve into something potentially worse.



Finally, if you can't afford the organic products, you can always make pesticides and fertilizers with ingredients found in the home:

- Bugs can be controlled with a simple mixture of dish soap and water. There are also a variety of plants that will keep the "bad bugs" away, while others will attract the "good bugs". Be sure to do your research, so you know which plants are native to your area.
- Weeds can be eliminated by pouring scalding hot water on them (be sure not to pour the water on plants you want to keep!).
- Leaving lawn clippings on your yard will keep it moisturized and reduce the need for fertilization. Mulch is also great to use, as it reduces the need for watering and keeps harmful plant fungi at bay. Rather than purchasing bags of it from the store, make your own with shredded bark, chopped leaves, straw, or grass clippings.
- Start a compost pile (if you haven't already); these are excellent for your plants!

### The Damage Done

Now, let's talk about the damage your dog may do to your lawn and garden: digging up flower beds, leaving yellow urine spots behind, how do you handle it? Well, the solutions to these problems are actually quite simple.

When it comes to eliminating the spots of yellow, or brown dead grass, a lot of sources will suggest flushing it out with water. They also suggest removing the dead grass and planting new grass seeds, which also requires a couple weeks of keeping the area constantly watered. This is extremely wasteful, especially if you live in an area that's prone to drought, and your water bill will skyrocket very quickly. Sure, you could build a dog run, put fencing around

areas you don't want her to enter, or even train her to use one specific corner of the yard. However, all of these require time and supplies that you may not have, or be able to afford.

Here are a few methods that are better for the environment and your wallet:

~ **The "Plug" Method:** Dig up the dead (or stained) area of grass, making sure to keep it intact as one big clump of dirt and grass. Take that clump to a section of your yard that's infrequently used, but has undamaged grass (like at the back of your property). Remove a clump of dirt and grass from the undamaged section that's the same size as the clump of dead grass. Now, take the clump of undamaged grass and use it to fill in the hole where the dead grass originally was, making sure to tamp down the soil with your foot, so the new clump stays in place.

~ **The Sawdust Method:** It's claimed that sawdust will counter the effects of the nitrogen in the urine (which is what causes all the damage). Simply cover the area (either urine or feces) with sawdust and dampen it with some water. This will: hide the spot, reduce (or eliminate) any odor, and the mixture will eventually turn into compost (which is great for any yard).

~ **The Food Method:** Some claim that adding tomato juice or yogurt to a dog's food and baking soda to the water will help decrease (or eliminate) this issue. I do not know if it will work or not, but it's at least worth a try. You can also try adding natural apple cider vinegar (1 teaspoon to 2 tablespoons, depending on the size of the dog) to their food or water, each day. This will prevent the yellowing effect, and is also great for repelling fleas, cleaning teeth, and relieving arthritis pain.

If digging is an issue with your dog, they might simply be bored, or in need of some exercise. Make sure you take them for a walk every day. Also, play with them! They love to play fetch, chase, and other games. Be sure to reward them with positive reinforcement or the occasional treat. Too many treats are really not good for their health and (in most cases) they would appreciate a nice walk a lot more. You can also try putting up fences around gardens or flowerbeds, to keep your canine friend out, or invest in some organic “no dig” spray.



# PART 1 HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

## CHAPTER 5 - NATURAL REMEDIES

### How to Help Your Pet's Immune System

Do your pets get sick easily? Do they have trouble fighting off infection or disease? If they've ever been wounded, does the injury take a long time to heal? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, your animal friend is in need of an immune system boost.



An animal's immune system works very much like a person's. It keeps them healthy, fights off sickness, and heals injuries. In other words, the immune system determines what is *supposed to be in the body* and what *needs to be removed from the body*, including bacteria, microbes, parasites, toxins, and viruses. However, if it's not taken care of properly, it becomes weak, leaving your animal friend vulnerable to a whole world of health problems, ranging from a simple, upset stomach to a life-threatening cancer.

Holistic veterinarians believe the main reason your animal friend gets sick is because something is interfering with her natural healing ability. Although antibiotics can be used to fight infection, they can't fix whatever weakened her immune system in the first place. Thus, some

believe it is more important to fix the body's defenses, rather than focus on the cause of disease. With a strong immune (defense) system, your animal friend is less likely to become sick.

Everything that happens to your pet can affect their immune system. A nice, quiet afternoon will keep them well, relaxed, and balanced. On the other hand, a stressful day can throw them off balance, to the point of disrupting their immune system and even making them feel "under the weather".

There are 3 main factors that play a role in the quality of your pet's immune system: diet, exercise, and stress. A lot of stress or anxiety will bring anyone's mood and well-being down, including your animal friend's. This will lead to a weakened immune system and greater risk of health problems. Helping them deal with their fears, making alterations to their environment, or your daily routine, can decrease their stress levels and boost their immune system. Make sure you spend plenty of quality time with your animal friend and if need be, see your vet or an animal behaviorist for extra help.

In regards to diet, the saying "you are what you eat" definitely holds true in this situation. All those bags of processed, dry, pet food mix they sell at the market are not exactly the best food choices for your animal friend. The majority of them contain fillers, chemicals, preservatives, additives, artificial flavors, and dyes that can seriously damage your animal friend's health. This is particularly true for the digestive track, kidneys, and liver, which all have to work extra hard to clear the body of those nasty impurities. None of it is healthy for them in the slightest and may make them sick, or give them an allergic reaction.

Your best bet is to feed your animal friend real, organic food.



Give them real meat, veggies, and even fruit. Grains are also good, but in moderation. Throughout almost their entire existence, dogs and cats have fed on raw, wild food. It was natural instinct for them to hunt and forage. So, it would seem only natural to keep them on a similar diet. Dry, processed kibble (or even the stuff that comes in cans) is a foreign concept to them and as such, their immune system will reject the unnatural ingredients.

When you were younger, your parents may have told you not to give table scraps to your dog. In reality, that's the exact food they *need* to stay healthy! Give them a piece of your chicken, or a slice of your carrot. Add some egg to their breakfast, or give them a piece of your sandwich from lunch. Basically, if it's healthy for us, it's most likely healthy for them. When I say "healthy" mean the actual organic food you can get at a farmer's market, in the produce section, or at the butcher/deli—not the processed stuff that comes in boxes or cans. Fresh food contains a lot of vitamins, minerals, enzymes, probiotics, and nutrients essential to anyone's health—the processed stuff is greatly lacking in those things.

This is also definitely a time to go organic. Organic foods are chemical, pesticide, herbicide, and insecticide-free, making them the healthiest option for everyone. Non-organic foods (especially fruits and veggies) have chemical residue on them and exposing yourself, or your pet, to those chemicals will only make things worse.

Clean, fresh water is also a must. While tap water is an option, you should run it through a filtration system first. Tap water can contain excessive chlorine and fluoride, as well as



toxins, all of which add stress to your pet's body. Bottled water and spring water are also good options. Also, you should only use glass/ceramic or metal bowls; plastic bowls can leech chemicals into your pet's food and water.

Finally, moderate exercise is a great way to improve your animal friend's immune system. Exposure to natural light (the outdoors), mental and physical stimulation will give their health quite a boost. It also helps to keep their weight under control. This is important, as overweight animals are more vulnerable to acute and chronic disease, or infection. Combine a good amount of exercise with the healthy diet I mentioned above, and your pet will be well on her way to having a better immune system.

Oh, and there's one other thing that will help your pet's immune system in a major way: Antioxidants. Antioxidants help rid the body of toxins, decrease allergy symptoms, protect the body from "free radicals" (molecules that take electrons from cells or other body parts, causing damage), lower cholesterol, help circulation, and perform other such useful tasks. They are also great at helping a variety of existing health conditions, including: arthritis, asthma, heart disease, kidney disease, and cancer.

Now, in regards to the "free radicals", they include nitric oxide and hydrogen peroxide. Ways they damage the body include: damaging membrane receptor proteins, inactivating enzymes needed for a normal metabolism, and deactivating proteins needed for energy production. These damages can lead to a number of health issues, such as cancer, nutrient deficiencies, and viral infections. High amounts of "free radicals" can come from exposure to radiation, environmental pollution, and unhealthy diets—which is why a proper diet and eliminating exposure to chemicals (like pesticides) is so important!

I'm sure you are wondering: where can I find these antioxidants? Well, they actually come in a lot of forms and

in a lot of food. Vitamins A, C, and E are all types of antioxidants. If you've ever heard of bioflavonoids (plant and animal compounds like grape seed extract, ginkgo biloba, or coenzyme Q-10), those are antioxidants, too. Enzymes, minerals (like manganese and zinc), and other nutrients are also included in this list. Some herbs that are a great source for antioxidants include: Cat's Claw, Echinacea, Indian Ginseng, Milk Thistle, and Mistletoe.

Here are a few sources of antioxidants and how they may help:

- **Chlorophyll:** Sound familiar? It should. In school, your science teacher taught you that chlorophyll is what makes plants green. It also contains vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and other nutrients. Broccoli stalks, asparagus spears, and the outer leaves of dark green lettuce are all great sources for chlorophyll (and good for your pet's diet!).
- **Echinacea (or *Echinacea purpurea*):** You may know this by its common name: Purple Coneflower. These flowers grow all over the place during the summer, especially in the east. They might remind you of a daisy or sunflower, but with purple or pink petals. It is the most commonly known immune stimulant. For people, it is the number one cold & flu herbal remedy, and also has antiviral and antibacterial uses.
- **Milk Thistle and Mistletoe:** These 2 herbs are great sources for antioxidants and can also be found in supplements. Both remove toxins from the body, by cleaning out the kidneys, liver, and lymph. This strengthens the immune system, maintains health, and allows the body to fight disease.

