POTOMAC VALLEY
IRISH WOLFHOUND
CLUB

JUNE 2026

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Beneath the thaw of winter's gray,
The waking meadows turn to green,
The sleeping giant stirs to play,
And bounds across the budding scene.

With shaggy coat and amber eyes,
The wolfhound tests the freshening air,
He leaps beneath the warm June skies,
As wild and vibrant as the hare.

His giant paws print in the mud,
While morning frost retreats in haste,
He runs to greet the springing bud,
A living spirit of the chase.

A gentle giant, proud and grand,
He towers where the blossoms spring,
The noblest hound in all the land,
A quiet king of everything.

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

PRESIDENT'S CORNER continued

From the Irish Wolfhound Health Group

By Keith Nisbet

Please be clear the below is only my own interpretation of the available information and I am posting here as maybe a catalyst for discussion or something others may find interesting. I do not have any specific expertise in the field so can only lay out my own interpretation of what is available.

Grain-Free Diets, Legumes & DCM in Dogs: My own interpretation of The Current State of the Evidence

What the Research Has Found

Despite the lack of a definitive conclusion, published research has identified several important signals:

Cardiac changes in healthy dogs on high-legume diets

Multiple studies found that dogs fed non-traditional, grain-free, legume-rich diets showed larger left ventricular diameters, reduced systolic function, and increased premature ventricular contractions compared to dogs on traditional low-legume diets.

Wrinkled peas specifically showed cardiac effects

A 2024 feeding trial found that after 28 days, a wrinkled pea diet impaired stroke volume and cardiac output, increased end-systolic ventricular diameter, and raised a cardiac stress biomarker (NT-ProBNP), albeit in a sub-clinical manner.

Many affected dogs recovered with dietary change

Many affected dogs improved clinically and functionally with dietary changes and treatment, suggesting nutritionally-associated DCM may be reversible.

The Taurine Question — The Most Important Mechanism

Taurine is an amino acid found almost exclusively in meat and is essential for healthy heart muscle function. Dogs can synthesise taurine in their bodies from other amino acids — specifically cystine and methionine — so it is not classified as an essential dietary nutrient for dogs, unlike cats. However, some breeds appear predisposed to taurine deficiency, particularly when fed diets low in these precursor amino acids.

Research has identified **three ways in which high legume diets may interfere with taurine availability** in dogs:

1. Legumes are low in taurine precursors

Pulses generally have high concentrations of lysine but are low in methionine relative to lysine. Methionine is a critical precursor for taurine synthesis, meaning a diet heavy in legumes may not provide adequate raw material for the dog to produce sufficient taurine.

2. Dogs use taurine in a uniquely vulnerable way

Unlike most mammals, which can conjugate bile acids with either glycine or taurine, dogs conjugate bile acids with taurine exclusively. Normally bile acids are recycled with 99% efficiency. However, disruption of this recycling system causes increased bile acid excretion in the faeces, leading to increased bile acid synthesis in the liver — a process that continuously draws on the body's taurine stores, potentially depleting them over time.

3. Legume fibre disrupts bile acid recycling

Pulse-based diets have been shown to increase faecal bile acid excretion and reduce the digestibility of sulphur-containing amino acids — the building blocks needed for taurine synthesis — compared to grain-based

diets. This creates a double problem: less raw material coming in and more taurine being consumed to compensate for disrupted bile acid recycling.

The Evidence Remains Inconclusive

Several studies have produced contradictory results. One 26-week study feeding a commercial grain-free diet to Labrador Retrievers actually found improved taurine status over the study period, leading researchers to conclude that other contributing factors beyond diet formulation needed to be explored. This illustrates why the picture is complex — not all grain-free foods, and not all legume-containing foods, produce the same effects. The quantity of legumes, their position in the ingredient list, the overall protein quality, and the individual breed's metabolism all appear to matter.

Current understanding suggests DCM may arise in two diet-associated forms: one linked to taurine deficiency, and another related to as yet unidentified dietary factors. More recent hypotheses also suggest the gut microbiota as a contributing factor to cardiac health.

Summary in Plain Terms

- **"Grain-free" itself is not the problem** — the issue is what replaces the grain, specifically large quantities of peas, lentils, and other legumes
- **Legumes appear to interfere with taurine availability** through two mechanisms: they are poor in the amino acids needed to make taurine, and their high fibre content disrupts the bile acid recycling system that dogs depend on — uniquely among mammals — to conserve taurine
- **Cardiac changes have been observed** in healthy dogs fed high-legume diets in controlled studies, and many recovered when diet was changed

- **No definitive causal proof exists**, and some studies have found no negative effect — suggesting individual variation, breed susceptibility, legume quantity, and overall diet quality all play a role
- **For breeds already predisposed to DCM** — such as Irish Wolfhounds — the precautionary approach supported by current evidence is to minimise legume inclusion in the diet, regardless of whether the food is labelled grain-free or not

Key published sources: FDA Investigation Reports (2018–2022); Mornard et al., Veterinary Sciences (2025); Pezzali et al., PLOS One (2024); Ko & Fascetti, Journal of Animal Science (2021); Kaplan et al., Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine (2018)

From the Desk of Susan Wine

Training idea for saving your dog in the event of a fire in your home.

If you are a person who would walk into a blazing inferno for your animal, and your pet has free movement around the house, here is a training exercise that could help save you both:

1) Set off your smoke alarm or play the sound on your phone, (if your home has no smoke alarms, please get some!)

