

The Whole Dog Journal™



VOLUME 19 | NO. 9 | \$5.95

A monthly guide to natural dog care and training

SEPTEMBER 2016

FEATURES

3 Tales of the Crypt

Cryptorchidism (undescended testicles) can cause serious health and behavior problems if not detected and treated (by neutering or re-neutering).

6 Is Behavior Genetic?

Or is it "all in how you raise them"? The truth lies absolutely in the middle.

8 Gastritis: Causes and Cures

Stomach inflammation can cause acute or chronic vomiting in your dog. It has many causes, but fortunately, there are many diagnostics and treatments for the condition, too.

14 No Escape

How to contain dogs who go over, under, around, and through fences (without shock!).

18 A New Great Bait Bag

Too late to be included in last month's review, we found a pouch that tops our previous list of favorites.

19 Unique Cues

WDJ subscribers describe the interesting and useful behaviors that they taught their dogs – or, in some cases, behaviors that their dogs taught them!



Fear-Free Puppies
How to raise a confident dog
Page 6



Tools and Treatment for Tummy Troubles
Page 8



Who Let the Dogs Out?
Prevent gate crashing
Page 14

\$5.95US



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Editor's Note
- 24 Resources



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF – Nancy Kerns
TRAINING EDITOR – Pat Miller
PUBLISHER – Timothy H. Cole
CIRCULATION DIRECTOR – Greg King

EDITORIAL OFFICE

E-MAIL: WDJEditor@gmail.com
ADDRESS: 1655 Robinson Street
Oroville, CA 95965

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

PHONE: (800) 829-9165
INTERNET: whole-dog-journal.com/cs
U.S. MAIL: PO Box 8535
Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535
CANADA: Box 7820 STN Main
London, Ontario N5Y 5W1

REPRINTS

For price quote, contact
Jennifer Jimolka at (203) 857-3144
Minimum order 1,000

NEWSSTAND

Jocelyn Donnellon, (203) 857-3100

WHOLE DOG JOURNAL DOES NOT ACCEPT COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING

B THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL (ISSN #1097-5322) is published monthly by Belvoir Media Group, LLC, 535 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854. Robert Englander, Chairman and CEO; Timothy H. Cole, Executive Vice President, Editorial Director; Philip L. Penny, Chief Operating Officer; Greg King, Executive Vice President, Marketing Director; Ron Goldberg, Chief Financial Officer; Tom Canfield, Vice President, Circulation. Periodicals postage paid at Norwalk, CT and at additional mailing offices. Copyright ©2016, Belvoir Media Group, LLC. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited. Printed in U.S.A. Revenue Canada GST Account #128044658. Canada Publishing Agreement Number #40016479.

THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL makes every effort to provide information on dog health, care, and treatment that is authoritative, reliable, and practical. It is not intended, however, to replace diagnosis or treatment from a veterinarian or other qualified dog professional. THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL does not assume any legal responsibility. Readers should always consult qualified healthcare providers for specific diagnosis and treatment.

Subscriptions: \$39 annually (12 issues). Bulk rate subscriptions for organizations and educational institutions available upon request.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL, PO Box 8535, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535

In Canada, send to THE WHOLE DOG JOURNAL, PO Box 39, Norwich, ON, N0J 1P0



Too Much!

A visit to “Superzoo,” a pet products show for retailers, reveals just how enormous the pet industry is.

BY NANCY KERNS

I recently spent three days at one of this country’s largest annual trade shows for pet product retailers. At the end of each day, my feet and back were sore, and I was mentally exhausted – and yet, *sooo* happy to be among our people – you know, obsessed, dedicated, creative, passionate, knowledgeable *dog* people!

I know this photo is small, and a lot of detail can’t be seen, but you don’t really need to see the details to appreciate the size of the show. The fine print at the bottom is a list of all the pet product companies who were there to promote products to owners and managers of pet supply stores and grooming shops; the map shows where they could be found on the Las Vegas convention hall floor.

For three days, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (well, 3 p.m. on the third day; the show closed early on the last day), I walked up and down the aisles, stopping *briefly* at booths that had products that I thought WDJ readers might be interested in: food, of course, but also gear for the training, health maintenance, and comfort of our beloved dogs. I picked up catalogs and fliers that described new products, I had ever-so-brief conversations with the company representatives in about a quarter of the booths I visited . . . and in the final minutes of the show, I discovered (to my dismay) that there were still aisles I hadn’t explored.