There are many, many, many other sources of antioxidants, but you'll have to do your research (and talk

to your vet) to find out what they are. One thing that should be noted though is alpha-lipoic acid may be a popular antioxidant for people, but it is quite toxic to cats.



### **Do not give it (or anything that contains it) to your cat!**

As always, talk to your vet *before* you give your animal friend any kind of pills, supplements, or herbs. They will be able to tell you what your pet needs and the proper dosage.

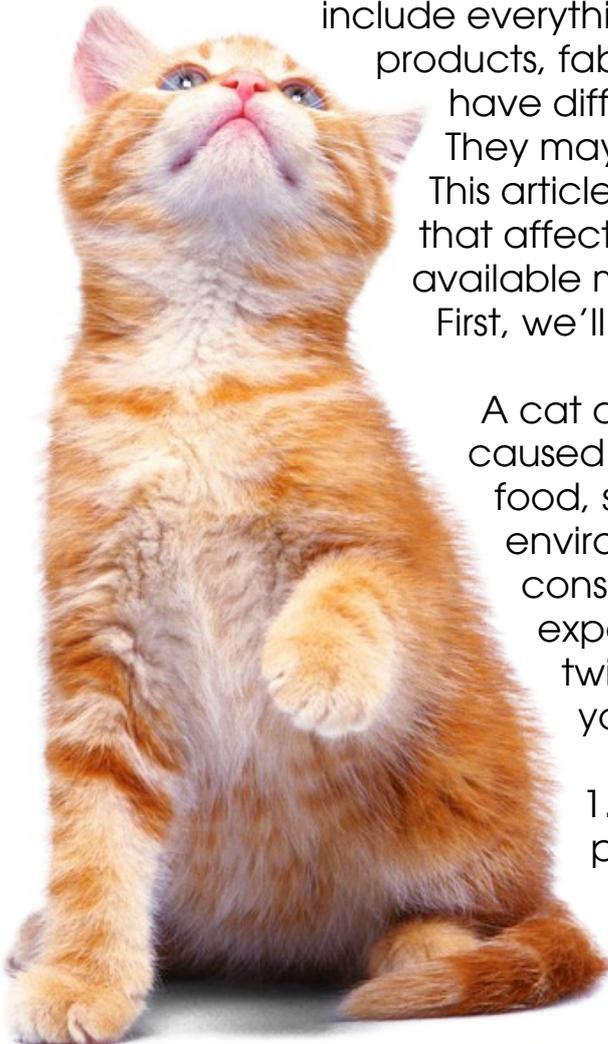
## Natural Remedies for Pet Allergies

Did you know that your animal friend could have allergies? Pets can get allergies like people. These can include everything from food and bug bites, to cleaning products, fabrics, dust, and more. Dogs and cats also have different reactions to allergens, just like us. They may cough, sneeze, itch, or even get hives. This article will cover the different types of allergies that affect dogs and cats, and some of the available methods for treating them.

First, we'll discuss cat allergies.

A cat allergy is an unpleasant, physical reaction caused by their immune system overreacting to food, something inhaled, or something in their environment. In order for your cat to be considered allergic to something, she must be exposed to the potential allergen at least twice. There are 2 types of allergic reactions your cat may experience:

1. The reaction that occurs right after exposure to the allergen. This produces hives (usually swelling around the eyes and mouth) and itching. Welts on the body are also possible.



2. The delayed reaction is itching, which can happen hours or days after the first exposure.

There are several types of allergies that are common in cats: Atopic Dermatitis (an inhalant allergy, like dust or pollen), Feline Miliary Dermatitis, Flea-Bite Dermatitis, and Food. Let's go over these, one by one:

### ► Atopic Dermatitis

These are allergic reactions to something your cat inhaled. Potential allergens can include dust, mold, and pollen, and may be a seasonal thing. Because there are so many diverse symptoms for this type of allergy (including itching, a rash, or hair loss), it can be difficult to distinguish Atopic Dermatitis from other allergies. So, it would be best to have your vet do some skin testing to determine the proper diagnosis. Once the allergen is determined, the best thing you can do is remove it from your cat's environment; if removing the allergen is not possible (in the case of pollen, or other outdoor allergens), you may have to consult your holistic vet about other options.

### ► Feline Miliary Dermatitis

This skin condition comes from an allergic reaction to a number of things, particularly bug bites (fleas, mosquitoes, lice, etc.). Skin infections, drug reactions, autoimmune diseases, poor nutrition, and hormonal imbalances can also



cause this. If your cat has Feline Miliary Dermatitis, you will find break-outs along her back, around her head and neck that look like small bumps and crusts beneath the fur. Itching is possible, but not a definite reaction. Also keep an eye out for raw patches of skin and hair loss.

### ► Flea Bite Dermatitis

Your cat will be extremely itchy if she has this; so much that the skin may break down and become infected from all the scratching. Peak flea season is during the summer, so you should be especially on guard then. Once the cat is exposed, itching may happen year-round if there are fleas in your house. That being said, the immediate thing you should do is clean your home and make sure it is flea-free. Keep in mind, that itching is a reaction for anyone bitten by a flea, so you will need to take your cat to the vet for a skin test, to determine the proper diagnosis.

### ► Food Allergies

This is generally a much simpler allergy type to deal with. As the name suggests, your cat may be allergic to something in her food. Possible food allergens for cats may include: beef, chicken, corn, dairy products, eggs, fish, pork, soy, and wheat. Symptoms of an allergic reaction include: an itchy rash, swollen eyelids, hair loss and oozing sores (from constant scratching). If you suspect a particular food is the allergen, remove it from your cat's diet for at least 4 to 6 weeks. Then, try exposing her to that food; if an allergic reaction happens, you've found the culprit and should remove it completely from her diet.



Common symptoms of cat allergies include:

- Coughing, sneezing, or wheezing
- Diarrhea
- Ear infections
- Increased itching/scratching
- Paw chewing/swollen paws
- Runny Eyes
- Snoring (caused by an inflamed throat)
- Vomiting

If you suspect your cat has allergies, take her to the vet before you give her *any* treatment. Those symptoms could be signs of other health problems, so it is best to get a proper medical exam to eliminate the chance of it being another unforeseen issue. For example, asthma in cats can be linked to allergies. Cats are highly sensitive to cigarette smoke, so if yours is diagnosed with asthma, smoking is absolutely out of the question.

Now, it's time to move on to man's best friend: the dog. Like the cat, dogs can get several types of allergies: those due to fleas or other biting insects (flea allergy dermatitis), inhalant allergies (canine atopy), food allergies, and skin allergies (contact allergies).

Did you know there are over 2000 species and subspecies of fleas? It's no wonder they seem to spread like the plague. Fleas love warm, humid weather and unfortunately, they aren't picky about hosts. In fact, dogs can also get cat fleas. Those little pests can jump 10,000 times in a row (about the length of 3 football fields) when searching for food. Their lifespan ranges between 16 days and 21 months, and they only need to eat once every day or so.



Why am I going on about fleas? Well, because they can cause some serious complications in dogs. Fleas consume 15 times their body weight in blood. This can cause anemia.

Also, such a great amount of blood loss can lead to life-threatening troubles with puppies. A cold body temperature, pale gums, and listlessness are all signs of parasitic anemia. Fleas can also cause allergies. If a dog is highly sensitive to flea saliva, just one bite can create an allergic reaction. This is known as flea allergy dermatitis, which can cause a lot of discomfort for your dog, including other skin infections. Hair loss, reddened skin, scabs, and hot spots are all signs of this. Dogs who live in warm, humid climates, or spend a lot of times outdoors are the most vulnerable.

Another common allergy in dogs is the food allergy. Ten percent of all allergy cases in dogs are food allergies. However, unlike some other allergy types, this is genetic and is triggered by exposure to the allergen. Foods that dogs may be allergic to include (but are not limited to): beef, chicken, dairy, egg, fish, lamb, pork, rabbit, soy, and wheat. Signs of food allergies in dogs include: chronic diarrhea/gas, chronic ear inflammation, gastrointestinal problems, licking their feet, and an itchy rear end.

Determining what your dog is allergic to is a simple process of elimination. First, you must stop feeding your dog *all* the foods she is used to eating. This includes dog food brands, treats, and table scraps. Next, you must give her a food she's never had before and keep her strictly on that diet. It could be an exotic kind of meat, or another kind of pet food. However, if you use pet food, you must check the ingredients to make sure it does not have the same as previous brands she's eaten.

Once the dog has been on the new diet for a while (at least a month or so), start reintroducing the old food one by one. When you finally figure out which is the allergen, take her to the vet to get proper treatment.

Be warned: food allergies in dogs are not apparent right away. It takes time for the dog to become sensitized to the allergen and so it could be years before they show any signs of allergies. The good news is, removing the allergen from their diet will help *a lot* in resolving the issue. Also, you may want to consider switching them to a RAW (or similar) diet. This means you prepare their meals for them with actual food, so you are aware of everything that goes into their diet and can easily avoid giving them foods they might be allergic to. Check online for recipes.

The next kind of dog allergy is the most common reason dogs go to the vet: skin allergies. Also known as contact allergies, they are caused by simply touching something. This has become so common in dogs, in recent years, that it's estimated 1 in 7 dogs have a skin allergy. Similar to food allergies, the dog's heredity does play a part in this.

However, before the dog even has an allergic reaction,

she must be exposed to the allergen twice. The first time makes the immune system send antibodies to the allergen. The second time triggers an allergen-antibody reaction that releases histamine (which causes the allergic reaction).

