

Prevent Pet Problems by Adopting a *Natural Approach to Health*



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All About Prevention

While we may be more educated from the pet food scare about what to feed our beloved pets, we still aren't always sure about **how to properly select and give our pets safe, daily nutrition**.



We also have so many **misconceptions about the resilience of pets' immune systems**. Given the wide range of things that our pets have been seen nibbling on -- from dirty socks to kitty litter -- there seems to be very little, if any, consequences visible on the outside!

But, it is important that we know that isn't the case... this seemingly indestructible pet can be **harboring many internal issues** and symptoms may be disguised for quite some time, sometimes surfacing once the problem has metastasized and too late.

While our furry friends are usually great companions, they can **sometimes act out of character with aggressive behavior** -- leading to **nips, bites, and potentially even attacks** to us, other people, or even other animals.

Fortunately, there are **steps we can take** to address this problem and be a responsible pet owner. One important step is learning about the behavioral cues that we should keep an eye out for.

Did you know that **children are three times more vulnerable to attacks** and bites than adults? This is often due to their immature nature and unpredictable behavior, which can be seen by an animal -- even a non-aggressive one -- to **pose a threat to safety or their comfort zone**. However, there are several tips you can follow to help prevent these events from occurring.

Read on for some great tips and information on keeping your pet healthy!

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It is not intended to diagnose or treat any medical condition. Nothing in this ebook is intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your veterinarian or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

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Taking a Bite Out of Food Borne

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Illness

Tips for promoting food safety in pets

While pet owners often take extra precautions in the kitchen when preparing food for their own meals, it is likely that **the same hygienic habits are overlooked when handling their dog or cat's food.**



Although the pet food scare of last year may have altered consumer pet food *buying* habits, it is likely that the **knowledge of how to properly feed a pet its daily nutrition requirements is still inadequate** -- which can impact their overall health and well-being.

Many people think of their pets as "garbage disposals", as many dogs and cats have the tendency to eat any leftover scraps or nibble on grass, plants, or other inappropriate snacks... therefore giving the **false perspective that their stomachs are infallible to afflictions.**

However, **dogs and cats are just as susceptible to food borne illness** as humans. Therefore, it is important to strongly consider and enforce the same measures of safety when buying, preparing, and storing their food and treats to help **prevent bacterial infections.**

For pets, many health **problems can be harbored internally and symptoms may be disguised for quite some time**, sometimes only surfacing once the problem has metastasized and too late.

Therefore, the importance of giving pets the same attention in the kitchen during mealtimes cannot be stressed enough. **Food borne illnesses like Salmonella are just as prevalent in pet foods and treats**, and contamination can even be spread to human foods -- creating the possibility of a chain of ill health in the household!

While the FDA has increased its efforts to minimize the incidence of infection, there are still precautions to take. Remember, prevention is best, and **maintaining pet health now can save time and money in the future!**

1. When buying food, make sure that containers are in good condition, free of signs of package damage such as dents or tears
2. Thoroughly wash hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling
3. Wash pet food bowls, dishes, and scooping utensils with hot, soapy water after each use
4. Properly dispose of old food in a covered trash receptacle
5. Refrigerate at 40 degrees or throw away any leftover wet pet food
6. Store dry product in an airtight container in a cool, dry place under 80 degrees
7. Keep pets away from all food storage, preparation, and garbage areas

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Pet Naturals of Vermont Calming Formula is recommended for animals exposed



[Calming Formula for Dogs](#)
Pet Naturals of Vermont Calming Support formula for dogs is a supplement re

Also **consider the pet's diet**. While some owners believe the "raw food diet" is the healthiest, the **FDA actually advises against raw meat, poultry, or seafood for pets** due to the increased chance of illness associated with raw foods. If choosing to feed this diet, consult with a vet first and follow the following tips to **help ensure safety**:

- Raw meat and poultry products should be kept frozen until ready to use
- Avoid thawing foods on the counter; do so in refrigerator or microwave
- Separate raw foods from other foods, and be sure to thoroughly wash surfaces, utensils (including cutting boards, preparation and feeding bowls), hands, and any other items that touch or contact raw meat, poultry or seafood with hot soapy water immediately
- Properly store and refrigerate leftovers immediately or discard safely

Unfortunately, even with the best attempts to provide good care, **pets often encounter some disturbances...** however; most common problems can be managed with at-home care. In addition, just **increasing awareness of these preparation habits alone can go a long way** in helping maintain pet health.

When Their Bark Isn't Worse Than Their Bite

Monitoring pet behavior to avoid biting triggers

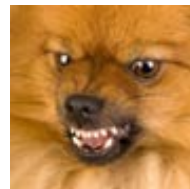
While a furry friend may usually make a great companion, they can **sometimes act out of character with aggressive behavior**—leading to **nips, bites, and potentially even attacks**. Often the underlying signs of aggression go unnoticed, but sometimes there are indicators... in any case, **dog and cat bites are a serious problem**.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, **800,000 dog bite victims require medical attention** in the United States annually, while countless more go unreported and/or untreated. Cat bites are not as frequently reported, but an estimated 700,000 people a year are thought to be bitten. However, **almost half of all cat bites become infected**... making both dog and cat bites worthy causes of concern!