As fun and interesting as it might have been, I didn’t have time to have in-depth meetings with representatives of pet food companies or gear makers; as it was, I barely had time to hear

the briefest of presentations about their newest products! And oh my dog, I’m not even counting the hundreds of booths I that walked right by – not to be rude, but because they were selling stuff that we don’t talk about in WDJ very much: costumes and “dress up” clothes for dogs, gifts and housewares, including dog-themed art, dishes, blankets, apparel, magnets . . . you name it. Some of it was nice! But there just wasn’t time, and besides, it’s not stuff that you need our help to evaluate.

Anyway, suffice to say, I’m prepared to really boost our offering of product reviews in many, many categories, and I have dozens of cool new products to feature in our annual “Gear of the Year” article in January. If I can wait that long!

NK



MISSION STATEMENT: WDJ’s mission is to provide dog guardians with in-depth information on effective holistic healthcare methods and successful nonviolent training. The methods we discuss will endeavor to do no harm to dogs; we do not advocate perpetrating even minor transgressions in the name of “greater good.” We intend our articles to enable readers to immediately apply training and healthcare techniques to their own dogs with visible and enjoyable success. All topics should contribute to improving the dog’s health and vitality, and deepening the canine/human bond. Above all, we wish to contribute information that will enable consumers to make kind, healthy, and informed decisions about caring for their own dogs.

Tales of the Crypt

Cryptorchidism (undescended testicles) can cause serious health and behavior problems if not detected and treated.

BY STEPHANIE COLMAN

If dogs hung out in locker rooms, swapping stories, I'm pretty sure my Golden Retriever, Saber, would take every opportunity to impress his pals with this gem: "Ya know, when I was younger, my testicles were such a big deal, I had to be neutered TWICE!" The best part? Saber's story is completely true!

When I adopted Saber as a 2-year-old, I was told he was neutered, and he certainly *appeared* to lack testicles. However, a thorough review of his medical records, obtained from his previous owner, revealed that Saber had undergone neutering surgery, but only one testicle was found and removed; he still possessed a single, "hidden" testicle!

Cryptorchidism (from the Greek *crypto*, meaning hidden, and *orkhis* or *orchid*, meaning testicles) is the medical term for the condition that occurs when one or both testicles of a male dog fail to descend into the scrotum. It's not an extremely common condition; various sources offer an incidence of between less than 1 percent and 10 percent.

It's also variable as to whether it affects one testicle or two. When one testicle fails to drop, the condition is described as *unilateral cryptorchidism*; if neither descends, the dog has *bilateral cryptorchidism*. Many people mistakenly refer to unilateral cryptorchidism (which is more common) as being monorchid,

which is incorrect. Monorchidism refers to the complete absence of a second testicle – only one ever developed – and it's so rare, we've yet to find a vet who has ever seen a monorchid dog!

"There's always a second testicle," says Suzi Milder, DVM, of Chatsworth Veterinary Center in Chatsworth, California. It may be difficult to locate, but if the dog is being neutered, Dr. Milder says, "It's the responsibility of veterinarians to find it and remove it." Sometimes, this is quite a challenge, as was the case with Saber. The veterinarian who performed his first

neuter surgery tried, but failed to find Saber's second testicle. Fortunately, this was noted in Saber's medical records, which I received from his previous owner a month or so after I adopted him.

I was lucky to learn about Saber's condition; had he been a previously stray dog without medical records, I wouldn't have known that I needed to schedule a second surgery to complete Saber's neutering. (I'll explain why I went to the considerable trouble to do so in a minute.)

TESTICLE DEVELOPMENT

How does it happen that testicular descent fails to occur in some cases? As the canine fetus develops, the testicles are formed in the abdomen, near the kidneys. Usually, as the puppy grows – initially, in utero, and then, after his birth – his testicles are gradually pulled from the abdomen, through the inguinal canal (a passageway through the abdominal wall), and into the scrotum by the gubernaculum, a ligamentous cord connecting the testes to the scrotum. Typically, the testes pass through the inguinal canal within a week or two after birth, and reach their final scrotal position by 6 to 8 weeks of age.