Your dog will scratch often and continuously, and will most likely express a miserable or grumpy attitude if they have a skin allergy. This category can also be broken down further into types



of hypersensitivity. One type will cause a reaction (usually hives) almost immediately after exposure to the allergen. The other type causes a delayed reaction (hours or days after exposure) and is the culprit for intense itching.

If not careful, your dog could experience some highly serious, hypersensitivity reactions, including: anaphylactic shock, vomiting, collapse, and if untreated, death. Keep an eye out for these symptoms to determine if your dog may have allergies (and remember to take your dog to the vet *before* attempting to treat the allergy):

- Excessive licking, chewing, or scratching of a specific area
- Hair loss on the legs
- Open sores from the excessive licking and scratching
- Rubbing their face with their paws, or rubbing against the furniture and floor

When your holistic vet has finally determined for certain what kind of allergy your pet has (or if it's even an allergy at all), you can start going through the different treatment options. In a lot of cases, simply removing the allergen from their diet or their environment (to eliminate exposure) will be enough to help them. Unfortunately, this isn't always possible and some of our animal friends may need a bit of extra care. So, here are some natural treatment options for your dog or cat.

Please remember to discuss these with your vet first, as different breeds or sizes may require different treatment methods:

- ▶ Bathing your pet in Epsom salts, or giving them an oatmeal bath can help relieve some symptoms.

- ▶ Aloe ointments or Aloe plant juice (straight from an Aloe Vera plant) can help soothe your cat's skin.
- ▶ Marshmallow Root is excellent for soothing the skin and Narrow-leaved Paperbark (aka Snow-in-Summer) is good for promoting skin health and keeping the skin clean.
- ▶ Licorice (the herb, not the candy) is an excellent tonic for their digestive tract.
- ▶ Marigold can be used to restore skin health and lessen rashes, while Chamomile is a nice, gentle, herb for cleansing and soothing skin discomfort.
- ▶ Simply wiping your dog or cat down with a wet towel when they come indoors can help decrease the absorption of some outdoor allergens.
- ▶ Soaking your pet in some cool water for 5 – 10 minutes can help soothe the skin (warm water will only aggravate the itching).
- ▶ Keep your home clean! This will cut down on pests (like fleas) and exposure to allergens like dust and mold.
- ▶ Also, in regards to dust, if you have a cat you may want to change their type of litter. A lot of cat litter products have dust and chemical additives—both of which can cause allergic reactions in dogs and cats. Switch to an organic brand, like Swheat Scoop or Feline Pine.
- ▶ Apple cider vinegar can be used as a quick rinse to relieve itching.
- ▶ You can also make a rinse from dried Yellow Dock. Add 1 tablespoon of the herb to 2 cups of boiling water. Let cool. Strain the herb and use the remaining liquid as a rinse.
- ▶ Burdock Root is good for dry, scaly skin and can be used as a dietary supplement.

- ▶ Nettle is great for treating allergies and other skin conditions, and has antibiotic properties.
- ▶ Feeding your dog Kelp regularly can give them a healthier coat and skin, and decrease the amount of scratching.

### Natural Remedies for Pet Anxiety

I don't know about you, but sometimes I get really stressed out. Issues with work, bills, and home can pile up very quickly, and there are times when I wonder: how am I ever going to get all of this done? There simply aren't enough hours in a day. And for some, that's when little fears start sneaking their way into their thoughts: fears about finances, fears about job performance, and even social anxiety. It may not always be a comfort to know that you're not the only one who experiences these things, but your animal friends experience fear and anxiety, too. Despite what you may be going through, they need comforting as well and perhaps, even some medical attention.

When an animal gets stressed, several things may happen: their heart quickens, they start panting, they start shaking, and their eyes may have a fearful, trance-like look about them. They also may resort to a drastic "fight or flight" response. All of this can lead to serious health issues, including: coronary heart disease, diabetes, memory loss, and thyroid problems, among many others.

If your pet's behavior changes suddenly during certain situations, like a thunderstorm or while traveling, you should keep note of what happens. Do they have the same reaction each time a storm happens? How severe is it and how long does it last? Does the behavior persist after the storm (or other stressor) passes? If your animal friend shows

signs of stress, fear, or anxiety during normal situations, it may be time to take them to a holistic vet. This is especially true if they try to rip out their fur, stops eating, or shows a major change in their bowel movements.

▶ Common stress factors for pets include:

- Boarding/kennel stays
- Bringing a new pet or person (a baby, for example) into the home
- Fireworks
- Grooming/bathing
- Hereditary disorders
- Leaving the property and getting lost
- Moving to a new home
- Thunderstorms
- A trip to the vet
- Unfamiliar surroundings



One key issue that many pets (especially dogs) suffer from is separation anxiety. Dogs are pack animals by nature and when they spend too much time alone, they get easily stressed out. This can happen when you go to work, on vacation, or are otherwise away from them for an extended period of time. This can lead to them chewing on themselves, chewing on furniture, getting in the trash, or having an “accident” on your new carpet. Other signs include excessive barking, howling or whining, pacing, and digging (as an attempt to escape).

Keep in mind this isn't because they are vindictive by nature, or that they hate your taste in interior decorating. It's because they miss you and that's kind of

hard to express when you're not around. You are part of their pack, so is it any wonder why they behave in such a manner when you're away?

It should also be noted that this can be due to a traumatic event that happened in your dog's life. If a previous pet owner was abusive, or if they were neglected as a puppy, it can lead to separation anxiety. I know a Siberian Husky, who is believed to have been abused by his previous owners. He is the sweetest dog in the world, but if you leave him alone for any length of time, he will howl and cry and get overly stressed out—so much that he's been put on tranquilizers and is actually suspected of having PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Granted, separation anxiety can be very much psychological, but it can also be physical. If you have an older dog that's suddenly showing signs of separation anxiety, you should take them to the vet to be checked for other issues. Otherwise, there are a couple things you can try to lessen their anxiety. First (and most obvious), you should spend more quality time with them! Put down the TV remote and step away from the computer. Take your dog for a walk or play with them, or sit with them for a while and pet them and talk to them. That quality time is very important because it lets them know you are there for them.

The other thing to do is try to get them used to you leaving the house. When you are home, every once in a while, open and close the front door to get them used to the sound of you leaving. After you've done that for a week or so, start going outside and gradually increase the time you are out there and away from them. Hopefully, as the time away from them progresses, your dog will realize that you aren't going to abandon them and their anxiety may decrease.

Not to let our feline friends out of the mix, cats experience stress, fear, and anxiety, too. They generally have the same

causes (unfamiliar surroundings, new animals or people coming to the house, traumatic event, etc.), but the symptoms are a bit different.

▶ Signs to watch for include:

- Biting and scratching
- Excessive meowing
- Hiding
- Not using the litter box/Spraying (even when spayed or neutered)
- Pacing
- Pulling out fur

One thing that will help calm them down is a simple massage. Simply pet them with long, gentle strokes and



using a light touch. Make sure to move your hand in the direction of the hair growth (usually from the head to the tail). Adding some Brewer's yeast to their food (less than 1 tsp) can also help because it's a good source of vitamin B, which helps reduce stress. Another thing to try is positive reinforcement.

For example: if you recently brought a new animal into your home, whenever that animal is in the same room as your cat, offer your cat some special treats. This will help turn her attention away from the new animal and focus more on the pleasant activity (the treats).

Now, you may wonder why I don't recommend giving them the standard medical remedy of pills and tranquilizers. The simple reason is due to the side-effects they cause. Although effective in their own right, they can lead to further health issues. It should also be noted that their effectiveness is temporary and can seriously alter your animal friend's body chemistry, putting stress on their organs and leading to even more health concerns.

Acepromazine (AKA Acetylpromazine, ACP, Ace, Atravet, or Acezine 2) is commonly prescribed to treat anxious dogs. It depresses their central nervous system and lowers their blood pressure. However, it can also cause allergic reactions, depression, increased heart rate, and a lack of coordination. It should definitely not be used on pregnant or nursing dogs, or those who may have seizures.

Fluoxetine (AKA Fontex, Prozac, or Sarafem) is another medication prescribed for stressed animals, but should not be given to pets with weakened hearts or other conditions. Side effects are numerous, and when talking about human use, the risk of suicide is one of them. I can only imagine what that could do to a dog!

Before you start giving your animal friend herbs, supplements, and other forms of medication, you should

know that there are some simple ways to help de-stress their environment. Start by learning what makes them tick, what it is that stresses them out. If you can remove the cause from their environment, do so. Otherwise, different methods will work for different situations.

For example, closing the curtains or blinds during a storm may calm them down. Also, do not fuss over them too much when they are stressed. Petting them or playing with them as normal is fine. However, any extra attention or coddling they get may be perceived wrong—they may think that as long as they act stressed, they'll get more attention, which can trigger unnecessary stress-related attacks in the future.

If you're taking them to the vet or to be groomed, bring some treats to reward them for their "bravery". And if your pet feels compelled to hide somewhere, let them be. My oldest dog used to hide under my bed during thunderstorms. She was not causing any harm to herself or others, and it made her feel safer. Eventually, she hid less and stayed out in the open more. Sometimes these situations will fix themselves, but don't expect it to happen right away (or in some cases, at all). If your pet does like to hide in a particular area (like under the bed), you can provide them with a blanket and some of their toys as comfort.

If your animal friend has issues with traveling, try getting her used to being in a crate before travelling. The crate should be big enough for her to stand up, turn around, and lie down in. Put some familiar comfort items in the crate with her, like a blanket or toys. Do not feed her in a moving vehicle—you should give her a light meal a few hours before departure time. To get her used to the crate, take her with you on short trips around town, like to the post office or grocery store. Gradually increasing the length of the trips will get her used to being in a crate.

