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If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Kathy Lewis.

What You Need to Know About Evacuating With Your Dog

By AKC Staff, Sep 14, 2018



First things first: Never ignore a warning to evacuate due to a possible natural disaster. You may think that you and your dog will be more comfortable at home, but ignoring the advice of local authorities puts both of you in danger. Authorities may give you notice of mandatory or voluntary evacuation one or two days ahead of time, or you may be asked to evacuate immediately.

If you have to evacuate:

- Implement your emergency evacuation plan.
- Take your dog's emergency "go bag," which should include essentials your dog will need, such as a few days supply of dog food, bottled water, treats, a first aid kit, and important paperwork.
- If time allows, take your dog's favorite toy and/or blanket, so that he can feel comfortable while away from home. You might also grab some dog clothing for protection from the weather, such as your dog's raincoat, warm jacket, or booties. If you're at risk for a flood, take your dog's life jacket.
- Put your dog on a leash and/or harness, with his identification tags securely attached.

- Follow instructions of emergency workers. Never think you know a better route because you may be unaware of blocked or dangerous roads.
- Go to a pet-friendly hotel near you or call your local Red Cross office to find a shelter nearby that accepts pets.
- Do not return home with your dog until authorities have explicitly said it is safe.

The Department of Homeland Security also advises that you:

- Unplug electrical equipment and shut off water, gas, and electricity.
- Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.
- Read the full list of evacuation recommendations from the Department of Homeland Security on Ready.gov.

Remember, thanks to the PETS Act, people with household pets and service animals must be included in any emergency preparedness operational plans by state and local authorities, and FEMA must provide rescue, care, shelter, and essential needs for both humans and pets following a major disaster or emergency. If you plan accordingly, listen to your local authorities, and remain calm, you and your dog will be able to evacuate as smoothly as possible.

Why Does My Dog Eat Leaves?

By Mary Beth McAndrews, Oct 03, 2019 **American Kennel Club**



- Wild dogs historically ate plants and leaves as ways to fill gaps in their diet.
- Today's domesticated dogs may have inherited this behavior from their omnivorous ancestors.
- Proper training, paying close attention, and knowing when to redirect are all ways to help curb leaf-eating.

The temperature is dropping, trees are covered in shades of orange, and leaves coat the sidewalk — fall is the air.

While you may enjoy the sound of crunching leaves under your feet, you may not find it so lovely when your dog is munching on a stray leaf or two. Ultimately, it is not harmful for your dog to eat a few leaves here and there, as it's part of their natural curiosity. If they're eating leaves all the time, however, there are ways to get them to curb their taste for greenery.

Why Do Dogs Even Eat Leaves?

So why do pups want to eat leaves in the first place? Research shows that eating leaves isn't just a domesticated dog behavior. Wild dogs have been observed eating grass and leaves in the wild, especially when they aren't able to find regular sources of meat. While plants are not as nutritionally dense as meat, wild dogs still use them to fill gaps in their diet.

According to veterinarian Dr. Andrea Rediger, DVM, there is a theory about how domesticated dogs inherited traits from their wild brethren. In an article in the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine, Rediger

explains that “undomesticated dogs are naturally omnivores (meat and plant-eaters), therefore domesticated dogs instinctively include plant material in their diet.”

The condition wherein dogs are compelled to eat non-edible items is known as pica, and it may be an indicator of underlying issues. Eating leaves may be a part of your dog’s primal instincts, but the behavior could also be a sign of other medical issues, nutritional deficiencies, or even boredom.



While leaves may be high in fiber, they are not nutritious, and therefore will not enrich your dog’s diet in any meaningful way. If your pup seems to love the taste or texture of leaves, consider adding dog-friendly herbs and vegetables into their diet, such as carrots, peas, and celery. You could even plant a dog-friendly herb garden, which may include rosemary, basil, and thyme.

If your dog has an upset stomach, they may also use leaves and grass as a way to make themselves vomit and get rid of whatever is causing them gastrointestinal pain. Leaves and grass are not technically harmful, but, in large amounts, they can cause a blockage, especially in puppies. Make sure to keep an eye on how often your dog is vomiting, especially concerning how much foliage they’re consuming. It could be a sign of an underlying gastrointestinal issue, which could require a visit to your veterinarian.

Eating leaves while on a walk is also risky, as that foliage could be covered in pesticides or other harmful chemicals. While most leaves that fall from trees are harmless, there are also a few toxic trees and plants whose leaves or berries can make your dog very ill, including black walnut trees, Japanese yews, and tomato plants. Make sure to familiarize yourself with the types of trees in your yard and neighborhood before getting a new dog.

How Can You Curb Leaf-Eating Behavior?

Your dog may think leaves are a special kind of canine potato chip, but it's never fun to clean up vomit after they gorge themselves. If you're concerned about the behavior, there are a few easy ways to keep your dog from eating too much fall foliage.

First, when you let your pup outside, follow them and keep a close watch on what they put in their mouths. If they start eating a leaf, give them a stern "no", and gently remove the leaf. If they start to eat leaves while on a walk, give the leash a gentle tug, followed by "no", and redirect their attention.



