

FLEA SEASON IS ALMOST HERE!

Natural Ways to Flee the Fleas – You Don't Have to Resort to Chemical Warfare!

By Linda Yost

Pets Are People Too!

Flea problems do not actually stem from the actual presence of fleas, but from health related and/or environmental circumstances that allow these parasites to wreak havoc upon your weakened pet. If your pet's health is overwhelmed with problems of poor digestion, over vaccination, food allergies, and inadequate waste elimination, then their ability to deal with fleas will be greatly reduced.

The Following May Help to Avoid Fleas:

- Switching to a premium kibble (containing no wheat/corn, by-products, preservatives, etc.) raw, or home-cooked diet can help for pets suffering from allergies (wheat & corn are common allergy foods for dogs/cats that many products contain) Cats should be on a premium wet canned, raw, or home-cooked diet.
- Supplement their diet with essential fatty acids (EFA). Salmon or flaxseed oils are full of essential fatty acids that promote healthy hair and skin, while adding a clove of fresh grated garlic to your dog's food each day will help build up his immunity and generate an odor flea find unattractive. Many vets do not recommend feeding garlic to cats because it can sometimes damage the red blood cells and cause anemia. Try brewer's yeast instead: it is a good source of vitamin B1 and acts as a flea repellent. When introducing any supplement to your animal's diet, it is a good idea to talk to a holistic vet.
- Use natural herbal products that repel and even kill fleas without the toxic chemicals. Look for products containing oils and/or extracts of neem, citronella, cedar, and rosemary.
- Add some apple cider vinegar to their water dish.
- Regular flea combing is the most direct/low tech method to flea control.
- Vacuum all areas that your pets use frequently – every two to three days – under the couch cushions/chairs.
- Change the vacuum bags frequently and dispose of in a plastic bag.
- Wash uncarpeted floors at least once a week.
- You can also carefully sprinkle natural, unprocessed diatomaceous earth on carpets, along walls and in cracks in the floor or corners. It will damage the fleas' interior functions and kill them. Sodium based flea-killing products, meanwhile, act as a desiccant and break the life cycle by drying out flea eggs and larvae.
- Conventional flea products:
When dealing with a serious flea infestation, it can be tempting to resort to chemical treatments. While it's true that some of these products may work faster than more natural alternatives, you pay for it by exposing your animal (and yourself) to toxic substances that can have a variety of adverse effects. In addition, overuse of pesticides can actually cause immunity in new generations of fleas. It is therefore best to avoid commercial chemical flea powders, collars, and sprays altogether.

The sooner you put a prevention program in place, the better your companion will cope if he does pick up a few fleas this summer, and the easier it will be to keep them under control. Your furry companion will be forever grateful!