Exercise and a healthy diet can also help de-stress your pet. Regular exercise burns stress-related hormones, like

adrenaline, and releases endorphins (which promote happiness). And if they want to sniff things while out for a walk, let them—it gives them a chance to relax and catch up on what's been going on in the neighborhood. If your dog gets stressed out a lot at night, take her for a nice, long walk right before bedtime. This will tire her out and usually ensure she sleeps most of the night through.

In regards to the healthy diet, a balanced diet keeps pets energized and helps them deal better with stressful situations. Vitamin B, calcium, and magnesium are key components to this and are all found in vegetables.

If nothing else seems to work, contact a trainer or pet behaviorist. These people are experts in dealing with a number of pet issues and may be able to offer solutions to their stress that even a vet wouldn't think of!

Here is a list of other natural remedies you can try, including herbal, aromatherapy, and flower essences:

- ~Astragalus stimulates the immune system; this is particularly useful if your animal has a depressed immune system, which can cause anxiety.
- ~Chamomile reduces anxiety in stressed out dogs. It calms their nerves and induces sleep. Give them some chamomile tea before a long drive, or soak some treats in the tea.
- ~Green Tea Leaves contain amino acids that induce a relaxed state.
- ~Jasmine is known for its calming effect.
- ~Oat calms the nerves and is very nutritious. Simply adding some cooked oatmeal to your dog's food can help.

~Passionflower is also good for calming your dog, without making her sleepy. Choose this over Chamomile if you need your dog to be alert (such as a watchdog).

~Skullcap (or Scullcap) is a great herb for soothing the nervous system and can also help epileptic dogs.

~St. John's Wort is wonderful for separation anxiety and tension, as well as depression in dogs. It also combines well with Valerian.

~Valerian is known to reduce anxiety and tension in animals, and also over-excitability in dogs. It also has an euphoric-inducing effect in cats similar to catnip. You can find products available in pet stores, usually in the form of capsules or tinctures.

~Aromatherapy scents that can help ease anxiety or depression include: Chamomile, Jasmine, Lavender, Rose, Sage, Sweet Marjoram, and Valerian. All of these are known for their calming effects. Simply lighting some incense or candles with these scents (while your dog is in the room) can soothe her anxiety.

~Bach's Flower Essences (especially Bach's Rescue Remedy) is one of the top choices among homeopathic veterinarians for treating stress. It is a combination of five flowers: Cherry Plum, Clematis, Impatiens, Rockrose, and Star of Bethlehem. Giving this to your animal friend 30 minutes or so before an anticipated stress-inducing event (travel, a vet appointment, a storm, etc.) can help keep them calm and reduce signs of anxiety.



Last of all, here's a recipe for a natural sedative that's 100% effective and completely harmless:

### Ingredients:

- 1 tsp. German Chamomile
- 1 tsp. Catnip
- 1 tsp. Skullcap
- ½ C. Water
- 2 – 3 Tbsp. Honey

### Directions:

1. Heat the water in a microwave-safe cup or bowl, to simmering.
2. Add the herbs (German Chamomile, Catnip, and Skullcap) to the hot water. Cover the cup or bowl to prevent the oils (from the herbs) from evaporating.
3. Steep for 5 – 6 minutes, then strain. Press the herbs in the strainer to extract as much fluid as possible.
4. Mix the strained liquid with the honey and store in an airtight container.

You can give this to your dog on a large spoon, simply letting her lick it off the spoon. Your dog should begin slipping into a relaxed, restful sleep within 15 – 30 minutes. The mixture can be stored at room temperature for 1 day, or refrigerated for up to 2 weeks.



As always, please check with your holistic or homeopathic vet first for a proper diagnosis and dosage information, *before* giving your animal friend any of these remedies!

### Natural Remedies for Pet Arthritis Pawrific-Style

Have you ever wondered if there is a natural way to help with your dog or cat's arthritis? Perhaps you have tried a number of modern medical things for your dog that seem to work but then seem to make things worse once the initial treatment wears off. My hope in sharing this article on Natural Remedies for Pet Arthritis is to help share some tips and resources for taking a natural approach to pet care. By the time you finish reading this article, you should have a better understanding of what causes it, what symptoms to look for, and ways to naturally treat it.

Like arthritis in people, pet arthritis has no cure. There are many things you can do to ease the pain, but as things stand right now, there is nothing that will make it go away permanently. And sometimes, even medication can be dangerous.

**Good or Bad:** Rimadyl for arthritis. This is a very common medication for dogs dealing with joint pain. Also known as Imadyl, Imafen, and Carprofen, this NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug) can actually do more harm than good. While a lot of dogs do respond well to the medication, others have faced some dire consequences—including death.



Thus far, the FDA has received more than 6,000 reports about negative reactions to the medication, including sudden animal deaths linked to its use. Rimadyl is known to cause gastrointestinal, kidney, and liver problems. Fortunately, my dog was not on the medicine for very long and is less likely to experience these things as a result. However, if you have a dog that is taking Rimadyl on an ongoing basis, here are some symptoms to watch for:

- Diarrhea
- Fatigue and/or lethargy
- Increase in thirst or urination
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of coordination
- Seizures
- Vomiting



### ► Read Label First

Rimadyl has also been linked to other health concerns, including: ulcers, change in behavior (activity level, aggression, etc.), change in skin condition (scabs, redness, etc.), staggering, stumbling, weakness, loss of balance, dizziness, partial or full paralysis, and black/tar-like stool or spots of blood in the vomit. You can find out more about Rimadyl's negative effects on dogs at [The Senior Dogs Project](#).

The good news is, there are many natural, holistic arthritis treatment options that are absolutely safe for your animal friend and do not come with any of those nasty side effects. However, the first thing I'm going to talk about is the causes.





## ► Pamper Your Dog with All Natural and Organic Products

Arthritis in cats is less common than in dogs (though 90% of cats over 12 are at risk), but the most common form cats suffer from is Osteoarthritis (AKA Degenerative Arthritis or Degenerative Joint Disease). The cartilage covering the surface of a joint wears down, causing the bone underneath to develop a rough surface, which damages the joint. This particularly occurs in joints that have been severely stressed, dislocated, or fractured. Osteoarthritis can actually start in the early years of their life, but they won't show symptoms until later on. Luckily, proper care of joint injuries may reduce the severity of the condition.

Dog arthritis, on the other hand, is a bit more complicated and unfortunately, most dogs have a 65% of developing arthritis between 7-11 years of age. Causes can range from joint injuries or inherited joint problems (like hip dysplasia), to old age or infection. Weight problems and poor nutrition can also play a part in the condition. If their joints have to support too much weight, they might get arthritis early on in life and if their diet doesn't contain the right balance of minerals, protein, and other nutrients, it can make them vulnerable later on in life.

Osteoarthritis affects 1 out of 5 dogs during their lifetime and it's not limited to older dogs. Inherited joint conditions or injuries can cause this, even in younger dogs. Large dogs and overweight dogs are also more vulnerable to this than smaller dogs, or those maintaining a healthy weight.

Immune-Mediated Arthritis happens when antibodies are directed against the dog's connective tissue. They will either destroy cartilage and joint surfaces (erosive) or there will be inflammation, but no tissue destruction (nonerosive).

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is an example of the erosive type and mainly affects small dog breeds around 4 years of age. The nonerosive type affects mid-to-large size dogs around 5-6 years of age.

Some types of arthritis can be caused by infections or other diseases. Lyme Disease can cause Spirochetal Arthritis and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever can cause Rickettsial Arthritis. Both diseases come from ticks, which make this all the more reason to keep your animal friend pest-free.

### ► Eco-Friendly Dog

Now, symptoms of arthritis can vary, depending on your pet's age, the severity of the condition, the type of arthritis they have, and other factors. However, here are some of the most common signs to watch for:

- They may be stiff in the morning, or after they wake up from a nap
- They may have difficulty standing up
- They may hesitate before going for a walk, or climbing up things (like stairs or hills)
- Lameness, laziness, limping, or decreased activity (they might move slower, or not be so inclined to run and play as much as they used to)
- Change in behavior, lack of alertness
- Weight gain or loss, change in appetite
- Joint pain, swelling, and stiffness
- Muscle atrophy (their hind legs may appear thinner than usual, for example)

Although these are common signs of arthritis, you should still take your animal friend to the vet, to get a proper diagnosis. They may need to run some tests and (most likely)

take some x-rays, but it is better to have your animal properly treated sooner than later.

Finally, we come to the treatments. While many of these you can do yourself, it's still best to take your pet to the veterinarian to make sure they get the best care, and to make sure you are doing the homecare treatments properly. I highly recommend finding a holistic veterinarian, as most of these treatment methods are "non-traditional".



### ► [Natural, Holistic Supplements by EnduraPet](#)

One of the first things you can do is take a look at their diet. If your pet is overweight or not getting the right balance of nutrients, it can bring on arthritis (or make it worse). Buy organic certified foods, or create meals for them by using fresh meat, veggies, fruit, and herbs. You should also make sure they get their exercise. Long walks may not be an option for some, so try taking them for a swim instead. Most dogs love the water and swimming is good for their joints, and good exercise. Not only is exercise good for weight control, it also helps maintain a healthy heart and lungs, and strengthens their bones and muscles.

Another easy thing you can do is monitor their stress level. In this case, "stress" means both physical (such as overworking the joints) and mental (such as anxiety or other issues). Spend some relaxation time with your pet and take the stress off their joints when you can. If they are a large dog and have to bend down far to reach their food dish, buy (or build) one of those special tables for holding dog dishes. This will take strain off their neck and back. If they have trouble with stairs, you can create a ramp for them, or

there are special pet steps for short distances (such as up to the couch or bed) you can get at most pet stores.