The interest in leaves may also be an indicator that your dog is bored and need something to keep their attention. Try purchasing chewing sticks or other toys to redirect their need to eat leaves. You can also try food puzzles to stimulate your dog's brain and get them to engage with something other than leaves.

Lastly, make sure to make time to play with your dog. If you let them outside and they start to sniff for a backyard snack, throw a ball or other toy to redirect their attention. The exercise and interaction with their owner may provide distraction from the fall snack and will help strengthen the bond you have with your dog.

Carole Silverthorne's **Wicca** was awarded her first AKC CH point on September 28th. "She was good and I survived!!" Wine Country Cluster, Kanadasaga KC.



SAD NEWS

One of our favorite girls went over the rainbow bridge today, 12 October 2024. We will miss Susan and Bill Montgomery's girl, Bonnie. While her AKC name was Ban an Maidin of Houndscroft FDC CGC TKN, on our play dates she was our "fun police," keeping the younger hounds in line. We will miss you and keep you in our hearts forever sweet girl.



With the holidays fast approaching, let's revisit some topics.

People Foods Dogs Can and Can't Eat

By **AKC** Staff, Updated: Nov 09, 2023

Dedicated dog lovers tend to be very kind people. We share our hearts and homes (and for some lucky pups, even the foot of our beds) with our canine pals. Surely there is nothing wrong with sharing our favorite people foods with our dogs too, right? Not necessarily. Many of the foods, such as fruits and vegetables, that people digest just fine can wreak havoc on a dog's body, causing severe health problems. On the other hand, some of the foods people eat can be introduced to a dog's diet just fine, and even provide health benefits such as joint strength, better breath, and allergy immunity.

But before giving your dog foods that you crave, read on and learn which foods are safe, and which can send your dog straight to the emergency vet. And always be mindful that even healthy foods fed in excess can lead to canine obesity, a major health concern for U.S. dogs. Always choose a quality dog food as your dog's main diet.

Human Food Safety for Dogs

Almonds: **No**, dogs shouldn't eat almonds. Almonds may not necessarily be toxic to dogs like macadamia nuts are, but they can block the esophagus or even tear the windpipe if not chewed completely. Salted almonds are especially dangerous because they can increase water retention, which is potentially fatal to dogs prone to heart disease.

Bread: **Yes**, dogs can eat bread. *Small* amounts of plain bread (**no** spices and definitely **no** raisins) won't hurt your dog, but it also won't provide any health benefits either. It has no nutritional value and can really pack on the carbohydrates and calories, just like in people. Homemade breads are a better option than store-bought, as bread from the grocery store typically contains unnecessary preservatives, but it's best to avoid it altogether.

Cashews: *Yes*, dogs can eat cashews. Cashews are OK for dogs, but only a few at a time. They've got calcium, magnesium, antioxidants, and proteins, but while these nuts contain less fat than others, too many can lead to weight gain and other fat-related conditions. A few cashews make a nice treat, but only if they're unsalted.

Cheese: *Yes*, dogs can eat cheese in small to moderate quantities. As long as your dog isn't lactose intolerant, which is rare, but still possible in canines, cheese can be a great treat. Many kinds of cheese can be high in fat, so go for lower-fat varieties like cottage cheese or mozzarella. Many dogs enjoy their very own dog-specific Himalayan dog chew made of dried cheese (but we don't recommend sharing it).

Chocolate: *No*, dogs should never eat chocolate. This isn't just an urban legend. Chocolate contains toxic substances called methylxanthines, which are stimulants that stop a dog's metabolic process. Even just a little bit of chocolate, especially dark chocolate, can cause diarrhea and vomiting. A large amount can cause seizures, irregular heart function, and even death. Do not have chocolate in an accessible location for your dog. If your dog does ingest chocolate, contact a veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline as soon as possible.

Cinnamon: *No*, dogs shouldn't eat cinnamon. While cinnamon is not actually toxic to dogs, it's probably best to avoid it. Cinnamon and its oils can irritate the inside of dogs' mouths, making them uncomfortable and sick. It can lower a dog's blood sugar too much and can lead to diarrhea, vomiting, increased, or decreased heart rate, and even liver disease. If they inhale it in powder form, cinnamon can cause difficulty breathing, coughing, and choking. *Can be used in small amounts.*

Coconut: *Yes*, coconut is OK for dogs. This funky fruit contains lauric acid, which can help combat bacteria and viruses. It can also help with bad breath and clearing up skin conditions like hot spots, flea allergies, and itchy skin. *Coconut milk and coconut oil are safe for dogs too.* Just be sure your dog doesn't get its paws on the furry outside of the shell, which can get lodged in the throat.

Corn: Yes, dogs can eat corn. Corn is one of the most common ingredients in most dog foods. However, the cob can be hard for a dog to digest and may cause an intestinal blockage, so if you're sharing some corn, make sure it is off the cob. (Or just opt for a squeaky corn toy instead.)