2) Stand BY THE FRONT DOOR to hand out treats.

3) Do this a couple of times and then keep it up NO EXCEPTIONS. Accidentally set the alarm of cooking? Treats by the door. Smoke alarm sound on the TV? Treats by the door. Changing your smoke alarm batteries twice a year like you are supposed to? Give them a test run and your dog gets treats by the door.

Keep a container of treats by the door so you do not have to search for some when you need them. The delay can have an effect on your dogs response.

Most dogs will clue in VERY quickly that hearing that specific sound means go to the front door and wait for treats.

If there is an emergency and even if you leave by another way, you will still know the most likely place your dog is and can direct first responders to help.

You can also do this for any other kind of emergency alarm, (tornado alarm).

You can train them to go to a different door than the front door if that is where you would exit the home.

From the desk of Kathy Lewis

At the May club meeting we discussed Scent Work for our hounds as a possible training activity. I've posted two articles below from the **AKC**. Let me know what you think.

Just some cool information--Dogs have an incredible sense of smell—between 10,000 and 100,000 times more powerful than a human. The sport of Scent Work celebrates this amazing ability, turning a dog's natural love of sniffing into a fun and engaging game. It's a great activity for dogs of all breeds and ages, and especially helpful for building confidence in shy or timid dogs.

Unlike many dog sports where the handler takes the lead, Scent Work puts the dog in charge. Neither dog nor handler knows where the target scent is hidden, so teamwork and trust are essential. The handler must read the dog's cues and follow that remarkable nose to success—making the dog the true star of the sport.

Scent Work is inspired by the jobs of professional detection dogs, such as those trained to find drugs or explosives. In ***AKC Scent Work***, dogs search for cotton swabs infused with essential oils—typically Birch, Anise, Clove, and Cypress—hidden in a designated search area. When the dog

locates the scent, they signal their find to the handler, who then alerts the judge. This partnership highlights the unique communication and cooperation between dog and human.

AKC Scent Work: Get Started

What is Scent Work?

From https://www.akc.org/sports/akc-scent-work/getting-started/

AKC Scent Work is a sport that mimics the task of working detection dogs to locate a scent and communicate to the handler that the scent has been found. Real-life detection dogs are trained to search for a variety of things– drugs, explosives, human remains, currency, other contraband, living humans (such as for Search and Rescue), and much more. AKC Scent Work takes this amazing working relationship and turns it into a fun game that any dog can play.

Am I Eligible?

To be eligible to compete in AKC Scent Work, a dog must be:

- Registered with the AKC, or
- Listed with the AKC Purebred Alternative Listing/Indefinite Listing Privilege (PAL/ILP), or
- Listed with the Canine Partners program, and
- 6 months of age or older.

How a Scent Work Trial Works

Scent Work trials, as with any AKC sport, are organized and held by AKC-Licensed or Member Clubs. The club is always your first contact regarding specific events.

The official announcement of a club's event is a called a Premium List. It contains all relevant information regarding the trial, including date, location, classes offered, and judges–as well as an entry form.

To enter an AKC Scent Work trial, the owner of the dog must submit an official AKC entry form, which can be found in the premium list. The entry form should be sent to the trial secretary that is specified in the premium. After the entries have closed, a program showing the schedule for the judging will be sent to you along with all relevant information about the trial.

AKC Scent Work Program

The Divisions

AKC Scent Work is broken down into two divisions. The Odor Search Division, in which the dog is searching for the odor of one or more specific essential oils, and the Handler Discrimination Division, in which the dog is searching for the scent of their handler.

The Elements

Searches in AKC Scent Work are completed in a variety of environments, known as "Elements." The Elements in AKC Scent Work are:

- Container: The target odor is concealed within a container (such as a cardboard box or briefcase), and the dog must indicate in which container the scent is hidden.
- Interior: The target odor is concealed on or in an object in an indoor search area.
- Exterior: The target odor is concealed on or in an object in an outdoor search area–this requires the dog to locate the scent despite changing airflow patterns, weather conditions, and natural distractions.
- Buried: The target odor is concealed within a small container and then buried beneath sand or water.

The Difficulty Levels

Each element in the Odor Search Division, and the Handler Discrimination Division, has four difficulty levels: Novice, Advanced, Excellent, and Master. Dogs will begin with the Novice level classes and move up as they earn titles and may progress through the elements at different speeds (i.e., a dog may compete in the Novice Interior class and the Advanced Container class). Factors such as the size of the search area, the number of hides, whether the number of hides is known or unknown to the handler, and the maximum height of the hides will change with the difficulty level.

The Odors

The Odor Search Division of AKC Scent Work uses four odors: Birch (*Betula lenta*), Anise (*Pimpinella anisum*), Clove (*Eugenia caryophyllata*), and Cypress (*Cupressus sempevirens*). Novice searches are for Birch only, Advanced searches are for Birch and/or Anise, Excellent searches are for Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove, and Master searches are for Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove and/or Cypress.

The Detective Class

The Detective Class is the highest-level competition in AKC Scent Work–it offers an integrated search environment with an unknown number of hides in a variety of elements. The intent of the Detective Class is to emulate as closely as possible the work of a true detection dog. In the Detective Class, the dog is searching for one or more essential oil odors.