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Although Mother Nature may inexplicably interfere with a pet's behavior at times, there are luckily **many precautions to take that can minimize the risk of biting.**

Unknowingly (or perhaps just unwisely) some owners actually encourage aggression in their dogs, or allow signs of aggressive behavior to go unchecked. **Self-monitoring of a pet is one of the biggest steps toward bite prevention.**

Biting Behaviors in Dogs

As **biting is a part of basic aggressive dog behavior** (arising from an innate attribute of dogs to dominate a pack), it is **necessary to determine whether this behavior has been initiated as a result of an interaction with the dog**, or whether it is just an inherent trait that must be controlled using training methods.

In many cases, **dog biting arises out of fear** or when a dog finds himself in an inescapable situation. If this behavior is not corrected in its early stages, **dog aggression may reach unmanageable proportions.**

Young puppies are prone to biting, but **this should not be ignored as playful behavior, as any biting can develop into aggression.** Young puppies may also feel compelled to bite due to teething. Their mouths need stimulation, which is provided by biting. In such cases, **provide chew sticks and bones** for the puppy to chew on.

Properly socializing puppies is also important, allowing the dog to familiarize itself with normal interaction situations-- thus **lessening the chance of feeling uncomfortable or scared.**

Other common causes of dog biting include sickness or physical discomfort. **Healthy dogs do not normally bite humans**, but the potential still exists. If a dog is prone to biting humans or neighboring animals, the best course of action is to **first get him checked for any underlying disease.**

Older dogs do tend to have more physical discomfort associated with normal aging, which can lead to "snappy" behavior. Consulting a veterinarian is the right way to **rule out medical conditions that are causing discomfort.**

Cats That Bite

Unlike dog aggression, **feline aggression for the most part is a playful activity.** Cats seldom indulge in aggression without provocation, but they are likely to react aggressively if provoked too much.

Unlike dogs, **a fearful cat is more likely to try the escape route** and hide behind a sofa

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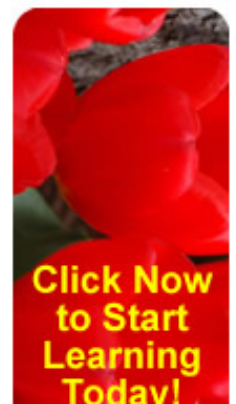
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than bite, but biting is still a possible result of fright. Therefore, caution should still be exercised when a cat is exposed to a new environment or there are guests present in the home.

Physical distress is another factor that can provoke a cat to bite (whether related to the normal aging process or illness), so consult a veterinarian if it is suspected that the aggression is linked to discomfort.

Cats are actually very predictable animals, and seldom do anything without a reason. Cats that bite or indulge in excessive scratching often **develop the habit due to human negligence**.

Playful biting and scratching are integral parts of cat behavior, so an effort must be made on the part of the **owner to establish boundaries**. When a cat is not taught that human hands are not toys, they are bound to bite or scratch whenever they feel like playing.

Remember, it all boils down to giving a pet the attention it needs and deserves. By doing so, it will be easier to detect anomalies in behavior—thus leading to **the ability to address aggression problems before they become an issue** in the household.

Tips for Preventing Dog & Cat Bites in Children

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention estimates that over the last decade, the number of overall bite injuries increased by 33%, and **children are three times more likely to suffer an animal-inflicted injury** than adults.

In addition, the attack is usually not the animal's "fault", but rather a **dog or cat is provoked** by a child's naturally erratic, unpredictable behavior.

There are **several tips that can help lessen the chance of biting**:

1. **Consider waiting to bring a pet into the household.** Since most bites occur with very young children, it is often suggested to hold off until a child reaches approximately 4 years of age.
2. **Evaluate pet and breed selection.** By nature, some breeds display more aggressive tendencies. Never bring home a pet on impulse, and research behavior and suitability before adopting or buying a pet.
3. **Monitor interactions between children and pets.** Never leave an infant or small child alone with a pet, and be wary of potentially dangerous situations.
4. **Socializing a pet immediately is very important.** As soon as the pet enters the home, begin slowly by introducing him or her to encounters with your child. By gradually increasing exposure to different situations, it will learn to recognize and distinguish between "threatening" situations versus normal encounters.
5. **Teach a child basic "rules"**, such as to never disturb a pet that is sleeping, eating, or caring for its babies.
6. **Consider professional or at-home training.** Especially with dogs, learning basic commands can build lasting obedience behaviors and establish trust.



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7. **Practice holistic health.** Maintaining optimal wellness minimizes erratic behavior. Just as in humans, how a pet feels directly correlates with its conduct.
8. **Spay or neuter the pet.**
9. **Take the time to be a considerate, responsible pet owner.** Studies show that animals left alone are a greater risk of developing behavior problems.
10. **Regularly evaluate behavior.** Stay alert to signs of illness, discomfort, or aggressiveness.



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