Eggs: Yes, dogs can eat eggs. Eggs are safe for dogs as long as they are fully cooked. Cooked eggs are a wonderful source of protein and can help an upset stomach. However, eating raw egg whites can contribute to biotin deficiency, so be sure to cook the eggs all the way through before giving them to your pet.

Fish: Yes, dogs can eat fish. Fish contains good fats and amino acids, giving your dog a nice health boost. Salmon and sardines are especially beneficial — salmon because it's loaded with vitamins and protein, and sardines because they have soft, digestible bones for extra calcium. With the exception of sardines, be sure to pick out all the tiny bones, which can be tedious but is definitely necessary. Never feed your dog uncooked or undercooked fish, only fully cooked and cooled, and limit your dog's fish intake to no more than twice a week.

Garlic: No, dogs shouldn't eat garlic. Like onions, leeks, and chives, garlic is part of the Allium family, and it is five times more toxic to dogs than the rest of the Allium plants. Garlic can create anemia in dogs, causing side effects such as pale gums, elevated heart rate, weakness, and collapse. Poisoning from garlic and onions may have delayed symptoms, so if you think your dog may have eaten some, monitor him or her for a few days, not just right after consumption.

Ham: Yes, dogs can eat ham. Ham is OK for dogs to eat, but certainly isn't the healthiest for them. Ham is high in sodium and fat, so while sharing a small piece is all right, it shouldn't be a continuous habit.

Honey: Yes, dogs can eat honey. Honey is packed with countless nutrients such as vitamins A, B, C, D, E, and K, potassium, calcium, magnesium, copper, and antioxidants. Feeding dogs small amounts of honey can help with allergies because it introduces small amounts of pollen to their systems, building up immunity to allergens in your area. In addition

to consuming honey, the sticky spread can also be used as a topical treatment for burns and superficial cuts.

Ice cream: *No*, dogs shouldn't eat ice cream. As refreshing of a treat as ice cream is, it contains lots of sugar so it is best not to share with your dog. Also, some dogs have an intolerance to lactose. To avoid the milk altogether, freeze chunks of strawberries, raspberries, apples, and pineapples to give to your dog as a sweet, icy treat.

Macadamia nuts: *No*, dogs should never eat macadamia nuts. These are some of the most poisonous foods for dogs. Macadamia nuts, part of the Protaceae family, can cause vomiting, increased body temperature, inability to walk, and lethargy. Even worse, they can affect the nervous system. Never feed your dog macadamia nuts.

Milk: *Yes*, dogs can have milk. ***But be cautious.*** Some dogs are lactose-intolerant and don't digest milk well. While it is OK for dogs to have a little milk, owners should be cognizant of the symptoms of lactose-intolerance and might want to stick to giving their dogs water.



Aiden Franklin/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Peanut butter: *Yes*, peanut butter is OK for dogs. Peanut butter can be an excellent source of protein for dogs. It contains heart-healthy fats, vitamins B and E and niacin. Raw, unsalted peanut butter is the healthiest option. **Read the label carefully to be sure the peanut butter does not contain xylitol, a sugar substitute that can be toxic to dogs.**

Peanuts: *Yes*, dogs can eat peanuts. Unlike almonds, peanuts are safe for dogs to eat. They're packed with good fats and proteins that can benefit

your dog. Just be sure to give peanuts in moderation, as you don't want your dog taking in too much fat, which can lead to pancreas issues. Also, avoid salted peanuts. Too much salt is hard for dogs to process.

Popcorn: *Yes*, dogs can eat popcorn. Unsalted, unbuttered, air-popped popcorn is OK for your dog in moderation. It contains riboflavin and thiamine, both of which promote eye health and digestion, as well as small amounts of iron and protein. Be sure to pop the kernels all the way before giving them to your dog, as *unpopped kernels* could become a choking hazard.

Pork: *Yes*, dogs can eat pork. Pork is a highly digestible protein, packed with amino acids, and it contains more calories per pound than other meats. Pork also may be less likely to cause an allergic reaction in some pets compared to other proteins.

Quinoa: *Yes*, quinoa is OK for dogs. You can now find quinoa in some high-quality dry dog foods. The strong nutritional profile of quinoa makes it a healthy alternative to corn, wheat, and soy — starches that are often used to make kibble.

Salmon: *Yes*, dogs can eat salmon. As mentioned above, fully cooked salmon is an excellent source of protein, good fats, and amino acids. It promotes joint and brain health and gives dog-immune systems a nice boost. However, raw or undercooked salmon contains parasites that can make dogs very sick, causing vomiting, diarrhea, dehydration, and, in extreme cases, even death. Be sure to cook salmon all the way through (the FDA recommends at least 145 degrees Fahrenheit) and the parasites should cook out.

Shrimp: *Yes*, shrimp is OK for dogs. A few shrimp every now and then is fine for your dog, but only if they are fully cooked and the shell (including the tail, head, and legs) is removed completely. Shrimp are high in antioxidants, vitamin B-12, and phosphorus, but also low in fat, calories, and carbohydrates.