However, in some cases, the gubernaculum isn't formed properly, or doesn't function properly, and the testicle stays in the abdomen, Dr. Milder explains. "It can be anywhere – up by the kidney,

Before he was re-neutered, Saber was unusually driven by his nose while on walks and while working. Though he had only one hidden testicle, he displayed behaviors typical of normal, intact males, such as urine licking and teeth chattering. His obsession made it difficult to work away from home, where novel dog smells were likely.



in the canal along the pathway, or even in the subcutaneous tissue next to the scrotum.”

The right testicle is retained more often than the left, due to its more forward-starting position in the abdomen. Retained testicles are smaller than scrotal testicles, and abdominally retained testicles are smaller than inguinally retained testicles.

Dr. Milder says it's even possible to have a late bloomer, where one or both testicles don't reach the scrotum until up to six months old. If a testicle hasn't "dropped" into the scrotum by six months of age, Dr. Milder and many of her colleagues say, it most likely won't.

Cryptorchidism is genetic; it's caused by an autosomal recessive gene that can be inherited by offspring. Research shows several breeds commonly known to be affected, including Standard Poodles, Boxers, German Shepherds, Weimaraners, English Bulldogs, Shetland Sheepdogs, and many of the toy breeds, such as Chihuahuas, Miniature Dachshunds, Pomeranians, Miniature Poodles, Maltese, and Yorkshire Terriers.

"There's definitely a higher prevalence of cryptorchidism in small and toy-breed dogs," confirms Brooke Neece, DVM, of Columbus, Ohio. "In larger dogs, there is a higher prevalence in the brachycephalic breeds such as Boxers and English Bulldogs."

FOUL BALLS

Poor Saber. As if one neuter surgery wasn't enough, when I learned he had a retained testicle, I planned a second surgery. Why go to all that trouble? Because cryptorchidism carries significant health risks.

Most seriously, dogs with cryptorchidism can develop torsion, an extremely painful condition where the testicle twists upon itself, inhibiting blood flow. The testicle swells as it becomes engorged with blood. This condition typically presents with abdominal pain and evidence of a firm mass in the stomach. The pain can be so severe it causes the dog to go into shock. Immediate removal of the testicle is

This Chihuahua has one testicle in the proper place (his scrotum) and one testicle that has been retained in the inguinal canal. Surgical removal of his testicals (neuter surgery) will require two incisions, one for each testicle.

required to provide relief.

Dogs with cryptorchidism are also at a higher risk of developing testicular cancer later in life. According to a fact sheet provided by the William R. Pritchard Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital at the University of California, Davis, testicular cancer is the second most common cancer in older male dogs, and the risk among dogs with cryptorchidism increases by about 13 percent. While the incidence of testicular cancer is fairly low in the United States, due to the prevalence of neutering, an Italian study of 232 dogs (post-mortem) showed 27 percent had one or more testicular tumors.

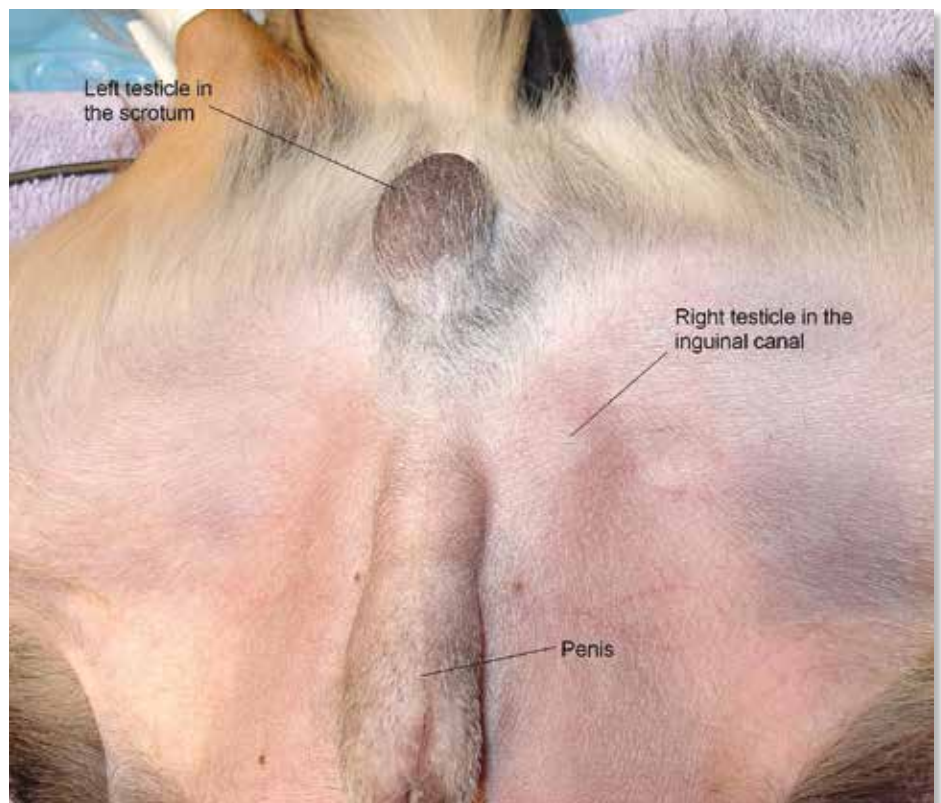
The most common testicular tumors are Sertoli cell tumors, interstitial cell tumors, and seminomas. According to Daniel Denger, DVM, a board-certified veterinary surgeon with Animal Surgical Center in Flint, Michigan, metastasis occurs in about 10 to 20 percent of testicular tumors.

