



PET ALLERGIES

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Is your cat over-grooming herself or is your dog licking his paws raw? It may well be that your pet is experiencing allergies. Just like people, animals have allergic reactions because their immune system overreacts to some material. Almost anything-pollen, dust, food ingredients-can set off an alarm in the immune system, causing it to pump out large amounts of white blood cells, hormones, and histamines into the bloodstream. The result for animals can include itchy, swollen skin, difficulty breathing, vomiting or diarrhea. These symptoms are the equivalent of a person's sneezing, runny nose, and watery eyes.

Animal allergies generally fall under one of four main categories.

CONTACT ALLERGIES occur when the skin becomes irritated at the point of contact- it may itch, become thickened or discolored, have a strong odor, and/or lose hair due to constant biting or scratching. They are usually confined to a specific area of an animal's body.

FOOD ALLERGIES occur when immune systems develop a response over time to some part of their diet. A food allergy can present in a lot of different ways, including itching, digestive disorders, and respiratory distress. They can be a real challenge to solve, however. Your pet may need a

specialized hypoallergenic diet.

INHALANT ALLERGIES are the kind we humans are most used to. Just like us, our pets can be allergic to the pollen and mold that fills the outside air during the spring and fall. They can also be allergic to the dust mites, mildew, and mold that can be inside every home. These kinds of allergens usually produce severe itching in pets, which is usually concentrated in the ears, feet, groin, and armpits, though it can be spread across the entire body. Dogs in particular may develop hairless, irritated "hot spots" from constantly chewing on and scratching the affected skin.

FLEA ALLERGIES are extremely common in pets. Animals aren't actually allergic to the fleas themselves, but to proteins that fleas secrete in their saliva when they bite. Affected animals can itch severely from a single bite for over five days! Frequent baths are a good idea, as are the prescription flea applications. Consult your veterinarian before you chose a flea repellent for your pet. You will also want to treat your pet's environment, including any bedding or carpeting he comes in contact with.

Veterinarians are able to perform allergy tests which help identify the specific allergens causing the pet's allergy problem. 🐾

ALLERGY SYMPTOMS

- Excessive Licking/
Biting/Chewing
- Excessive Scratching
- Excessive Shedding
- Ear Infections
- Runny nose
- Watery Eyes
- Hot Spots
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

FAQS: REPRODUCTION

How long is a dog or cat in season?

A dog is in season (or heat) for about 21 days. The first 10 days include bleeding from the vagina, then your dog is ready to accept the male. A cat is completely different from a dog. They go in and out of season all year round until they are either bred or spayed. It always best to spay your pet if you do not intend to breed her so that they are less likely to develop mammary or uterine cancer.

How long does pregnancy last in a dog or cat?

A dog is pregnant for 63 days and a cat for 61 days. The newborns should be examined by a veterinarian within 24-48 hours.

Will spaying or neutering my dog or cat make them fat and lazy?

No. Spaying or neutering will not contribute to obesity at all. If you watch your pet's diet and give them plenty of exercise you should not have a problem.

Can my female dog be spayed while she is in heat or while she is pregnant?

It is best to wait until a female is out of heat before she is spayed. During the heat cycle all the blood vessels that lead to the ovaries and uterus are inflamed and this makes surgery more of a risk to the dog. A dog can be spayed if she is in the early stage of pregnancy. You should discuss this with a veterinarian.

How soon after my dog or cat has had puppies or kittens can she be spayed?

As soon as the puppies or kittens are weaned and the mother's milk has dried up, she can be spayed.

If I neuter my cat, will he stop spraying my furniture?

When a cat sprays, he is exhibiting the male tendency to mark his territory with urine. Neutering decreases his male hormones and makes him much less likely to exhibit this undesirable trait.

ASK THE VET

Q: My pet is already on heartworm prevention. Why do I still have to do a heartworm test every other year?

A: *Testing every two years is required for several important reasons. First, many of us do not take our own medications as directed let alone medicate our pets. We're busy; we forget; we miss a dose here and there. Second, even if you never miss a dose there is nothing to prevent your pet from eating some grass and vomiting up the medication you just gave without your knowledge. Your pet would be without protection for an entire month. Third, no medication is 100% guaranteed. Early detection is critical to prevent irreversible heart and lung damage, or even death. With bi-annual testing, you know your pet is heartworm free and not infected with these serious tick-borne diseases. Bi-annual testing provides peace of mind in knowing that your pet is free of heartworms, and should your pet be infected, it assures you of early diagnosis. 🐾*



DR. INGRAM AWARDED “MY VET’S THE BEST” HONOR

Pets Best Insurance, a leading pet insurance agency, named Dr. Ingram as the nation’s best veterinarian of 2012. Dr. Ingram took home the top honors of the 2012 My Vet’s The Best contest, which featured more than 20 finalists from across the country.

Developed by Pets Best Insurance to recognize outstanding veterinarians who go above and beyond to keep pets healthy, the 2012 contest culminated with a presentation at the Western Veterinary Conference in Las Vegas. Dr. Ingram was announced as the winner of the coveted 2012 My Vet’s the Best title and was presented with a check for \$1,000 to support his charitable work.