Tuna: *Yes*, dogs can eat tuna, but only in small amounts. In moderation, cooked, fresh tuna is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which

promotes heart and eye health. As for canned tuna, it contains small amounts of mercury and sodium, which should be avoided in excess. A little bit of canned tuna and tuna juice here and there is fine — prepared only in water, not oil — as long as it doesn't contain any spices.

Turkey: *Yes*, dogs can eat turkey. Turkey is fine for dogs, but be sure to remove excess fat and skin from the meat. Don't forget to check for bones; poultry bones can splinter during digestion, causing blockage or even tears in the intestines. Any meat with excessive salt, seasonings, onions or garlic should not be fed.

Wheat/grains: *Yes*, dogs can eat wheat and other grains. Dogs do not have to be grain-free; it is perfectly OK for them to have grains. In fact, grains like wheat and corn are great sources of protein, essential fatty acids, and fiber. If your dog has certain allergies, however, it might be best to avoid grains, but it truly depends on your dog. Ask your veterinarian for recommendations.

Yogurt: *Yes*, yogurt is OK for dogs. Plain yogurt is a perfectly acceptable snack for dogs. However, some dogs may have trouble digesting dairy products. If your dog can digest it, the active bacteria in yogurt can help strengthen the digestive system with probiotics. Plain yogurt is the best choice. Avoid any yogurts with added sugar, and skip all yogurt with artificial sweeteners.

How Many Treats Can Your Dog Really Have?

By Anna Burke, Published: Feb 07, 2023, AKC

As a dog owner, I frequently come across the 10-percent rule. It sounds simple. "Treats should not make up more than 10 percent of your dog's diet," say veterinarians everywhere.

I've quoted this so many times I've lost count, but then, as I was in the middle of a training session with my dog, treat bag full of tiny treats, I had a crisis of faith.

What does 10 percent of a dog's daily diet actually mean?

It's All About Calories

It is easy to make general assumptions about quantity. When it comes down to calculating 10 percent, I realized I did not know exactly how to do it.

The answer is in the calories, much like many human dietary plans. Unlike humans, however, the sheer range in size between dogs means that you can't fall back on a solid number, like the 2,000 daily calories most human nutritional labels use. This means you will have to come up with that number yourself.

Your dog's food bag should tell you the number of calories in your dog's food (based on your dog's weight). But as you check it, you may notice that the caloric content is measured in kcals, not the same calories you are used to seeing. This is often confusing.

Scientifically speaking, a kcal is a kilocalorie, or 1,000 calories. Dog food manufacturers, however, must have figured out that "kcal" doesn't roll off the tongue the same way "calories" does, because the calories found on food packages are actually kcals.

In other words, when your dog's food says: 364 kcal/cup, it just means 364 calories per cup. Normally, 364/kcal would be equivalent to 364,000 calories, but in this case, "kcal" and "calories" are used interchangeably.

If your dog's food does not tell you the number of calories per cup, you have to do a little more research, like calling the company and asking your veterinarian what your dog's total daily caloric intake should be.



Counting Calories in Dogs

Now that we've cleared that up, let's get down to the math. Figuring out 10 percent of your dog's daily diet requires first figuring out how many calories your dog consumes each day. According to the package feeding instructions, let's say I feed a senior German Shepherd Dog four cups of Hills Active Longevity a day and my veterinarian approves of her weight. That's 1,456 calories a day.

Ten percent of 1,456 is 145.6, which gives me, at last, a number. Unfortunately, I still had questions. Was this the number of calories I could feed *on top* of my dog's four cups of food, or did I have to adjust her food to make up for these calories?

The answer, according to veterinarians, requires a little more math. While your veterinarian is the best resource for calculating the amount of treat calories you can feed your dog, in general, most of the veterinary articles I read suggested that treats should not make up more than 10 percent of your dog's total diet, and that diet includes treats and snacks.

In other words, if you feed a lot of high-calorie treats, you need to subtract a few kibbles to make up the difference. Subtract too many dog food kibbles, however, and you will be depriving your dog of necessary nutrients. That would be like calculating the number of calories in ice cream and deciding to cut out fruits, vegetables, and protein calories to make up for it.

You should also keep in mind that your dog's total caloric requirements might not reflect the feeding guidelines of your dog's food bag. My veterinarian, for instance, recommended feeding more than was advised by the food company to one of my dogs and significantly less to my other dog. For the most accurate estimate, talk to your veterinarian about your dog's nutritional and caloric needs.



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Choosing Healthy Treats

Now let's talk about cheese. Note that cheese may not be the best treat for all dogs due to its high-calorie content; however, it makes a good example here.

One cube (one cubic inch) of cheddar cheese contains about 69 calories. That is about 5 percent of an 80-pound German Shepherd's daily intake. If fed sparingly, this is not necessarily a problem, but what about your 5-pound Yorkshire Terrier? What would a single cube of cheese do to him?

If your 5-pound Yorkie needs one-half cup of Hills Active Longevity a day, that is only a total of 182 calories. Ten percent of their diet is 18 calories. That one cube of cheese is nearly four times the amount of recommended calories: about the same as eating a Big Mac for us.