You can take the relaxation a step further and give them a massage by gently kneading the area with small, circular motions. This may sound silly, but it works, and there are holistic vets and even pet spas that specialize in it. Before or after they've done any exercise is always good. It also helps to keep their joints warm. For example, if they go outside in the morning or evening (generally the colder times of the day), apply some warmth to their joints for 10 to 15 minutes by using a warm water compress, or even a small towel or blanket. This is especially useful in the morning, when their joints are particularly stiff.

Most of the above mentioned treatments can be used on both dogs and cats—except swimming (since most cats don't like water). Making sure your animal friend (either





type) gets a good amount of exercise, eats nutritional/organic food and maintains a healthy weight, and gets plenty of relaxation time are all key points to the therapeutic process. It may surprise you to learn that acupuncture is also an option, though the effects don't last very long and it would

probably need to be done more often than not.

**If you're looking for supplements or herbal remedies, here are a few things you can try:**

Add powdered vitamin C to your dog's daily meal. This will help keep tissue healthy and protect against further joint deterioration. You should use a buffered form of vitamin C, like sodium ascorbate, since plain ascorbic acid may give them an upset stomach. Start with the lowest dosage and gradually increase every 6 months. If they produce loose stool, the dosage may be too high.

- Small Dogs: 500mg – 1000mg
  - Medium-Large Dogs: 1000mg – 2000mg
  - Giant Dogs: 2000mg – 4000mg
1. *Make a tea of alfalfa leaves (fresh or dried) to soothe swelling in the joints and add to your dog's daily meals. You'll need between 1 teaspoon and 3 tablespoons of alfalfa to make the tea. How much you use will depend on the size of your dog (smaller dogs will get less, giant dogs will get more).*

2. *Mix comfrey leaves with rosemary and parsley and add one serving regularly to their meals.*
3. *Nettle extract can be used alternately with the alfalfa to provide relief and help detoxify your dog's body.*
4. *Feed your dog greenlip or perna mussels to help restore damaged connective tissues.*
5. *Wild Salmon Oil or Fish Oil can be added to your cat's food, as both contain omega 3 fatty acids, which are anti-inflammatory. You can find gel caps at most health food stores. Simply shove a pin through the gel cap and mix the oil with their food.*
6. *Other herbs that can be helpful include: Devil's Claw, Feverfew, Frankincense, Licorice Root, St. John's Wort, Turmeric, and Wild Yam.*



**Please Note: you should consult your holistic vet first, before giving them any dosage of these herbs.** The vet will be able to tell you the right amount to give your animal, and what effects they may have.



# PART 1 HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

## CHAPTER 6 - NATURAL PEST CONTROL

### Natural Pest Control Remedies

Summer is a time for beach vacations, camping trips, and barbecues. While these are enjoyable activities, they usually come with unwanted guests—I mean pests. Ants, mosquitoes, flies, and other insects can quickly turn a fun afternoon into a disaster, and let's not forget the fleas and ticks that bother our animal friends.

I'll bet most of you will be lighting those Citronella candles, applying bug spray, or attacking the pests with Raid and any other commercial bug trap or insecticide you can find. Did you know insecticides, pesticides, and other products like these contain ingredients that are actually harmful to you and your pets?

If not, check out the [EPA's section on Pesticides](#). It covers everything from protecting your pets to lawn care. It also has a section that teaches kids about chemicals around the house (including bug spray). Now, we move on to some hard-hitting facts.

You know those spot-on anti flea and tick products you buy for your pets? They *might* get rid of the pests, but they are the source of a much bigger problem. You see, those spot-on treatments don't simply stay on the spot you squeeze them onto. They are absorbed through the skin and work their way through your animal's body.

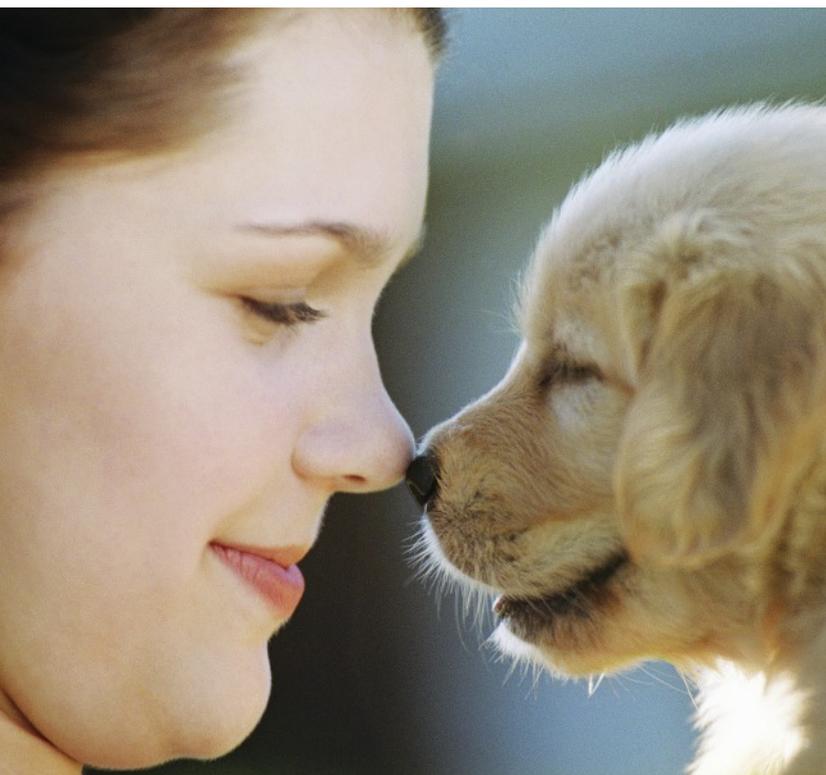
Ever notice the warnings on the product labels? They'll tell you to put on gloves or be careful not to get the treatment

on your skin. If a product isn't safe for you, it definitely isn't safe for your pet.

In 2008, there were at least 1,600 pet deaths due to spot-on treatments that contain pyrethroids. I think it goes without saying, but go check the ingredients list on your spot-on product; if it contains pyrethroids, get rid of it immediately. Otherwise, brace yourself for serious medical reactions like brain damage, heart attacks, or violent seizures.

The EPA created a report that includes information on specific products and the dangers they pose. You can check it out [here](#) (.pdf file).

Other ingredients to be wary of include: tetrachlorvinphos, permethrin, carbaryl, and propoxur. These are dangerous to your pets and also probable human carcinogens (cancer-causing chemicals). For more information on spot-on products, their ingredients, and safer alternatives, check out the NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council) [Poisons on Pets](#) site. You should also check out their [Poisons on Pets II](#) site, which contains information on the dangers of flea and tick collars.



Signs that your animal may be poisoned from the treatments (or exposure to other products, like pesticides) include: tremors, vomiting, dilated pupils, hiding and shivering, confusion, unwilling to eat/drink, and skin irritation. Contact your vet immediately if your animal friend shows any of these symptoms.

Now, I'll bet your wondering what natural methods could possibly be as effective as

those spot-on products. Well, the first step to keeping pests away from your pets is not a chemical treatment. It's prevention.

You can easily prevent fleas, ticks, and other icky bugs from making a meal out of your animal friend by keeping them in good health. Bathe them regularly (at least once or twice a month) with organic, pet-friendly products. Make sure they get plenty of exercise. And keep them on a healthy diet. I recommend using actual food over store-bought kibble. By this I mean you should research pet recipes (or buy a book that has them) and prepare them meals with chicken, fish, peas, carrots, and similar foods.

Why does this work? Fleas and other pests have little to no interest in healthy animals. A strong immune system is an excellent way to keep those parasites at a distance. To be on the safe side, however, you should still run a flea comb through their fur at least twice a week. When you do this,

have a jar (or other container) with water and dish soap close by. If you happen to notice any fleas stuck in the comb, dip the comb in the container and shake off the fleas. The water/soap mixture will kill them.

The next step in prevention is ground control. Keep your environment clean by vacuuming a couple times a week, pulling weeds in the yard and trimming the lawn. Sprinkling some Diatomaceous Earth over the grassy areas of your lawn (while wearing a breathing mask) will naturally help prevent the spreading of ticks. You'll have to replace vacuum filters (or empty the containers in the newer models) each time and you should also wash pet bedding and cages (or crates) regularly to keep infestation to a minimum.



If you are really interested in home remedies, however, here are some recipes:

### ▶ **Flea Spray:**

Mix equal parts of white vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Spray the mixture evenly over your pet's coat (not in their eyes!) and work into the skin with your fingers.

Another method is to mix 600ml of water with 2 drops of pure Lavender essential oil and 2 drops of pure Cedarwood essential oil in a spray bottle. Shake to mix then spray evenly on your pet's coat, being careful not to get any in their eyes or other sensitive areas. Although this method works, it may need to be reapplied more frequently than others.

### ▶ **Citrus Fruit Bath:**

Collect a bunch of citrus fruit (oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, etc.)—you can use them in any combination. Squeeze out all the juice (removing pulp is not necessary). Put the rinds into a big pot and fill with water. Bring to a boil, then turn down the heat and let simmer for several hours.

When the rinds become soft and squishy, take them out of the water and mash them up, to get as much liquid out as possible. Add that liquid to the pot and simmer for several more hours. Let the liquid cool. Then, pour through a strainer or cheesecloth to remove pulp. Bottle and store in refrigerator. You can also store this in the freezer and it will work just as well when thawed.