However, even when metastasis has not occurred, Milder says certain tumors can cause plenty of other problems, from mild to life-threatening. For example, Sertoli tumors produce estrogen and similar hormones, which can cause skin and coat problems, and even wipe out a dog's bone marrow. While removal of the testicle or testicles is often curative, as

with many things, an ounce of prevention can be worth a pound of cure.

"In my head, whether the tumor is malignant or benign, it would be much easier to perform major abdominal surgery to remove a retained testicle on a healthy, younger dog, than on a dog who is experiencing health problems because of a tumor," Dr. Milder says. "Waiting can make things a lot more complicated and risky for the patient. It's not a good answer to say, 'I'll wait until he's sick,' because then you're adding a whole new layer of complications."

Dogs with cryptorchidism typically display the same hormonally driven behaviors as dogs with descended testicles. They are often especially interested in intact females, and are capable of impregnating them in some cases. (When testicles remain in the body cavity, the increased temperature negatively impacts sperm viability. Dogs with bilateral cryptorchidism are almost always sterile or infertile, but some dogs who are unilaterally cryptorchid may have viable sperm.) In cases when a dog's neutering history is unknown – even when the dog appears outwardly neutered – and the dog exhibits the libido or other hormonally driven behaviors typical of intact male dogs, the possibility of a remaining, retained testicle should be considered.



© JOEL MILLS, USED THROUGH WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



The author worried that 4-year-old Saber's obsessive sniffing might have become a habit (which can happen in late-neutered dogs), making it less likely to diminish, even after neutering. Fortunately, his obsessive sniffing, licking and chattering ceased immediately after the procedure. Today, Saber easily focuses on training tasks, even in a neighborhood park.

LOOKING FOR A LOST BALL

While most vets feel six months is the age of “last call” for testicular descent, some make a case for watching and waiting much longer. “Classically, by the time a dog reaches six months of age, if he does not have two scrotal testicles, he is considered a cryptorchid . . . but, realistically, with the vast differences in age at puberty between breeds, this is probably not a reasonable expectation,” says Cheryl Lopate, DVM, of Reproductive Revolutions in Aurora, Oregon, a diplomate of the American College of Theriogenologists.

“Based on the average age of puberty for any given breed, one would expect to have both testes in the scrotum within two months of attaining puberty to be considered normal. This means that for large and giant breed dogs, testicular descent may not be complete until well over a year of age. Small- and medium-breed dogs should still be considered cryptorchid if two testes are not in the scrotum by six to eight months of age,” Dr. Lopate says.

In recent decades, veterinarians have typically recommended that male dogs who are not going to be used in a breeding program are neutered around six months of age; this recommendation stems from a desire to prevent unwanted reproduction (population control). But because the condition can be passed down to a dog's offspring, most veterinarians recommend that even purebred dogs with cryptorchidism who were otherwise destined for a breeding career to be neutered. This is partly due to the fact that research suggests dogs

with cryptorchidism are more likely to have other congenital problems as well.

“Because we would like to, ideally, eliminate this negative trait, I recommend neutering between six to 12 months so there's not a chance of an accidental breeding where it's passed on,” Dr. Milder says. “From a responsibility standpoint, the best thing to do is neuter sooner rather than later.”

However, when owners are confident they can prevent accidental breeding, and when they wish to maximize potential health benefits associated with neutering at a slightly older age, some vets are comfortable waiting until as late as four or five years old.