On the other hand, one-half cup of sliced cucumbers contains only 8 calories, and one medium-sized carrot contains only 25 calories. You can also consider using cooked asparagus and cooked green beans as low-calorie treats.

Looking at a cube of cheese is a great way to visualize why low-calorie treats are healthier options for your dog. If vegetables don't get your dog motivated, you can always look for a meat-flavored training treat with a low caloric content, or use your dog's food and just subtract what you feed as a treat from their total diet.

Fighting Dog Obesity

Even if you don't count calories for your own diet, it is a good idea to be aware of the caloric content of the human foods or dog treats you might be tempted to feed your dog.

Obesity leads to canine health problems, such as joint disease, diabetes, and pancreatitis; we can lessen the likelihood of these problems occurring if we limit our dog's food intake.

It is also hard to adjust our thought process down to scale. For instance, I was very surprised to realize how many calories a single cube of cheese could add to a small dog's diet. Things that we might not think of as adding excessive calories, like cheese, hot dogs, rawhide chews, or scraps of meat can cause big problems over time.

The good news, however, is that by doing a little math, you, too, can estimate the maximum number of treat calories your dog should have each day and learn how to adjust their diet accordingly.

If your dog is already overweight, talk to your veterinarian about the best weight loss plan for your dog, and the type and amount of treats that will be best suited to their needs.

Pumpkin turmeric dog treats

***Pumpkin turmeric dog treats** are made with 6 ingredients and contain anti-inflammatory ingredients that are perfect for senior dogs.*

Ingredients

- 2 cups old-fashioned oats
- 1 tsp. turmeric
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp. coconut oil, melted and cooled

- 1/2 cup pumpkin purée

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Measure 2 cups of oats, then pour them into a food processor. Let machine run for 2 - 3 minutes, until oats are almost flour consistency with a few big pieces left.
3. Add oats to medium bowl, then add turmeric and black pepper. Stir to combine spices with ground oats.
4. Whisk egg, then add it to the oat mixture with the coconut oil and pumpkin purée.
5. Using a rubber spatula, mix dough until it is uniform.
6. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside. Use a small cookie scoop or a tablespoon measure to portion out treats, placing them on the lined baking sheet.
7. Using wet fingers, press the tops down to flatten slightly.
8. Bake for 18 minutes for chewy and soft treats. (See notes for crunchy, drier treats)
9. Cool completely before feeding to your pup.

NOTES

Tips and Tricks for Making Baked Dog Biscuits

- Baked treats can be made bigger/smaller. Keep an eye on your time and temperature. The smaller the treat, the shorter the baking time.
- For a crunchier treat, you can let baked treats sit a while in the cooling oven before removing to get a little crispier.
- Homemade baked dog treats are best consumed within a couple of days from baking or frozen for longer storage.
- Variations in measurements, individual ingredient types, options and substitutions plus variations in egg sizes, your ingredients and home

temperatures, etc. are all part of why you should work incrementally when mixing ingredients together. You may need a little extra flour or water.

- In addition to being doggone delicious and fragrant, cinnamon offers some great health benefits to dogs (and people). However, it's not suitable for everyone. Pregnant and/or nursing dogs in particular should not be given cinnamon. Ceylon cinnamon is the recommended variety for dogs, if/when used in small amounts.
- A sprinkle of ginger would go great in this recipe, with or without the Ceylon cinnamon or maybe some thinly sliced carrots or bananas!

Turkey, Sage & Cranberry Dog Biscuits

Turkey, Sage & Cranberry Dog Biscuits are an easily made Christmas treat, full of natural ingredients that your hound will love.

Cook Time 25 minutes

Servings 40 approx. depending on size

Ingredients

- 1 lb cooked turkey, chopped
- 1/3 C dried cranberries finely chopped
- 2 t dried sage
- 1.5 C chickpea/gram or other flour plus extra for rolling out
- 2-3 T yogurt, milk, stock or water

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350*
2. Heat a non-stick frying pan, tip in the turkey and cook until brown, stirring regularly. Break up any large pieces with a fork. Stir in the sage then leave to cool.

3. In a large bowl, mix the cranberries and flour. Stir in the cooled turkey.
4. Add enough yogurt or other liquid to bring the mixture together into a soft dough. Knead lightly on a floured surface.
5. Roll out the dough to approx. ¼"- ½" thickness, keeping the worksurface and rolling pin well-floured, then cut out biscuit shapes.
6. Put onto a baking sheet and cook until browned and cooked through (20-25 min). Check while baking, thinner treats will take less time.
7. Cool on a wire rack before storing biscuits in a tin or other airtight container. Should keep for 2-3 weeks or can be frozen.

How to Clean Your Dog's Bed and Why It's Important

By Gemma Johnstone, Updated: Oct 24, 2024 **AKC**

There are lots of benefits of sharing your home with a dog, but the extra dirt they generate might not be one of them. While hoovering up hairs may become part of your daily routine, it's not uncommon to overlook your dog's bed and let it go weeks without a wash. However, given that these sleeping spots can be havens for fur, fleas, and undesirable germs, learning how to wash a dog's bed properly and adding the task to your regular cleaning calendar makes sense.