Add 1/4 cup or so to a dog's bathwater. The mixture should kill fleas on contact.

### ▶ **Other Methods:**

Grind rosemary leaves into a powder and sprinkle on your pet or their bedding to repel fleas.

Add a clove of finely minced garlic or a teaspoon of brewer's yeast to their food to repel fleas.

### ▶ **Tick Repellent:**

Mix 2 tablespoons of vegetable or nut oil with 10 to 25 drops of rose geranium oil in a small jar. Rose Geranium oil can be purchased at your local nutrition/organic foods store. Shake the jar to mix the ingredients. Dab on skin or clothing. This mixture works for dogs, cats, and people and can be stored for up to 6 months.

### ▶ **Essential Oil Remedy:**

Put a few drops of Rose Geranium or Palmarosa essential oil on your dog's collar to repel ticks.



**Do not use essential oils on cats!** Their liver cannot process the oil (remember: what goes *on* your pet's skin is also absorbed *into* their body).

→ [Check out Natural Pet Grocer Flea and Tick Care Holistic Section](#) ←



It should be noted that before using any home remedies, you should contact your vet to make sure you are using the right dosage. If you want to take natural pet care even further, you can check out the [American Holistic Veterinary Medicine Association](#) to find a holistic vet near you. They specialize in natural treatments like acupuncture, aromatherapy, massage, and more.

If you absolutely must use a spot-on treatment, keep these things in mind:

- **Always** follow the directions that come with the product.
- Do **not** use dog products on cats, or vice versa.
- Do **not** use these products on pregnant or elderly animals.
- Be 100% certain of your dog's weight and **only** use products designed for their weight class (in other words, **don't** use a product designed for a 50lb animal on a 10lb animal, or vice versa).
- Do **not** depend on spot-on treatments alone. You should use natural methods as well as the spot-on products.
- If your animal shows any signs of bad health or poisoning, stop using the spot-on treatment and take them to the vet immediately.



Now, let's move on to the rest of the house. There are a *lot* of bugs in the world and they love to pester us every chance they get. They'll chew up garden plants, raid the kitchen cupboards, and weasel their way into any crack or forgotten basement corner they can. Fortunately, there are also a *lot* of natural home remedies that are great at repelling these pesky critters. Here's a list of some of them:

► **Ants:**

Sprinkle a line of spices (like cream of tartar, paprika, or red chili pepper) from your cupboard over points of entry to prevent ants from entering your home.

Spread cucumber peels near where ants enter your home. Ants hate cucumbers, especially bitter ones. Cucumbers may also be useful in repelling flies, mites, moths, wasps, and other bugs.

If they are entering your home through a hole or crack, squeeze some lemon juice into it.

Build a barrier by sprinkling bone meal, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, powdered charcoal, or chalk around the outside of your home. You can also use ground up garlic mixed with water. Another option is to create a plant barrier. Pennyroyal, Peppermint, and Spearmint are good for repelling ants and aphids.

Apply Diatomaceous Earth to places on the ground where you think insects are overstaying their welcome. This is one of the oldest forms of natural insecticide, but keep in mind that it can kill both good and bad bugs, so be careful where you put it.

### ► **Flies:**

Create a plant barrier around the outside of your home. Basil and mint in particular are great at repelling flies.

Fill a saucer with some cheap white wine and dish detergent. Flies are attracted to the wine and drinking the mixture will kill them.

Put sweet food, like fruit peels, into the bottom of a narrow-necked bottle. Flies will go in the bottle to get the food, but will be unable to get out.

Create your own fly paper by boiling water, sugar, and corn syrup together. Spread the mixture onto brown paper bags to create natural fly paper.

### ► **Other Bugs:**

Create a barrier around your home made of sand, ashes, copper, or lime to repel snails.

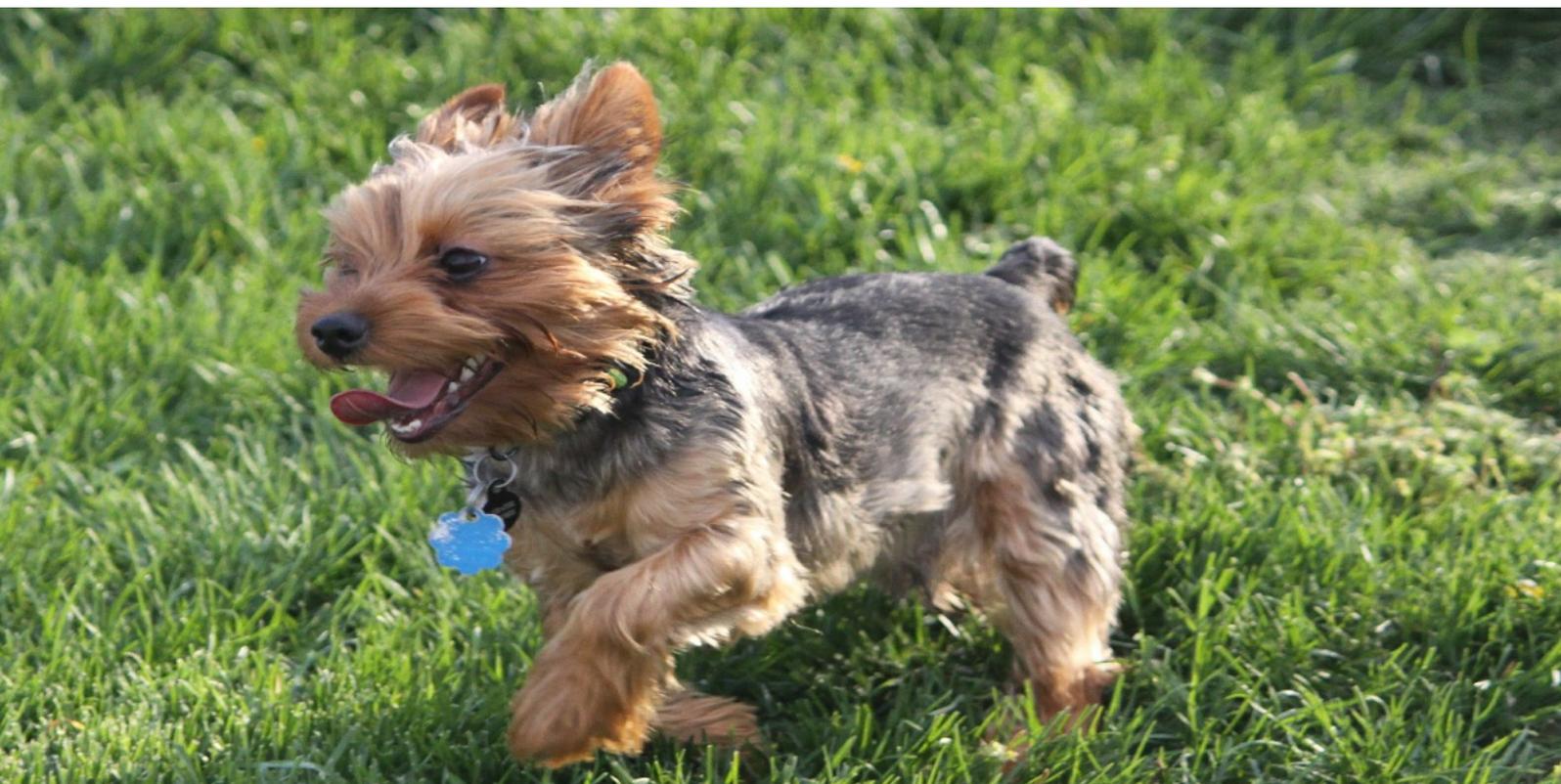
Cloves can be used in place of moth balls to repel winged pests.

Mix equal parts of baking soda and powdered sugar to create a natural roach killer. Simply spread the mixture around the area you see roaches and soon they won't be there anymore.

Garden pests can be repelled by planting onion, garlic, and marigold.

Create a homemade bug spray by combining 1 part essential oil to 10 parts of rubbing alcohol, witch hazel, or olive oil. Test the spray on a small patch of skin and wait 24 hours to be sure you are not allergic. Essential oils that can be used include: cedar, citronella, clove, eucalyptus, and lemongrass. These are good for repelling biting insects, like mosquitoes and fleas.

Create a natural plant spray by mixing a ½ cup each of hot pepper and garlic cloves, plus 2 cups of water. Steep the mixture for 24 hours then strain. Spray on plants every week to keep bugs away.



For more information on natural pest control and the dangers of chemical treatments (like pesticides), check out these sites:

- [My Eco Maid – Eco-friendly topics and resources for living a natural life.](#)
- [Eco Home Resource: Natural Pest Control – Bug Spray Alternatives](#)
- [Pays to Live Green: Make Your Own Homemade Pesticides and Repellants](#)
- [\*\*Natural Pet Grocer Flea and Tick Care Holistic Setcion\*\*](#)
- [Green Your: Make Homemade Bug Spray](#)
- [EarthEasy: Natural Garden Pest Control](#)
- [EarthEasy: Natural Insect Pest Control](#)
- [Mercola – Healthy Pets: How the Amazon Rainforest Provides a Centuries-Old Natural Formula Against Ticks, Fleas, and Mosquitoes](#)
- [Paw Rescue: Fleas, Ticks, Mosquitoes – Prevention and Treatment](#)
- [EPA: Protecting Pets](#)



# PART 1

## HELPING RAISE A HAPPY, HEALTHY DOG, "NATURALLY"

### CHAPTER 7 - ECO-FRIENDLY DOG TOYS

Our family has a little Shitz Zu that probably has different preferences when it comes to toys than your dog. Suzie loves to chew toys and tends to be an aggressive chewer especially when it comes to toys that have squeakers. That seems to be her "catnip" of dog toys. She will shred some toys within minutes. If it was a stuffed toy, she would remove the stuffing. If it squeaked, she had to remove the squeaker. Not only did this leave a mess in the house, but it made me wonder if these toys were really safe for her. There was the chance she could choke on the squeaker, or if she ingested the stuffing it could cause digestive trouble. So, other options were needed.