The Qualifying Performance

In AKC Scent Work, handler-dog teams are judged on a qualify/non-qualify basis. The dog must use their nose to search out the hidden odors and then alert their handlers when the odors are detected. Dogs may paw, bark, point with their nose or body, sit, lie down, or use any other behavior to communicate the location of the odor. The dog is the star of the Scent Work trial–the handler remains mostly passive, guiding the dog's search

only when necessary and letting the judge know when the dog has found the scent.

In order to earn a qualifying leg, the handler-dog team must find and call all hides in a search area within the time allowed for the class without committing any non-qualifying faults.

Teams that qualify will then be ranked 1st through 4th, based on fewest number of faults and then on time.

How Do I Get Started in Scent Work?

Scent Work is a terrific sport, because you don't necessarily have to take classes to become ready to compete at trial. And because the searches mimic real-life scenarios, training can be done at home or in the community. There are many books and videos to help you get your dog started in Scent Work.

If you need the discipline of class environment or a little more expertise, local Scent Work clubs and many dog training facilities offer training in Scent Work (or "Nosework," as it is sometimes known). See our Club Search or our Training Resources pages for more information on finding Scent Work classes near you.

How to Teach Your Dog Scent Work at Home

By Kathy Santo, Published: May 27, 2020

Originally printed in ***AKC Family Dog***

You don't have to own a military or police K-9 to teach your dog how to recognize a scent. In fact, you don't even have to leave your house.

What Is AKC Scent Work?

AKC Scent Work is a sport that mimics the task of working detection dogs to locate a scent (e.g., explosives or narcotics) and communicate to the

handler that the scent has been found. Scent Work is a positive, challenging activity that allows dogs the opportunity to use their strongest natural sense in a way that's fun, engaging, and that builds and strengthens a foundation of trust between the handler and dog.

Many dog clubs offer Scent Work or "nose work" classes, but if you're just looking to try it out or teach your dog a new skill, you can follow these instructions in your home.

What You Need for Scent Work Training

The first step in teaching your dog Scent Work from home is finding the necessary supplies. Almost everything you'll need can be bought on Amazon or found around your house.

- Birch essential oil
- Cotton swabs, cut in half
- Tweezers
- A small glass jar with a lid
- A "scent vessel" to hold the cotton swab. (An empty, cleaned mint tin with holes drilled in the lid will work to get started)
- Disposable gloves
- High-value treats
- A lidded, plastic container with holes drilled in the lid

Prep the Odor and Scent Vessel

In a room far away from where you're working with your dog, wear disposable gloves as you apply two drops of essential oil to each cotton swab. Place the scented cotton swabs in the glass jar.

Take the gloves off by turning them inside out, roll them in a newspaper, and put them in a trash can outside immediately.

Using your tweezers, take a cotton swab out of the jar and put it in the scent vessel.

Place your tweezers in a plastic bag and seal.

After the training session, you can reuse the cotton swab if your dog doesn't drool, and if food or soil doesn't contaminate them.

Introduce Your Dog to Identifying the Scent

Hold the tin in one hand and treat in the other, about a foot apart from each other.

When your dog finally stops smelling or licking your hand with the treat and investigates the hand with the tin, say "Yes" and reward him by bringing the food to the hand with the tin. Note: This is an important step. You must feed the dog at the source of the odor. If the dog continues smelling the tin, you can feed at the tin.

After a few reps, switch the tin to the other hand so the dog doesn't rely on memory to know which hand to go to.

You're ready to move on if your dog can correctly identify the scent in each hand within a few seconds, three times in a row.

Teach Your Dog to Find the Scent

Next, put the tin holding the scented cotton swab into the plastic container.

Repeat the same system, holding the box in your hand and waiting for the dog to indicate that he recognizes the scent. When he does, be sure to feed the dog at the box, like you did previously.

Once this is easily accomplished, place the box on the ground, between your feet, and repeat the above process.

Finally, you can place the box on the floor while your dog is in another room and then bring him into the room and see if he can find it.

Scent Work Training Tips

When setting up, wear gloves, and always handle the cotton swab with tweezers.

The odor should always be "novel," so don't contaminate the environment with it. Be sure to dispose of everything that came into contact with the source odor properly (in a sealed plastic bag, preferably outside in a garbage can, away from where you're training).

Choose a location to set up your odor that's far away from where you're training. I set up everything in a bathroom, with the door closed.

How and When Should I Begin Training My Two Littermate Puppies?

By Breanne Long,Updated: May 03, 2021 **AKC**

William T. writes, "I have two puppies (littermates that are 4 months old). At what age should I start training them to sit and stay, and can I teach them together or would it be better to teach them separately?"

You're in a tricky situation! It is difficult to train and properly socialize two puppies at the same time. "Littermate syndrome" can often develop because the pups tend to prefer each other's company over that of any human. Littermates raised together sometimes have trouble developing social skills with other dogs or people, so it's extremely important that they spend plenty of time apart from one another and are only allowed short periods of playtime together each day.

The pups should have lots of one-on-one time with their human family, and that time should be spent playing and training. Training needs to be done separately with each puppy and can start ASAP.

Getting Puppy Play Right with Safe Play Sessions

By Gemma Johnstone, Updated: May 16, 2024, **AKC**

Puppies have a critical socialization period that starts around 3 weeks of age and goes up to when they're between 12 and 14 weeks old. Studies show that a lack of positive interactions during this time can lead to problem behaviors and fearfulness in adult dogs.