Aiste Stankeviciute/Shutterstock

Why You Should Wash Your Dog's Bed

Washing your dog's bed does more than remove funky odors—it can have health benefits for the whole family.

- **Control allergies:** Research shows a buildup of dander and dust mites in dog beds could exacerbate allergies, especially if your dog sleeps close to you in your bedroom or under your work-from-home desk.
- **Keep parasites at bay:** Dog sleeping spots can harbor fast-spreading fleas, roundworms, ticks, mange-causing mites and other external parasites. One study found fleas in 14% of pets' sleeping places, even though it was conducted well outside the prime flea season. Fleas mainly produce eggs at night, so dog beds can quickly become heavily infested.
- **Better for your dog's health:** Lying in a grimy bed increases the chance of your dog picking up an infection, especially if they have cuts or other open wounds.
- **Reduce the risk of spreading disease:** Studies show zoonotic diseases (those that can pass from animals to humans) and harmful bacteria can spread through contact with infected dog beds. These include Salmonella, Staphylococcus aureus and Leptospirosis.
- **Increase the bed's lifespan:** By ridding a buildup of coat oils, fur, odors, residue from treat toys or chews, and other grime.



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How Often Should You Wash Your Dog's Bedding?

There are no hard and fast rules regarding how often you should wash your dog's bedding. However, the authors of a study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal and the CDC recommend washing your dog's bedding weekly to reduce the risk of spreading parasites or zoonoses. The guidance from the EPA is to deep clean dog beds every two to three weeks to help control flea infestations.

How often your dog sleeps in their bed, the material it's made from, the type of coat your dog has, what they get up to outdoors, and whether any family members have allergies are some factors that can influence cleaning frequency. The fluffy bed of an oily-coated, heavy-shedding Labrador Retriever that loves to swim in muddy ponds and roll in fox poop will need more frequent cleaning than the water-resistant bed of a minimal-shedding Poodle that skirts around puddles to avoid getting their paws wet or dirty, for example.

How to Wash Your Dog's Bed

How you wash your dog's bed depends on its material, size, the manufacturer's instructions, and how dirty it is. Here are a few easy ways to clean a dog bed:

Remove Excess Hair

Mixing dog hair with water causes it to clump up and clog your machine, so before and in between washings, vacuum the surface, crevices and sides of the bed with a pet hair vacuum or a pet hair remover tool. Use a lint roller or masking tape, or wear rubber or latex gloves, and wipe the bed to lift the remaining hair.

Put It in the Washing Machine

Dog blankets and soft beds are typically best put in a washing machine—if they fit and the label allows it. High-temperature programs can kill germs and parasites and provide a deep clean.

Use a fragrance-free, pet-friendly detergent. If you have concerns about hair causing washing machine clogs, purchase a dog bed laundry bag to keep them contained. After the program is complete, check the filter and wipe the rubber seal to remove any debris or hair.

If the bed is very dirty, consider running an empty cycle afterwards to remove lingering odors. Put 1 or 2 cups of white vinegar and a 1/2 cup of bicarbonate of soda into the dispenser.

Air drying is usually best, as some bed fillings can clump in the dryer. Wait until thick, fiber-filled beds are fully dry before allowing your dog to snuggle back into them. A damp bed encourages mold and mildew formation.

Clean With Soapy Water

For plastic beds or other materials that can't go into the machine, wash them with warm, soapy water. Place the bed in a bathtub (if that isn't big enough, try an outdoor children's pool). Fill the container with warm water, pet-safe laundry detergent, and a cup of vinegar. Squeeze and knead soft beds in the water repeatedly or scrub plastic beds thoroughly with a sponge. Empty the tub and rinse the bed until the soap is gone, then thoroughly disinfect the tub.

Where possible, avoid washing pet beds in sinks as this can spread germs to this food prep area.



STOWEN SETO/Getty Images Plus

What Dog Beds or Bedding Are Easiest to Keep Clean?

Choosing the right dog bed or bedding can make the washing process easier. Some options include:

- Plastic dog beds, which are probably the easiest to clean option and won't harbor hairs, smells, or parasites the way fiber-filled, fluffy

beds will. However, some dogs don't find them snugly enough, even with cozy blankets or a cushion lining their base.

- Elevated dog beds. These beds are typically built on a metal frame and featuring a wipe-clean fabric that stretches across the frame like a taut hammock.
- Dog blankets, which are ideal for covering a bed, especially if your dog sheds heavily or has an oily, smelly coat. They offer extra protection, meaning you can often wash the blankets weekly and the bulky bed slightly less frequently.
- Beds with removable covers. Removable bed covers are another option that might allow you to wash the main bed less frequently, especially if you opt for a waterproof type. You can easily pop these in the washing machine and can often go in the dryer. Even if they require air-drying, a cover won't take nearly as long to wash as a thick, fiber-filled cushion.

When Is a Dog Bed Too Dirty for Cleaning?