In addition to plastics in dog toys being an issue, there are reports of lead being found in them, as well. Not only that, but it's also possible that these—and other toxic substances found in traditional dog toys—may be linked to canine mouth cancer. I don't know about you, but that kind of information will definitely make me think twice before I buy another toy. No, this does not mean you can't buy toys for your dog, or that they will have to laze around and be bored for the rest of their life. What it does mean is you need to switch to a safer alternative—brands that are organic, or eco-friendly. Why? Well, for starters, they are a safer choice for your dog, because they are made of

organic, renewable or recyclable materials and they don't contain harsh chemicals or other dangerous materials. Second of all, they are also better for the environment, since they come from organic or recyclable material, production of them is generally more ideal and less harmful.



## Is The Toy Really Eco-Friendly?

How can you tell if a product is truly organic? Apart from the usual method of checking the labels, keep your eye out for these things:

- Is the toy made from recycled items?
- Is the toy made from organic fabrics, like cotton or hemp?
- Are natural, botanic dyes used?
- Are they made from unbleached fabric?

Stay away from toys that contain PVC (polyvinyl chloride) and chemical dyes, as they may contain heavy metals and other bad substances. In addition to being tied to cancer and digestion trouble, these can also lead to allergies and other health issues.



## Choosing The Right Toy For Your Dog

Toys are great for dogs because they keep dogs mentally and physically active. However, you want to make sure your dog sticks to the right kind of toys. Dog proof your home by

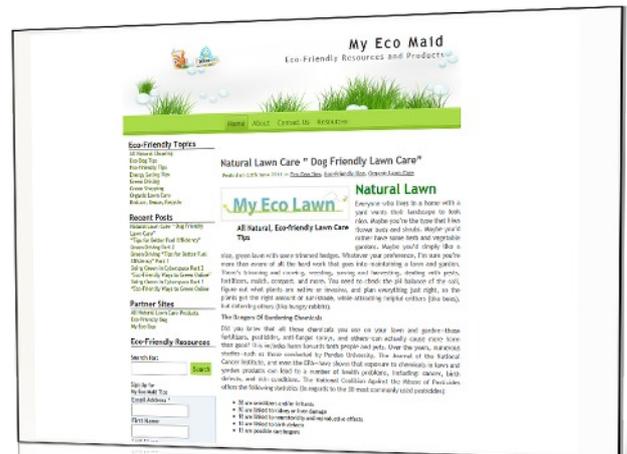
keeping objects like electrical cords, plants, sewing supplies, seasonal decorations, and children's toys out of their reach. Another thing to do is make sure your dog toys are size-appropriate for your dog. A small dog, like a Dachshund and a large dog, like a Newfoundland, should not use the

# An Eco-Friendly Guide to Raising a Happy, Healthy Dog

same toys. Also, remove anything from the toys that might cause choking, such as tags and string.

One type of toy that is greatly recommended these days are Kong toys. Vets, trainers, and your average dog owner around the world all claim that Kong toys are great for dogs. You can fill them up with food or treats, stick them in the freezer for a bit, and then let your dog have fun for hours. They get exercise by playing with the toy and it's also mentally stimulating, as they try to figure out how to get the food out of the toy.

Don't feel like shelling out money for more toys? No problem! You can also make them from items around the house. [Make-And-Build-Dog-Stuff.com](http://www.makeandbuild.com) offers instructions for a bunch of DIY projects for your dog. This includes: dog toys, bedding, exercise equipment, houses, and even recipes for dog food and treats! [This article on Squidoo.com](http://www.squidoo.com) contains more dog toy projects, from balls to treat dispensers, they're great ways to reuse and recycle old items, and your dog will still have loads of fun.



FOR MORE INFO & RESOURCES ABOUT THE TOPICS DISCUSSED IN THIS PART 1 YOU CAN CHECK:

<http://www.pawrific.com> AND <http://www.myecomaid.com>

# PART 2

## CHAPTER 8 - GREEN CLEANING TIPS

Did you know that you can make awesome cleaning products with items found in your kitchen? Consider that before the invention of Lysol, Mr. Clean, or Scrubbing Bubbles, we had to resort to other cleaning methods. By combining common ingredients, our ancestors discovered that you can make practically any kind of cleaner, ranging from glass cleaners to furniture polish, and your general all-purpose cleaner.

Here's a list of ingredients no kitchen should be without:

- Water (of course!)
- Lemons (or lemon juice)
- Vinegar (white or apple cider)
- Baking soda
- Salt
- Dish detergent (organic)
- Dried herbs (also organic)
- Essential oils (100% pure)
- Club soda

*\*Some people will also add borax to this list, but as it's [not entirely safe](#) (it's classified as a poison!), I won't be including it here.*

You'll also need containers to store the cleaning mixtures in (such as clean, recycled spray bottles). Now, I'll bet you may be wondering what some of these mysterious cleaning recipes are. Truth be told, you can find hundreds of them online, or even in books (check out your local library). I recommend the book [Shift Your Habit](#), which offers tips on

how to go green (including recipes for home-made cleaners). Here are a few simple recipes, though:

## All-Purpose Cleaner

- 1 part white vinegar
- 1 part water

## Furniture Polish

- ½ tsp olive oil
- ¼ cup vinegar OR lemon juice

-Can be stored in a sealed, glass jar indefinitely.

## Glass Cleaner

- ¼ to ½ tsp organic detergent
- 3 Tbsp vinegar
- 2 cups water

In addition to these recipes, there are some basic, common uses for individual ingredients:

## Baking Soda

- Can prevent clogs
- Can remove dirt, wax, or pesticide residue from fruits and veggies
- Can be used to put out a small kitchen fire (*However, it should not be used on fires in a deep fat fryer, or those involving combustibles, such as wood or paper*)
- Can remove marks or debris, including: heel marks on the floor, crayon marks on the wall, and candle wax on most hard surfaces
- Can control (or lessen) household odors (including from pet waste)
- Can even be used to clean cars!

## Salt

- Can remove tarnish from silverware
- Can remove odors from closed containers (such as a thermos)
- Can prevent white wicker from fading to yellow (salt water)
- Can loosen soot inside your chimney (provided you have a fireplace)
- Can prevent new colored fabrics from “bleeding” in the washer
- Can help clean up oil spills in the garage
- Can even be used to kill poison ivy plants (3 lbs salt to 1 gal. soapy water)!

## Vinegar

- Can be used to clean the inside of the dishwasher and remove any clogs
- Can prevent mildew buildup in (or on) your refrigerator
- Can be used for general, every day cleaning (wiping countertops, minor stains, etc.)
- Can remove carpet stains
- Can deter pests, such as ants and cockroaches
- Can remove rust from tools and other metal items
- Can even be used to remove skunk spray smell from your dog (usually also with water and organic dish soap)!

Some of you may wonder why it's better to make your own cleaners, when you can go to the store and buy products instead.

First of all, these ingredients are typically found in most kitchens and thus, readily available during unexpected

situations. Imagine that you're expecting guests for dinner and your kid makes a mess in the living room: stains on the carpet, crayon on the wall, the works. You're out of manufactured cleaner and you don't have time to run to the store to buy more. However, you can simply go to your kitchen, find some of those common ingredients and put them to work.

Please note that you can't use the ingredients at random. They do need to be mixed and used in specific ways, for each purpose. I would recommend buying some books on how to make natural, home-made cleaners, or keeping a recipe list close at hand, for such situations.

Second of all, store-bought cleaners tend to be highly toxic. Have you ever read their labels? You'll notice words like: CAUTION, DANGER, WARNING, HAZARDOUS, TOXIC. This is because those cleaning products contain poisons and other chemicals that won't just cause health problems, they'll kill you. This is especially important to remember if you have little kids or curious animals in the house, as they are most vulnerable to the dangers.

If you *must* buy cleaning products from the store, as always, do the following things:

- Read the ingredients list. If it contains mainly natural ingredients, it should be safe. If it contains a bunch of chemicals and hard to pronounce terms, it will do more harm than good.
- Look for warning signs. As stated above, if the product mentions any kind of "WARNING", has pictures of a skull or crossbones, or talks about the poison control center, put the product back on the shelf and move on.
- Check for trusted labels. If you see labels for things like USDA Organic, Green Seal, Choose Cruelty Free (the rabbit logo), or others that indicate it has trusted, natural content, then it should be perfectly safe to purchase.

One other thing to note is instead of using paper towels to clean up messes (including small spills) or glass surfaces, use sponges or washable cloths instead. You can also turn old clothes into cleaning rags. They can be washed and reused again and again, and it will save you a ton of money (and a lot of trees!).

Here's a bonus tip:

- Add some plants to your home! They are naturally great at keeping the air fresh and clean. Here's a list of the [top 10 plants for cleaning the air](#).

*\*The list includes the Peace Lily. Please note that lilies are EXTREMELY toxic to cats if eaten, and will kill them within 48 hours.*

For more extensive information, check out [TreeHugger.com's resources on green cleaning](#).