Allowing your puppy to play with other dogs is a crucial element of proper socialization. Plus, it can also be great fun for them. But if play sessions aren't managed and introduced carefully, they can do more harm than good.

It's not uncommon for well-meaning owners to book a place at a one-off — and often chaotic "puppy party" — or to head straight to the local dog park. But that's not always the right approach. Instead, it's best to do your research. Take time to prepare ahead of enrolling in classes or arranging playdates. That way, you'll be setting your puppy up for success.

Not All Puppy Classes Are Equal

When looking for a puppy class, it isn't necessary to focus on a structured format, teaching just basic commands and obedience.

Casey McGee is the owner of Upward Hound Dog Training and a coach and mentor for Jean Donaldson's prestigious Academy for Dog Trainers. She emphasizes the importance of positive socialization, supervised off-leash play, and understanding the basics of force-free training methods. "You have your puppy's entire life to teach them how to hold a sit-stay. But you only have their first 18 (maybe fewer) weeks to teach them that the world is a safe and happy place," McGee explains.

McGee advocates off-leash play in a controlled environment. It allows your puppy to get feedback on their social skills in real-time from their peers where the cost of mistakes is still relatively low. "Puppies without adult teeth are incapable of seriously hurting each other. With appropriate supervision, nobody will become frightened," she says.

But supervised, rather than free-for-all, play sessions in a puppy class are crucial. "Shy pups need to be given a chance to watch and absorb rambunctious play vibes. They can then opt in when ready rather than getting repeatedly rolled, bitten, and chased, which will only exacerbate their fears," says McGee.

Research shows that dogs attending a six-week course, instead of no class or a one-off puppy party, were more likely to respond positively to strangers. It's also best to complete the course, rather than dropping in and out for a couple of sessions.

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Setting Up Puppy Play Dates

As well as attending classes, you might want to set up some puppy play dates with friends who have dogs. It's best to start with one-on-one sessions in a neutral and safe environment. Meet up with puppies that are well-matched in terms of style of play and size.

Don't get too caught up in catching up with your friends. Close supervision ensures the dogs will remain comfortable and have fun.

Be an Advocate for Your Puppy

The last thing you want to do when it comes to play sessions is force your puppy into it, especially if they're displaying fearful behavior. If things are getting rough or if you think your puppy may be feeling overwhelmed, try conducting a consent test.

"Gently hold back the dog who may be coming on too strong, and let the other puppy 'vote with their feet,'" she suggests. "If they come back right away to initiate more play, then they're game. If they take that opportunity to get a drink of water, escape, or even just wander away, they need a break."

Don't be afraid to advocate for your puppy in a class or play date environment. If they're hiding behind you and another puppy keeps coming at them, ask their owner to step in.

McGee also clarifies that it's okay for them to sit in your lap initially to take things in. "Let them join the fray when they're good and ready, knowing they can come back to you — their safe spot — whenever they need to check in."

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Understand Your Puppy's Body Language

Another way you can protect your puppy is by understanding their body language. "It's easy to mistake growling, pinning, wrestling and biting for aggression rather than play. But, most healthy play involves one or more of those activities," McGee explains.

Subtle signs that your dog is fearful or stressed could include a tucked tail, trembling, hunched posture, pinned back ears, or whale eye. They may

also display submissive appeasement gestures. Some common examples include excessive yawning, lip licking, sniffing the ground, or averting their gaze.

Is the Dog Park a Suitable Place for Puppy Play?

Although well-managed dog parks can offer benefits for confident adult dogs, they aren't the best places to introduce young puppies to play. There's a risk of your puppy contracting diseases before they've completed vaccinations. Plus, controlling the set-up is more challenging. There's also an increased chance of overly boisterous adult dogs frightening or even injuring your puppy.

McGee recommends avoiding the dog park until your puppy is at least 6 months old. "When arguments arise, dogs navigate conflict using a combination of body language signals and non-injurious anti-social behavior, such as growling and snarking," she explains.

"Puppies who have not been previously 'padded' with dozens of positive dog experiences may understandably be quite traumatized by these sights and sounds. They can come away thinking that all unfamiliar adult dogs are scary," says McGee. "Instead, let them acquire their social skills in a safe environment. If they develop positive associations with other dogs here, when something goes south at the dog park, they're more likely to be able to shrug it off."

Puppy Fear Periods: Why Is My Puppy Suddenly Afraid?

By Sassafras Patterdale, CPDT-KA, CTDI, Updated: Mar 23, 2026 **AKC**

Have a new puppy? There's a lot to get used to and prepare for, but one thing that often gets overlooked is puppy fear periods.

Puppies go through an important socialization period from approximately 3 weeks of age to 12–14 weeks. This is a critical time in puppy development. It's important to safely and intentionally expose puppies to new sights,

scents, and sounds. They should also be meeting new people, dogs, and other animals. This critical period of early socialization starts with the breeder and then continues as puppies go to their new homes and families. Well-socialized puppies are generally playful and confident, so it can take people by surprise when these same puppies become spooked or fearful seemingly overnight—welcome to your puppy's first fear period!

What Are Puppy Fear Periods?