Over time, washing might not vanquish ingrained dirt, stains and odors as well. If your dog's old bed still smells funky after washing and doesn't look its best, it might be time to invest in a new one. The EPA also recommends discarding your dog's bedding if it's heavily infested with fleas.

Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) in Dogs: What to Know

By Nandini Maharaj, Updated: Feb 12, 2024 **AKC**



When bacteria from the skin or rectum make their way into the urinary tract, they can grow and multiply, leading to a urinary tract infection (UTI). Since dogs can develop many of the same bacterial infections as people, you might be wondering, can dogs get UTIs?

A common sign of a UTI is frequent urination or a painful sensation while urinating. As uncomfortable as this sounds, imagine what it's like for a dog who can't tell you what's wrong. If you notice your dog urinating more than usual or whimpering while relieving themselves, it's important to seek veterinary attention.

This condition should be treated once symptoms are observed for a faster recovery. Here's what you need to know about UTIs in dogs, including causes, UTI symptoms, prevention, and treatment.



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What Is a Urinary Tract Infection?

Like people, dogs have a tube connected to the bladder called the urethra through which urine leaves the body. Bacteria from feces or debris can enter the urethral opening and travel upwards into the bladder. "A urinary tract infection in a dog occurs when there is growth of bacteria in the bladder," says Dr. Jamie Whittenburg, DVM.

Urinary tract infections are fairly common in dogs, affecting 14% of dogs, and UTIs tend to be more frequent in senior dogs, particularly those aged 7 and older. A UTI in dogs can be an isolated infection or a recurring condition among dogs with underlying health problems.

"The most common cause of a UTI in dogs is E. coli, but many other bacteria can cause an infection," she says. If a dog has a weakened

immune system due to illness or a lack of proper nutrition, bacteria are more likely to reproduce and cause infection. In more severe, but less common cases, causes include cancer, bladder disease, kidney disease and stones, diabetes, bladder inflammation or infection, spinal cord abnormalities, and prostate disease.

Which Dogs Are Most at Risk?

Compared to male dogs, female dogs are more susceptible to UTIs. The shorter length of a female's urethra can allow bacteria to ascend into their bladder more easily, Dr. Whittenburg says. In contrast, male dogs have a longer urethra, meaning bacteria need to travel a greater distance to infect the urinary tract.

"Male dogs exhibiting signs of a UTI are more likely to be suffering from another condition, though UTIs are possible," she adds. Conditions including chronic kidney disease, neurologic disease, and hormonal diseases can predispose male dogs to UTI.

Any dog breed can develop a UTI. However, individual dog anatomy can play a role, placing some dogs at higher risk for developing this condition. "Dogs with redundant or excess vulvar tissue may have trapped bacteria near the urethra that can travel upwards and cause an infection," Dr. Whittenburg says, an example of higher-risk anatomy.



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Breeds such as the Shih Tzu, Bichon Frise, and Yorkshire Terrier are predisposed to urinary stones, which are made of minerals that develop in the bladder. These stones can be detected using X-rays or ultrasound and vary in size from a grain of sand to a piece of gravel. For dogs prone to

urinary stones, this condition can be complicated by having a urinary tract infection.

What Are the Symptoms of UTIs in Dogs?

If your dog has a UTI, you might notice that they seem uncomfortable trying to relieve themselves or that their urine has a strong smell.

“Typically, dogs with a UTI will posture to urinate multiple times, with little to no urine passing,” Dr. Whittenburg says. Other signs of a UTI in dogs are:

- Bloody or cloudy urine
- Straining or whimpering during urination
- Accidents in the house
- Wanting to be let outside more frequently
- Dribbling urine
- Licking around the urinary opening
- Fever

How Are UTIs Diagnosed and Treated?

Given the pain and discomfort associated with this condition, it’s important to be aware of how to treat a UTI in dogs. The veterinarian will begin by reviewing your dog’s health history and symptoms. Often, they’ll conduct a urine culture test and urinalysis , which allows them to detect microorganisms that are causing infection. A urinalysis requires that the dog owner or veterinarian obtain a urine sample from the dog for further examination.

Your vet will test the pH and glucose level of the urine if they suspect any health issues like diabetes. Next, the sample will be spun in a centrifuge to separate the liquid from the solid components to look for bacteria, blood cells, mineral crystals, and protein. “The urinalysis will identify bacteria, as well as white and red blood cells, which will aid in the diagnosis,” Dr. Whittenburg says.



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Based on the urine culture results, your vet will have a better idea of which bacteria are causing the infection. "This will ensure proper antibiotic use and a cure for the UTI," she says. "Uncomplicated UTIs typically receive a three to five-day course of antibiotics."

If the dog's condition is more serious, the vet may prescribe a round of antibiotics for seven to 10 days. For dog UTI treatment, make sure your dog finishes the antibiotics to prevent the infection from recurring unless otherwise instructed by your veterinarian. It's recommended that you also increase your dog's water intake to flush out bacteria during urination. You may need to bring your dog back for a second visit, so your veterinarian can conduct a second urinalysis to determine if the infection has cleared.

Can UTIs in Dogs be Prevented?