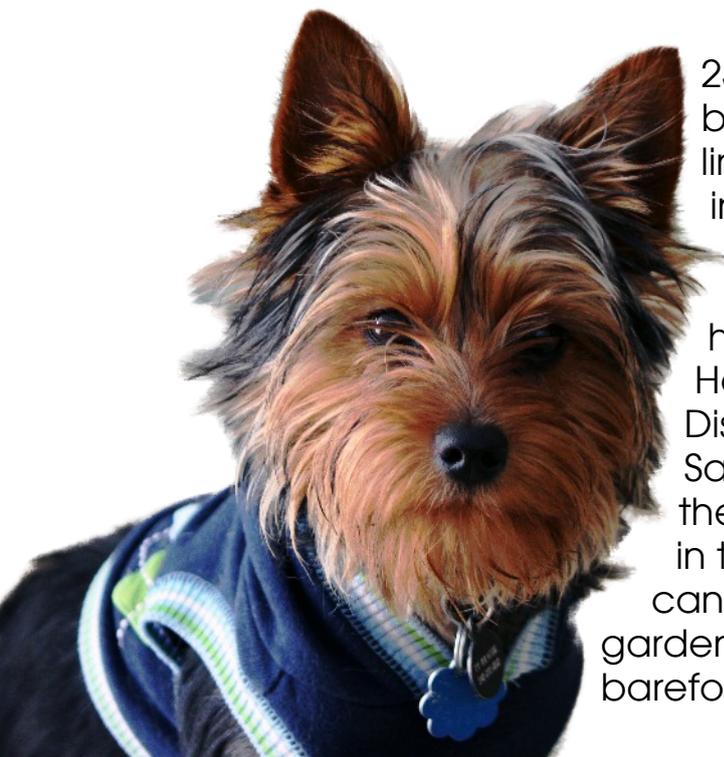


# PART 3

## CHAPTER 9 - WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

There's one other topic pertaining to lawn care that I'd like to touch on and that's the effects dog waste has on the environment.

In the US alone, it's very likely the number of pets is greater than the number of people living here. Now, consider the fact that your dog is most likely not toilet trained. A lot of people don't even give a second thought to when their dog goes to the bathroom and probably also don't clean up the mess afterwards. If it's in their own yard, they'll get to it...eventually. If it's in a public place, someone else will be stuck with the dirty work. Most people also have the misconception that dog waste is great lawn fertilizer and will "break down over time". Guess what? Those people are wrong.



Dog waste (feces) may contain over 23 million types of fecal coliform bacteria. These bacteria have been linked to a number of diseases and infections, including those that can be transmitted to humans. The list of health issues (for either animal or human) include: Heartworms, Hookworms, Tapeworms, Kidney Disorders, Intestinal Illness, Parvo, Salmonella, and more. The eggs of these parasites and bacteria can remain in the soil for years, which means you can still be exposed to them even while gardening or walking through your yard barefoot. Children are at an even greater

risk at contracting one of these diseases, since they enjoy playing in dirt so much.

If that's not enough to convince you of the toxicity of dog waste, then check out this information from the EPA:

- In 1991, the EPA deemed pet waste a "nonpoint source of pollution", placing it in the same category as oil and toxic chemicals.
- The EPA has estimated that 2 to 3 days worth of droppings from about 100 dogs would create enough bacteria to close a bay and all watershed areas within 20 miles, preventing any swimming or shell fishing activities.
- According to the EPA, the decay of pet waste creates nutrients that allow weeds and algae to grow in waterways. As these plants can live off your dog's waste, they are capable of overtaking waterways and limit the amount of light that penetrates the water's surface. This causes oxygen levels in the water to drop and the marine life may be asphyxiated.

Now, you may think that it won't have such a bad impact if you forget to clean up the waste for just a couple days, but what if it rains? That rain will break down the feces and carry pieces of it away. Combining with other nonpoint pollutants, that dog waste can end up on the street, sidewalks, someone else's yard, or even in public waterways. Now, imagine that every time you go swimming at the beach or fishing in the river, that the water you are in or collecting food from is contaminated with dog feces. That doesn't sound very pleasant, does it?

The bottom line is, whether you like it or not, your dog's waste needs to be cleaned up—and disposed of—properly. If you *really* don't want to do it yourself, you can always hire a service to clean up the mess for you. However, if you don't mind a little grunt work, here are a couple tips to keep in mind:

### Don't use plastic bags; go biodegradable instead.

Plastic bags do not break down (at least not for an extremely long time, if ever). So, when you put pet waste into a plastic bag, and that plastic bag into the trash can, it will eventually sit at a landfill, doing nothing more than collecting flies. However, biodegradable bags will break down and so will the fecal matter inside them.

### Install a canine septic system in your yard.

No, this is not a way to train your dog how to use a toilet, but it does make cleaning up after them a lot easier (and even safer than the biodegradable bag option). What you basically have is a hole in the ground, with some stones at the bottom. A special bucket with holes in the bottom is placed on top of the stones, which you will add an enzyme to.

All you have to do is put the waste in the bucket. When the bucket is full, pour water into it. The enzymes will help break down the feces and the water will wash it away, posing little to no threat to you, your dog, or the environment.

Ultimately, by remembering to clean up your dog's waste, you are ensuring that your yard is a safe, healthy place and you also reduce any possible negative impact on the environment.



# RESOURCES

## USEFUL LINKS



- <http://www.pawrific.com>
- <http://www.myecomaid.com>
- <http://www.naturalpetgrocer.com>
- <http://www.naturesvariety.com>
- <http://www.sojos.com>
- <http://www.westpawdesign.com>
- <http://www.myecolawncare.com>
- <http://www.FreeDogFoodDelivery.com>

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FOR MORE INFO

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- ✓ FREE HOME DELIVERY
- ✓ ECO-FRIENDLY AND HEALTHIER THAN BASIC KIBBLE BRANDS
- ✓ SAVES YOU TIME, MONEY, AND ALL THAT HEAVY LIFTING

”  
REAL  
TESTIMONIALS  
FROM OUR  
WEBSITE

*Thanks for the excellent deal on the greatest toy ever! Super sonic delivery!!!*  
- EQ

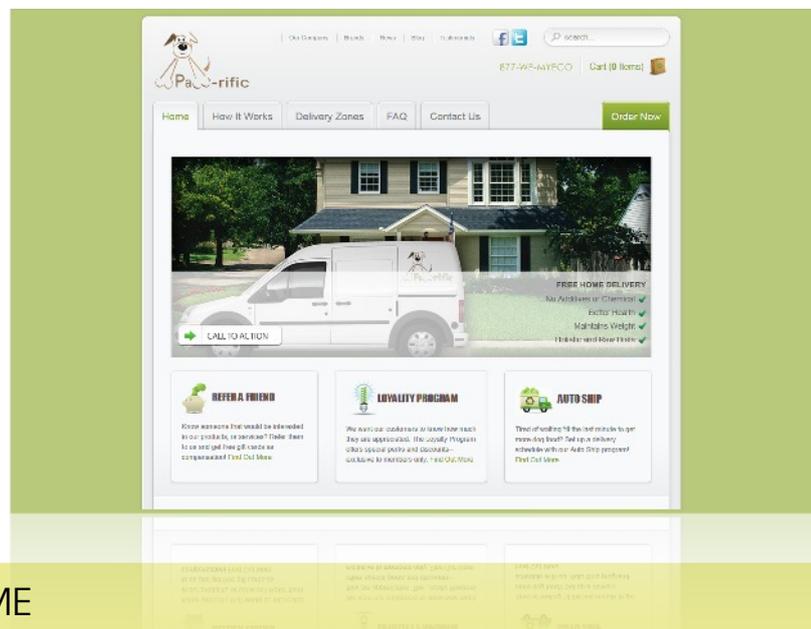
*Fast shipping, great service, fun extras in the package! 5 stars all the way!!*  
-Marie

*Perfect!! Eco-Friendly Dog Ball, Bow Wowzer Ball by West Paw*  
- B Topaz

*The dogs love it!! And Haven't chewed it all up!! Excellent Toy! Eco-Friendly Dog Toy, Tux allows a treat to be inside*  
-HM

*Dog loves it, hasn't destroyed it*  
- JG

AAAA++++  
- 92mom



## WELCOME

[PawrificExpress](#) is dedicated to providing your dog with the best natural dog food available. From one dog lover to another, I'm sure you've shared in a variety of food issues over the years. Maybe you had a busy day at work and forgot to stop for dog food on the way home. Perhaps your dog has food allergies, or requires a very specific diet. Or maybe you simply want to live a greener lifestyle. We understand life can become crazy at times, or circumstances may make it difficult to provide your dog friend with the nutrition she needs. So, our delivery services will bring the dog food straight to you.

# An Eco-Friendly Guide to Raising a Happy, Healthy Dog



Only the best natural dog food brands are delivered by our company. These include: [Nature's Variety](#), [Primal Pet Foods](#), and [SOJOS](#), with more to be added soon. Each of these brands include high-quality, natural ingredients, which are a much healthier (and safer) choice than all that processed kibble. The ingredients vary for each brand, but include: fresh meats, veggies, fruits and herbs. All brands are also USDA Organic approved, so you can rest assured they are Eco-friendly, healthy, and safe for your dog.

Currently, we provide free home delivery to those within a 15 mile radius of Collegeville, PA, but have plans to expand our delivery range soon. In the meantime, we will also ship our products to nearby areas for a flat rate fee of \$5.99.

In addition to that, we have educational resources available for those interested in learning more about Eco-friendly pet care. You can also purchase more Eco-friendly dog products online at [naturalpetgrocer.com](http://naturalpetgrocer.com)

[Pawrific](#) strives to provide you with a quality, convenient service at a great value that will keep your dog happy and healthy for years to come. Order now and start benefiting from all the great, Eco-friendly things we have to offer!

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