

Questions for Our Veterinarians: Top 10

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Top 10 Questions

asked of our veterinarians

My pet seems to be having trouble rising in the morning (or he's limping). What could this be?

If your pet is a senior or has a condition such as hip dysplasia, arthritis may be the cause of his discomfort. Arthritis occurs when smooth joint cartilage erodes and secondary bone growth occurs.

The result is uneven and abnormally shaped bone surfaces that cause friction within the joint. Any lameness or difficulty rising should be checked by your veterinarian. If arthritis is the problem and your veterinarian has recommended a prescription medication, check out our [online pharmacy](#).

What are worms, and should I worm my pet?

Worms are gastrointestinal parasites that live inside your pet. Most puppies are born with worms. It is essential for puppies to be wormed, since these harmful pests can contribute to everything from anemia to bowel obstruction. Try [Nemex-2 Wormer](#).

What kind of vaccinations should I give my pet and when?

A vaccine helps your pet's immune system fight off damaging infectious diseases such as canine parvovirus, distemper, and certain respiratory diseases, formerly called Kennel Cough.

Dogs and cats should be [vaccinated according to your veterinarian's recommendations](#). Rabies vaccination depends on your community's guidelines. Single dose [vaccines](#) are available.



My pet is itching constantly - he's miserable. Is this due to an allergy?

Could be allergies; could also be dry skin (especially in fall and winter), parasites (mites, fleas), or infections with bacteria or yeast. While your veterinarian can determine the cause, you can do some things to reduce itching of allergies and make your pet more comfortable. At-home remedies range from providing [fatty acid supplements](#) to shampooing with soothing products containing [tea tree oil](#) or [oatmeal](#).



I have had my puppy for 2 weeks and he's still not housetrained. What am I doing wrong?

You simply may not be waiting long enough for the housetraining to "kick in." Puppies younger than 16 weeks of age have a difficult time controlling their bladders. The canine species learns best with repetition and consistency. Keep at it, praise when the pup eliminates in the right place, and reward with a [treat](#). Try our [Piddle Pads®](#) and [Simple Solution Puppy Aid™ Training Spray](#).

Why does my dog bury his bones?

It's inherited; wild relatives of the dog often bury their food. This is called caching or hoarding. Our dogs seldom experience the extreme hunger that would encourage them to find it again, so often these buried treasures are forgotten.

How can I tell if my dog has fleas?

Some signs include spotting the reddish brown fleas moving in your pet's fur, brown specks that turn red when wiped with a damp paper towel and, of course, incessant itching. We recommend a [4-step process for eliminating fleas](#), including getting them out of your home and outdoor environment, off your pet, and using a topical flea preventive monthly like [K9 Advantix® II](#).

What is the best way to make sure my pet gets proper nutrition?

Reading your pet food label is one of the best ways to determine the quality of the food you are feeding. In addition to providing information about the amount and quality of protein and fat, the label also alerts you of any unwanted preservatives. Try our natural [Drs. Foster & Smith Signature Series® food](#).



My dog is out of control. He barks all the time, jumps on people - what can I do?

Overwhelmingly, the top reason people give up their dogs is for behavior problems. But behavior problems generally can be changed if you start early and are consistent. When you teach your dog to respect you - in a gentle way - training will be much easier for you. See what [training aids](#) are available. And remember most dogs with behavior problems are not receiving enough exercise. Brisk walks with your dog will do wonders for him and you.

How do I remove a tick? Is there any way to prevent them from alighting on my dog?

To remove a tick, use a pair of fine-tipped tweezers. To dislodge it, grab the tick by its head and pull directly outward. Cleanse the bite wound with an antiseptic and remember to wash your hands afterward. Tick prevention includes checking your dog's skin every 24 hours, removing leaves and brush from your yard, and using a [monthly preventive](#).