Fear periods are a normal part of puppy development, but they also can be overwhelming for dogs. During fear periods, puppies become more sensitive and aware of the world around them. They may be more concerned about new objects or experiences. Even things that they previously might have enjoyed can become worrisome. Your puppy will experience two fear periods, both of which are a normal evolutionary part of puppy development. No amount of socialization can prevent them, but the good thing is you can help your puppy to work through them and come out the other side more confident.

evijaf/Getty Images Plus

Fear Period #1: 8–11 Weeks

Puppies will generally experience their first fear period around 8–11 weeks. Coincidentally, this fear period happens right around the time they're coming home and adjusting to a new family, and starting to explore the world. Recognizing that puppies are very impressionable, you want to be thoughtful about what your puppy experiences during this critical time. It's essential to not overwhelm a new puppy. Instead, create situations where

they can explore meeting new people and having new experiences without being pressured or forced to interact.

Fear Period #2: 6–14 Months

This second period often takes new puppy owners by surprise. Small breed dogs tend to experience their second fear periods earlier than large breed and giant breed puppies. This second fear period can be especially disorienting for owners because your 6-14-month-old may look like an adult dog. It can be hard to remember that your dog is still a puppy and emotionally developing. It can feel like everything you taught your puppy has fallen apart. The confident, engaged, and smart puppy you had just a day ago is now insecure and worried about a harmless object. Don't worry—this isn't forever!

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Understanding Fear Periods

Dogs who experience stress or trauma at this age can experience larger, related behavioral problems or consequences later in life. As a result, it's crucial to be sensitive to training needs during this time. Fear periods are often misunderstood as puppies being defiant or difficult. However, they're actually just being uncertain or worried about things in the world around them.

Even confident and well-socialized puppies go through a phase of feeling concerned about something that might seem silly to us. Just because we know that the vacuum cleaner turning on, a plastic bag blowing in the wind, or a wobble board at training class isn't something dangerous, your puppy doesn't have the same understanding of the world. Fear periods are

a developmentally normal part of growing up for dogs and something for us to be thoughtful and intentional about preparing for.

If your puppy suddenly develops a fear about someone or something, it can be tempting to try and force your dog to get closer and see that it isn't scary. But this approach is far more likely to backfire and create a bigger and possibly long-lasting fear. Don't force your puppy to engage in things that scare them. Instead, give them the space to explore and choose to engage at their comfort level.

Training Through Fear Periods

Follow these tips to turn the scary situation into a positive learning opportunity.

Step 1: Allow your puppy to move away from whatever scares them.

Step 2: Praise and reward your puppy for looking at the object that scared them. Also, reward them if they look to you for guidance.

Step 3: Allow your puppy to control how close they get to what scared them. Don't pressure or lure them to get closer. Praise and reward with treats or toys as well as for any positive curiosity or interaction including looking at the object, stepping towards it, sniffing, etc.

Step 4: Keep the training session short and fun. It's okay if your puppy doesn't overcome the fear and get completely comfortable with the object that frightened them. End on a positive note with lots of treats and praise.

Step 5: Try not to make a big deal about the thing your dog is afraid of, but incorporate it into future training sessions. Reward your puppy for looking at you or engaging with things that scare them. If possible, engage your puppy with a toy. Let the puppy control the pace and stay at a distance they're comfortable with.

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Don't Panic!

Fear periods can take everyone by surprise but try not to panic. It can be helpful to keep a list of things your puppy is nervous about. You can try to incorporate those things into future training sessions. You might be surprised to discover that your puppy might be afraid of balloons one day, but comfortable around them just a day later. Try to remember this is a normal stage of development. It can be tempting to want to quickly show your puppy there's nothing to be scared of. But remember, there are no shortcuts through a fear period. Your puppy is taking in an overwhelming amount of information about the world. They're looking to us for reassurance and guidance. It should be our training goal whenever possible to make those experiences safe, fun, and positive.

Did You Know That These Plants Are Poisonous To Dogs? Outside Flowers & Plants

KLLewis

Did you know there are many trees, shrubs and flowers that are poisonous to your dog if he eats them? They aren't just in the wild, they are commonly found in the garden too. Some of these plants can be fatal if eaten, while others can cause discomfort or misery.

Poisonous Flowers and Bulbs

Name	Parts	Symptoms	
Autumn Crocus (Colchicum autumnale)	All parts and varities	Gastrointestinal bleeding, kidney and liver damage, respiratory failure, severe vomiting, tremors, lack of appetite (symptoms may be delayed by several days	**Extremely TOXIC**- don't wait to get veterinary help
Begonia	All parts especially tubers	Mouth irritation, difficulty swallowing	Not lethal
Chrysanthemum	All varities and parts	Intestinal irritation causing diarrhea, vomiting, excessive drooling, skin rashes, loss of coordination	Not lethal
Daffodil	All parts and varities especially bulbs	Severe vomiting, drooling, low blood pressure, dermatitis, muscular tremors, convulsions, seizures, respiratory distress, heart problems	Long lasting issues
Azalea & Rhododendron (Rhododendron spp)	All	Vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, weakness, hypotension, coma, CNS depression, heart collapse, death	**Extremely Toxic--death**
Foxglove (Digitalis purpurea)	All including seeds, petals	Vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, cardiac arrhythmias, cardiac failure, death	**Extremely Toxic--death**
Geranium	All parts and varities	Lethargy, low blood pressure, loss of appetite, skin rashes	