"Though there is no surefire way to prevent a UTI in a dog, there are things that can help," Dr. Whittenburg says. She recommends having the vet examine your dog's genitals if you suspect there's an anatomical issue that predisposes them to a UTI. In some cases, your dog may require surgery to correct the issue.

It's important to encourage your dog to drink lots of water. Be sure your dog always has access to fresh, clean water, and remember to change their water bowl whenever there's drool or food residue. If possible, let your dog outside more often, so they're not holding their bladder for hours

and hours. This can also help prevent accidental soiling on your floors and furniture.



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Make sure your dog isn't licking their genital area and keep the area around your dog's urinary opening clean of any debris. Many pet stores sell antibacterial wipes which can be used to clean this area.

If your dog suffers from allergies, managing this condition can also help with decreasing licking of the genitals and the likelihood of developing a UTI, Dr. Whittenburg says. You can also consult with your vet about prescription urinary diets and dog probiotic supplements to encourage the growth of healthy bacteria.

My Dog's Symptoms Return Repeatedly. Can It Be Something Else?

"If the dog does not have a UTI, urinary symptoms can point to bladder or kidney cancer," Dr. Whittenburg says. Especially if a dog has recurring symptoms of a UTI like urinating frequently or having accidents at home, which could point to a more serious condition like cancer. These dogs may also have bloody or cloudy urine, weight loss, vomiting, and UTIs that are resistant to treatment.

Sometimes, a positive diagnosis of bladder cancer is found after rounds of antibiotics to treat UTI symptoms that don't fully resolve themselves. The dog may then be evaluated for the presence of a tumor, usually via urine cytology, which involves testing the urine to look for abnormal or cancerous cells. Because this test alone isn't sufficient to make a diagnosis, the vet may recommend a procedure called a cystoscopy.



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A cystoscopy involves inserting an instrument inside the urethra to examine the bladder and look for signs of bleeding or abnormal blockages.

This procedure requires anesthesia and must be performed by a specially trained veterinarian. "Advanced imaging, such as ultrasound or a CT scan, may be needed to confirm the diagnosis," she explains.

Keep in mind that these diagnostic procedures take additional time, which could allow the mass to continue to grow and spread within the bladder and surrounding areas. Moreover, these procedures are expensive and invasive. In most cases, treatment involves chemotherapy or radiation or sometimes surgery if the tumor is localized, meaning it hasn't spread to other body parts.

The prognosis for dogs with cancer depends on how well your dog responds to treatment. Close monitoring of your dog's health and regular consultations with your vet are essential to promoting a good quality of life.

This article is intended solely as general guidance, and does not constitute health or other professional advice. Individual situations and applicable laws vary by jurisdiction, and you are encouraged to obtain appropriate advice from qualified professionals in the applicable jurisdictions. We make no representations or warranties concerning any course of action taken by any person following or otherwise using the information offered or provided in this article, including any such information associated with and provided in connection with third-party products, and we will not be liable for any direct, indirect, consequential, special, exemplary or other damages that may result, including but not limited to economic loss, injury, illness or death.



PVIWC List of Meeting & Events 2024

March 2023	<u>St. Patrick's Day Parades and Festivals</u>
March 31&April 1	<i>Specialty Harford County Equestrian Center, Bel Air, MD</i>
April 12&13	Dills Celtic Festival, Dills Tavern, 237 Baltimore St, Dillsburg, PA
April 20&21	Tell-Tale Steampunk Festival Pikesville, MD
April 21	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Carolinas Specialty</i>
April 27	Southern MD Celtic Festival
May 4	Annapolis Irish Festival, Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds, 1450 Crownsville, MD
May 4&5	Faerie Festival Marshy Point
May 19	Show Wrap Up Meeting
May 20-22	<i>IWCA National Specialty 300 Checkerboard Loop, Gray Summit, Missouri</i>
June 8	Carroll County Celtic Festival, Westminster, MD
June 9	Regular Meeting
June 15	Penn Mar Irish Festival, Shrewsbury, PA
June 21-23	Celtic Fling <i>(with a concert on Friday night)</i> PA Renn Faire grounds
August 11	Regular Meeting
August 17	Oakenmist Ren Faire Howard County Fairgrounds
Aug 31 & Sept 1	Virginia Scottish Games
September 15	Fun Day
September 21-23	PA Renn Faire
October 6 & 7	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Delaware Valley Specialty</i>
October 20	Regular Meeting
November 2	Lá Gaeilge (Irish Day), 1190 Progress Dr, Front Royal, VA 22630 CANCELED
November 8-10	Maryland Irish Festival, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD 21093
November 16	Fairiefolk Family Festival, DoubleTree by Hilton 1726 Reistertown Rd, Pikesville, MD
November 17	Regular Meeting
November 24	Wolfhound Walk Gettysburg Battlefield
December 8	Holiday Party
December 14	Druid Hill Winter Solstice 5-Miler, 1 Safari Place, Baltimore, MD 21217
December 28	Military Bowl Parade, Annapolis, MD

Dates, Time, or location to be determined and subject to change on some events.

Need Volunteers to Host meetings.