Dr. Ingram, who has been practicing veterinary medicine for more than three decades, regularly travels to Arizona’s Navajo and Hopi reservations to provide free vaccinations and spaying and neutering services for local animals. He also embarks on trips to Nicaragua, India and other countries across the globe to treat and vaccinate pets in impoverished areas. Dr. Ingram completed his most recent visit to Nicaragua earlier this February, working alongside other medical professionals to control rabies in the area and protect pets and humans from the potentially fatal virus, in addition to providing other services and treatments.

“Pets Best Insurance is thrilled to reward such a compassionate and dedicated veterinarian who shares our company’s goal of promoting pet health on a global level,” Dr. Stephens, the founder of Pets Best, said. “Dr. Ingram’s charitable work throughout the years has touched the lives of countless animals and pet owners. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to support his noble efforts in the U.S. and abroad.”

Dr. Ingram plans to use the prize money to purchase vaccines and other supplies necessary for treating animals in Arizona and Nicaragua.

“This prize money will have a tremendous impact on our outreach efforts,” Dr. Ingram said, noting that Pets Best Insurance has made additional contributions to support his charitable work. “I’d really like to thank the people at Pets Best Insurance for their commitment to keeping pets healthy.”

In 2010, Pets Best Insurance became the nation’s first pet insurance company to develop a contest aimed at recognizing the country’s best veterinarians. Each year, hundreds of veterinarians receive nominations from grateful pet owners. While voting for the contest’s quarterly winners is open to the public through the Pets Best Insurance website and Facebook page, each year’s grand prize winner is selected by an internal review panel composed of respected veterinarians.

While many other veterinarians received nominations from clients this year, Dr. Ingram stood out in a field of highly qualified medical professionals.

“Dr. Ingram received multiple nominations in 2012, underscoring his commitment to making a difference within his community,” Dr. Stephens said. “While there were many veterinarians worthy of the top honors this year, we felt confident in choosing Dr. Ingram as the winner.” 🐾



HEARTWORM DISEASE

Heartworm disease is transmitted to pets via mosquitoes. These worms develop and lodge in an infected pet's heart and pulmonary artery, where they cause serious illness and even death. It is important to realize that even though heartworms are more common in dogs, they are even more deadly to cats.



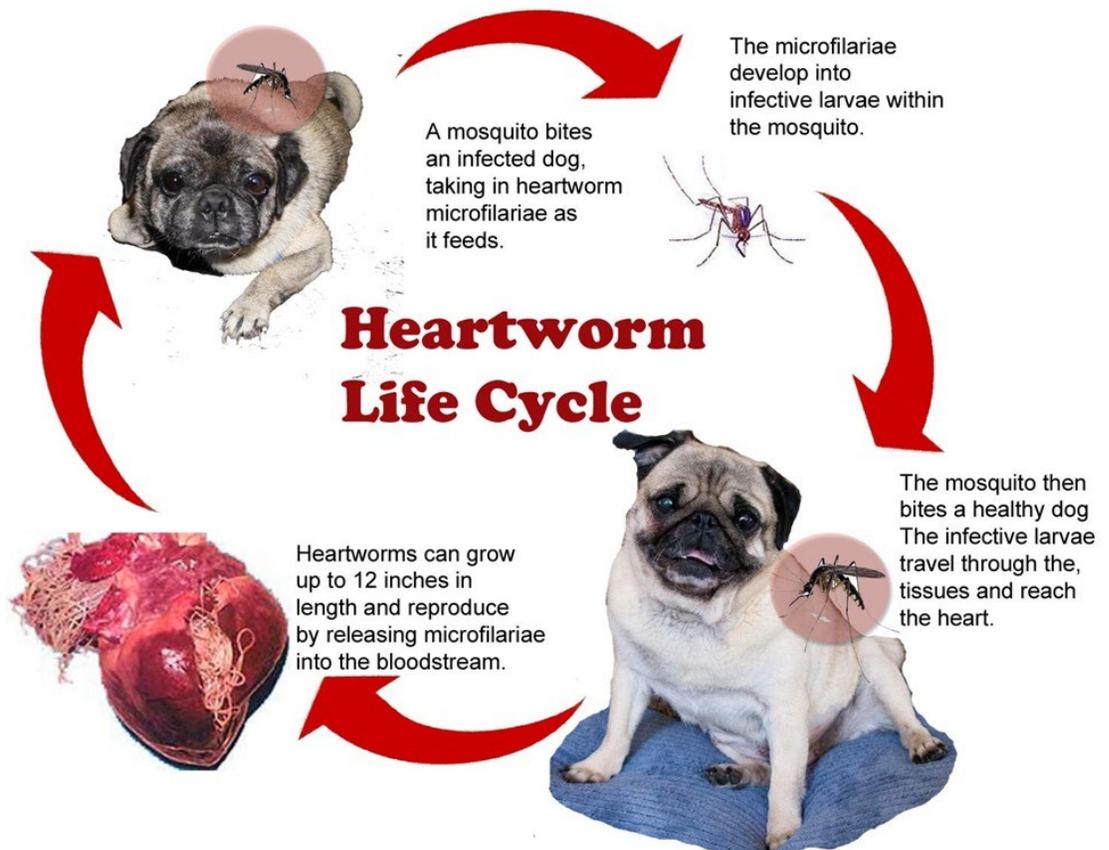
In dogs, the worms live in the heart and large blood vessels around the heart and lungs, where they damage tissues and lead to heart failure and pulmonary disease. In some cases, the worms can obstruct other large blood vessels, leading to liver failure and kidney disease. In cats, the worms are found in the heart, lungs, or pulmonary arteries. While cats are less susceptible to heartworm infection than dogs, their body's reaction to the worms can be more intense. Feline patients can become severely ill or even die suddenly from just one or two worms.