Lily: there are many varities, some are dangerous, some are benign, best to avoid all varities	All parts including bulbs	Gastrointestinal upset, some varities release a substance that burns and irritates mouth and stomach	Mild to severe symptoms based on varity
Lily of the Valley	All parts including bulbs	Diarrhea, vomiting, drop in heart rate, cardiac arrhythmia	Serious
Hyacinth (Hyacinthus oreintalis) and Tulip (Tulip spp)	All parts especially bulbs (most toxic part)	Excessive drooling and vomiting, diarrhea, tremors depression, irritation to mouth and esophagus, increased heart rate, irregular breathing, lack of appetite	With vet care dog usually recovers without further ill effects
Oleander	All parts	Extreme vomiting, abnormal heart rate, may also include tremors, drooling, seizures and weakness, death	**Extreme toxicity—Death** (also toxic for humans)

There are other flowers that are harmful to our dogs and our children, come to that. Plants listed above are plants that are normally grown outside. House plants can be poisonous as well. Be aware and do your research. The best cure for poisonous plants is prevention!

If your dog eats something poisonous, a plant or other hazardous material, there are some telltale signs, as noted above, that will alert pet parents. Common symptoms of poison consumption include:

- Vomiting
- Drooling

- Lethargy
- Diarrhea
- Weakness
- Nausea

Severe symptoms often include:

- Agitation
- Seizures
- Extreme sedation
- Coma

What should you do?

1. Contact your vet or AKC Vetline ASAP. It is available 24/7, giving your access to licensed and trained veterinary staff and pet health care professionals. **Or** call the Pet Poison Helpline (855-764-7661) for accurate advice. (There is a fee when you call the Pet Poison Helpline.) *Remember, helplines and hotlines are not a substitute for taking your pet to the vet!*
2. Try to id the plant: take a sample or a picture of the plant or collect the dog's vomit in a plastic bag to take with you to the vet.
3. When you reach the vet or helpline, be clear, concise and provide as much information as possible, including:

- The suspected plant name and the time of ingestion.
- Your dog's weight.
- Any and all symptoms your dog is showing.

1. *"Under no circumstances should you induce vomiting unless instructed to do so by the vet*. Specific plant poisons require specific treatments, and vomiting can make some cases worse." (akc.org)

2. It is a myth that dogs instinctively avoid dangerous plants. While it is sometimes true of wild animals, dogs do not have ability to distinguish between safe and unsafe plants.

Puppy Teething and Nipping: A Survival Guide

By Harriet Meyers, Sponsored by Purina Pro Plan, Updated: Feb 20, 2026 **AKC**

Congratulations on your new puppy! This adorable, four-legged family member is going to bring you love and affection — and also some challenges, including how to survive teething and nipping.

Puppies' mouths are filled with 28 tiny, razor-sharp teeth that seem to be attracted to nipping at your fingers and toes. Although an annoying behavior, this is completely normal for teething puppies and something you can train away.

When Do Puppy's Teeth Fall Out?

Puppies get their baby teeth at a much younger age than human babies — as early as 2 weeks old. As puppies grow, they explore their world with their mouths. When a puppy is about 3-to-4-months-old, puppy teeth begin to fall out to make room for 42 adult teeth. (That's about 10 more teeth than people have.)

This process can be awfully painful for your puppy, and their gums will be sore. When teething occurs, you might notice the puppy drooling or see little spots of blood on their toys. If you notice anything unusual, talk to your veterinarian since both symptoms could also be related to a more serious issue.

Once your puppy is 6 months old, their baby teeth should've fallen out. According to AKC Chief Veterinarian Dr. Jerry Klein, "You may find puppy

teeth on the floor, although the puppy is likely to swallow most of the teeth. If you find that some don't fall out, be sure to tell your veterinarian. They may need to be removed by a veterinary professional."

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How to Survive Puppy Teething

The teething process is very uncomfortable for a puppy. Your job as a responsible owner is to provide something they can chew on to soothe sore gums and help make this process a little more comfortable. By doing so, you'll be preventing the puppy from finding something on their own to chew, whether it's your shoes, your couch, or your children's toys.

The best objects to offer teething puppies depend on your dog's size and level of activity. Rubber teething toys that you can put in the freezer, edible puppy teething rings, and flavored puppy chew toys can all be good options.

You can ask your veterinarian for advice on choosing safe chew toys for your puppy. Whatever you choose, always supervise chewing and playtime. Check your dog's toys periodically to ensure they aren't falling apart. Your puppy shouldn't be able to chew chunks off or pull pieces of fiber or stuffing from them. Sticks can also be hazardous, although many puppies chew them.

How to Stop a Puppy From Nipping

Puppies naturally nip at each other while playing and sometimes don't realize how hard they're able to bite down without hurting the other dog. If

they bite too hard, another dog will make a loud yelp, warning the puppy, "Hey, that hurts!"

You can teach your puppy that biting hurts with a loud, high-pitched "OW" if they bite you. Then, give them a treat or verbal praise for backing off. Beware that some puppies get even more worked up if you yell. In this case, turn around quietly, walk away, or gently put them in a crate for a few minutes to calm down.

Now is the time for them to learn how to moderate the force of a bite, called bite inhibition. Any adult dog might put their mouth on you or someone else, like your vet, if they're in pain, but the outcome will likely be harmless if the dog has learned bite inhibition.

After teaching your dog that biting you is painful, let them know what they can bite or chew on. If they start nibbling at your fingers or toes while you're playing, offer them a toy instead. Keep toys where you can easily reach them so you can quickly offer an acceptable alternative when the puppy feels a need to chew.

If they continue to nip you, stop the play session so that they realize that biting isn't a behavior you'd reward. You may also need to redirect that excessive puppy energy with outside playtime, a walk, or a training session. If your pet seems to be biting out of aggression (not during play), speak to a veterinarian or dog trainer about ways to deal with that behavior.

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Caring for a Puppy's Adult Teeth

Once your dog has all of their adult teeth, you want to ensure that they stay pearly white. Begin a healthy-teeth routine by getting your puppy used to having their mouth and teeth touched at an early age.

You can purchase a dog-friendly toothbrush and toothpaste (an enzymatic product is recommended as it works both mechanically and chemically to remove plaque). Don't use human toothpaste because it can include ingredients like xylitol that are toxic or even deadly to dogs.

Keep in mind that even though they're no longer teething, adult dogs still like to chew. Continue to give your dog chew toys and edibles that will satisfy this natural instinct and can help keep teeth clean, too.

Good luck with your new puppy, and enjoy guiding them through this important time. Before long, the memories of your pup as a nipping, chewing little monster will be something you look back on fondly.

Expert Tips To Curb Puppy Mouthing

By Stephanie Gibeault, MSc, CPDT, Updated: Mar 23, 2026 **AKC**

Puppies explore the world with their mouths, so it's completely natural for puppies to mouth your hands, feet, and anything else they can get between their teeth. Mouthing and play-biting are also normal parts of puppy play. Plus, teething (which can last for up to six months) is painful, and mouthing things helps to relieve the pain.

But those razor-sharp puppy teeth can hurt, and you don't want your dog to continue mouthing you into adulthood. An important step for any new puppy owner is teaching them not to mouth humans. It takes patience and consistency, but there are ways to make it easier for both of you!

These tips will help stop your puppy from mouthing you, so you can both spend more time learning the fun stuff.

When They're Mouthing, Stop All Play and Movement

Attention of any kind is a strong reward, but it's important not to reward your puppy for mouthing or play-biting. Whenever your puppy bites or mouths you, stop all interaction with them. That will teach your puppy that mouthing or biting stops the fun. You can even tuck your hands away and turn your back to your puppy for a few seconds to really emphasize the lesson.

To help teach bite inhibition (the use of a gentle mouth), say "ouch!" or "yip" in a high-pitched voice whenever your puppy bites you. This mimics the behavior their mother and littermates used when the puppy bit too hard, and it will help them understand the importance of a gentle mouth. However, this noise can over excite some pups, so if it doesn't settle your puppy down, walk away or calmly place them in their crate instead.

Minimize Jerky Movements While Practicing Calm Handling

Waving hands, running feet, and other sudden, jerky movements will encourage your puppy to play bite. That's because these types of actions tap into their instinct to chase and capture prey. It wouldn't be fair to rile up the puppy, then get upset when they mouth or bite as a natural response.

Instead, set up your puppy for success by using calm, smooth movements. When you handle your puppy (for example, when you are grooming or petting them), do so gently and slowly.

Chris Amaral/Getty Images Plus

Avoid Playing in a Way That Triggers Reflexive Biting

When you play with your puppy, it's tempting to wrestle and gently push them about. After all, it's how they play with other dogs, and many puppies love that kind of interaction.

But if you roughhouse with your new pet, you might encourage them to play-bite and mouth you. They won't understand where to draw the line, and you could end up looking like a pin cushion. Instead, try to find ways to play with your puppy that don't trigger those instincts.

Engage in Noncontact Play

There are all kinds of exciting games you can play with your puppy that will keep their teeth away from your skin. For example, teaching your dog to play fetch is a great way to bond, provide exercise and have fun. You can also train your puppy to drop the ball so you don't have to remove it from their mouth or chase them to get it back.

Tug-of-war is another game that allows you to interact with your puppy while keeping their mouth at arm's length. It's a wonderful way to teach the cues for "take it" and "drop it." It also encourages impulse control and makes a perfect training reward in place of treats.

Play With Large Toys Away From Your Body

As anybody who has had their pants legs bitten understands, puppies will nip at anything that moves. When playing with puppy toys, choose larger options and keep them away from your body. That way, when your puppy mouths or bites the toy, you won't be caught in the crossfire and get nipped.

Encourage your puppy to focus on the toy rather than on your hands, legs, or feet. Save smaller toys, like chew toys, for your puppy's solo play.

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Schedule Crate and Nap Time

Just like human infants get cranky, puppies can get mouthy when they're tired or overly stimulated. To prevent that, schedule time every day for them to nap or wind down in their crate.

Remember that puppies need a lot of sleep — up to 18 hours a day! Plus, dogs love routine. Put your puppy on a regular schedule that includes quiet time, and don't disturb them while they're sleeping.

Use Up Their Physical and Mental Energy

Between naps, your puppy will be bursting with energy. Find ways to tire them out, both physically and mentally, so they are less likely to mouth and nip. Plus, stimulation and exercise are great ways to keep your puppy out of trouble. Consider puzzle toys, training sessions for cues like "sit" or "down," romps in the backyard, or structured play.

Teach your puppy to play appropriately. After playing calmly, you can then ask for a sit. When they respond correctly, reward them with more playtime. As they catch on to the rules, increase the enthusiasm of your play sessions. Soon, you will be able to tire them out (yet also be able to ask them to calm down when needed).