Heartworm disease is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito carrying the microscopic heartworm larvae. Mosquitoes become carriers by biting an already infected animal and then subsequently biting other healthy

ones.

A simple blood test can detect whether or not your pet has been exposed to heartworm infection. This test is necessary to ensure that your pet is free of disease prior to beginning any preventative medications. Although these medications are completely safe when given to a disease-free animal, several complications could arise if given to an infected animal. The heartworm preventatives offered are simple, easy to administer monthly doses that not only protect your animal from heartworm disease, but other parasites as well.

Even though heartworm disease is treatable, it is very costly and can produce several side effects. For these reasons, prevention is a better approach to the disease. Unfortunately, in cats the disease is much more complicated to treat because the side effects, such as blood clots and fluid in the lungs, are much more serious. 🐾



FEATURED BREED: BERNESE MOUNTAIN DOG

In addition to being strikingly good-looking, the Bernese Mountain Dog has a wonderful temperament. He is known for being loyal, affectionate, eager to please, and intelligent. He's generally easy to train if you allow him time to analyze what you want him to do. Most of all, he has a happy-go-lucky attitude about life.

The Bernese Mountain Dog is calm but gregarious, and sometimes even a little

goofy when he plays with his family. He does well with children of all ages and with adults, but he isn't a good choice for people who live in apartments or don't have a large, fenced yard for him to play in. He's happiest when he can



participate in all family activities. Prospective owners should know that they are slow to mature, both physically and mentally; he may remain puppyish for some time.

Females generally weigh between 70 and 95 pounds, while males can weigh as much as 115 pounds. This large breed is prone to cancer, bloat and

hip dysplasia. Their lifespan is a relatively short 7-9 years.

Grand Canyon State Bernese Mountain Dog Club and Rescue

<http://www.gcsbmdc.org>

ENERGY	🐾 🐾
TRAINABILITY	🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾
GROOMING	🐾 🐾
WATCHDOG	🐾 🐾 🐾
EXERCISE	🐾 🐾 🐾
CHILDREN	🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾

FEATURED BREED: SIAMESE

Siamese are believed to be one of the most intelligent and inquisitive of all cat breeds. They are also very talkative, both with their loud

voices and their eloquent body language. They are extremely curious and clever, unpredictable, and prone to jealousy. Daily play and interaction are critical to a Siamese's emotional and mental well-being.

They tend to have blue eyes and an unusual



coat pattern. Their coat tends to become lighter around their neck and body but then darkens on the points of the cat, which are the ears, face, paws and tail. When Siamese cats are born, they are only black and white. As they grow older, their coat color changes into the dark and light re-

gions.

In terms of life expectancy, these cats can live 15-20 years.

ACTIVITY	🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾
AFFECTION	🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾
VOCALITY	🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾
INTELLIGENCE	🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾
INDEPENDENCE	🐾
GROOMING	🐾 🐾

HALO Animal Rescue

<http://www.halorescue.org>

Cow Cats Pet Adoption

<http://www.cowcats.com>

AZ Humane Society

<http://www.azhumane.org>

FEATURED CREATURE: AFRICAN GREY

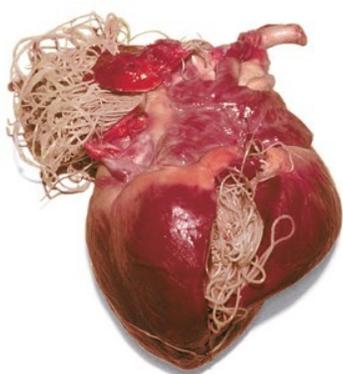
African Grey parrots generally make wonderful and very affectionate companions. Pet owners often refer to their relationship with them as being "like having a five-year-old child."

African Grey parrots are particularly noted for their exceptional talking and cognitive abilities. Research has shown that they are capable of associating human words with their meanings. They are also generally thought of as the best mimics of all the parrots.

Anyone considering getting an African Grey parrot as a pet should note that due to their high intelligence, they quickly become bored unless provided with stimulating toys and interaction with their owners. Their lifespans are 40+ years in captivity.



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pet's life.**



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