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Have a Plan To Direct Your Puppy's Energy

Plan for puppy energy bursts so you aren't caught unprepared. For example, have toys or a pouch or container full of treats in every room. The faster you can redirect a mouthy puppy to a more appropriate behavior, the faster they will learn what you expect of them.

Even better, anticipate your puppy's periods of high activity, so you can prevent mouthing in the first place. If you know your puppy gets mouthy after being released from their crate, have a toy ready to distract them as soon as you open the door.

Distract Them With Treats

If you need to have your hands near your puppy when they're feeling mouthy, such as when you're petting or grooming them, it's helpful to use small treats as a distraction. If they're focused on eating, they won't have time to mouth or nip.

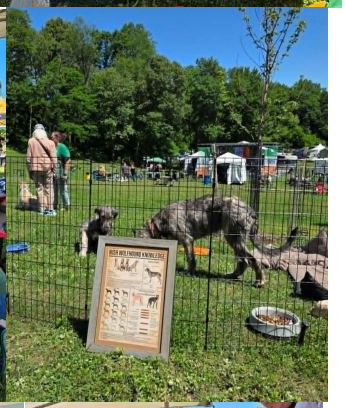
For example, if you're petting your dog with one hand, feed them small treats with the opposite hand. This will also help your puppy get used to your touch and learn to associate it with the reward of delicious food.

Teach Children How To Interact and Handle Puppies

As already mentioned, fast, jerky movements encourage mouthing and nipping in dogs. Children tend to move that way. They can inadvertently also be rough with dogs, another activity that riles up a mouthy puppy.

But you don’t want your puppy hurting a child, even by accident, and you don’t want your dog to practice mouthing humans. It’s important to teach children how to interact safely with your dog. For example, don’t let them chase or harass your puppy. Encourage children to move slowly and calmly, be gentle, and keep loud noises to a minimum. And always supervise all interactions between children and your new pet.

Annapolis Celtic Festival



More than 700 plants produce physiologically active or toxic substances that are dangerous to dogs and cats if ingested.

Pets & TOXIC PLANTS

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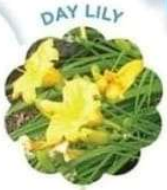
POISONOUS PLANTS INCLUDE

AUTUMN CROCUS

AZALEA*

CALLA LILY

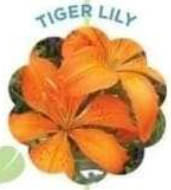

DAY LILY

EASTER LILY

ANGEL'S TRUMPET

OLEANDER*

RHODODENDRON*


TIGER LILY

YEW*

FOXGLOVE*

LILY OF THE VALLEY*

SAGO PALM

JAPANESE PIERIS*

MONKSHOOD*

*Cardiotoxic plants pose the highest risk to your pet.

YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW

ELEPHANT'S EAR

Effects of poisonous plant ingestion range from mild **nausea** to **death**.

Signs of toxicity

Vulnerability to plant toxicities depends on:

- PET SPECIES
- AMOUNT DIGESTED
- SIZE OF YOUR PET

If your pet eats any part of a plant:

1. Call your veterinarian immediately
2. Bring a sample of the plant
3. Tell the veterinary staff how much your pet ingested

Last year, Nationwide® members filed **$9.5M** in pet insurance claims for vomiting/upset stomach

Average treatment costs

Plant toxicity:	Tremors:	Kidney failure:
$547	$474	$663

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855.289.0358
www.petpoisonhelpline.com

POTOMAC VALLEY
IRISH WOLFHOUND
CLUB

2026 Meeting and Events

March 8& 9	***Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Carolinas Specialty Durham Kennel Club, 7318 Guess Road, Durham NC***
March 14	Westminster Celtic Canter
March TBD	Ellicott City Historic Downtown
March 29 & 30	***Specialty Harford County Equestrian Center, Bel Air, MD (Meeting Following Judging)***
March 29	***Irish Wolfhound Association of Lake Erie Specialty New York State Fairgrounds***
April 17 & 18	Dills Celtic Festival, Dills Tavern, 237 Baltimore St, Dillsburg, PA
May 2 & 3	Faerie Festival Marshy Point Rocky Point Park in Baltimore County, MD. 2200 Rocky Point Rd, Essex
May 17	**Show Wrap Up Meeting**
May 18-21	***IWCA National Specialty Purina Farms St Louis, MO***
May 29 & 30	Annapolis Irish Festival, Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds, 1450 Crownsville, MD
June 13 & 14	Carroll County Celtic Festival, Carroll County Ag Center, Westminster, MD
June 21	**Lure Coursing Practice at the LeVan's**
June 20	Penn Mar Irish Festival, Shrewsbury, PA
June	Celtic Fling *(with a concert on Friday night)* PA Renn Faire grounds
August 9	**Regular Meeting**
September-13	Fun Day
September	PA Renn Faire Shamrocks and Shenanigans Weekend
October	***Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Delaware Valley Specialty***
October 18	**Regular Meeting**
November 13, 14 & 15	Maryland Irish Festival, Timonium, MD
November 22	**Regular Meeting**
December 13	**Holiday Party**
December	Druid Hill Winter Solstice 5Miler , Baltimore, MD
December	Military Bowl Parade, Annapolis, MD

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

Need Volunteers to Host meetings.