Finding an undescended testicle can be tricky, as it can go off-course at any point along its intended path. Dr. Neece says testicles in the inguinal (groin) area can often be felt with careful palpation. They typically can't be felt in heavier dogs, nor can they be felt when in the abdomen. An ultrasound by a highly skilled technician will sometimes reveal the location, but is not always successful, since retained testis can be tucked away behind other anatomy.

When the retained testicle's location is known, surgical removal is similar to spaying a female, in that an incision is made in the abdomen. If the location is unknown, surgery is exploratory. Some veterinarians, including Dr. Neece, prefer to start near the bladder, by the inguinal ring. “In my experience, I have found more abdominally retained testicles further down in the abdomen,” she says. If a retained testicle cannot be found in the vicinity of the bladder, a second

incision is made higher in the abdomen, closer to the kidneys, where the testicles begin their development.

Beyond the typical risks associated with any surgical event, Dr. Neece says the most likely complications associated with neutering a dog with cryptorchidism are bruising and seromas (swelling caused by temporary fluid build-up at the surgical site). “You often have to dig around a little, in a small area, to find the testicle,” she says.

BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY

Nobody like subjecting her dog to surgery – especially for a second time, as was the case with my dog! And there's always the occasional piece of anecdotal evidence suggesting that dogs with cryptorchidism can live to a ripe old age without surgical intervention or complications. For me, however, the combination of my vet's recommendation to re-neuter Saber by age four, the gnawing fear of cancer, and some unwanted, hormonally driven behavior (insatiable sniffing), solidified my decision to pursue the second surgery – which was successful. (And, I'm pleased to report the excess sniffing stopped almost immediately; I wouldn't have believed it could happen so quickly, had I not witnessed the remarkable change.)

“It's important for dog owners to understand that cryptorchidism is a real and potentially serious issue,” Dr. Neece says. “These dogs should absolutely not be used as breeding dogs. When dealt with at a young age (or, we would add, at an age deemed appropriate for your situation, by your vet), the prognosis is great and there aren't any long-term effects of cryptorchidism.”

Dr. Milder agrees. “I've seen what can happen when cryptorchidism is untreated (torsion, tumors). It's tragic and so preventable. One time is too many for me,” she says. 🐾

Stephanie Colman is a writer and dog trainer in Los Angeles. See “Resources,” page 24, for contact information.

Is Behavior Genetic?

Or is it “all in how you raise them”? Nature vs. nurture and raising a well-adjusted dog.

BY JESSICA HEKMAN, DVM, MS



Dr. Ilana Reisner wanted her new Australian Shepherd puppy, Asher, to have a rock-solid temperament. She knew how tough it is to live with a fearful or aggressive dog because, as a veterinary behaviorist, she works with reactive dogs and their owners for a living. So she did everything that she advises her clients to do: she found a puppy whose parents had lovely personalities and whose breeder provided excellent socialization experiences; she brought the puppy home between eight and ten weeks of age; she continued his socialization herself; and she enrolled him in a well-managed puppy class so that he would have a chance to learn good social skills with puppies his own age.

Given that Dr. Reisner did everything that behavior experts recommend to create a confident, well-socialized puppy, she was surprised when Asher showed anxiety around other dogs in his puppy class – nervousness that only increased as he matured. Then she had some bad luck when, at age four months, Asher was jumped by an out-of-control dog, and it was a really scary experience for him. By the age of eight months, Asher was showing clear signs of fear of other dogs.

Dr. Reisner has continued to work with him over the ensuing years, but he

hasn't improved; she describes him as a whirling dervish when he sees unfamiliar dogs. And yet she did everything she could to avoid this issue. Is it possible that, due to genetics, Asher's behavior problem was inevitable? How much influence did Asher's environment have in the development of his temperament?

PULLING APART THE THREADS OF BEHAVIOR

In the complex interplay between genetics and environment, sometimes genetics takes the upper hand. Researchers have

tested just how far genetic influences on personality can go by breeding animals for particular temperaments and absolutely nothing else.

This sort of study is, by necessity, very long term and therefore fairly rare, but there are two well-known examples in canids. A group in Russia has bred two lines of foxes over three to four decades, selecting one line for fearfulness of and aggression to humans, and the other line for friendliness to humans.

A similar long-term project in the U.S. has resulted in a line of pathologically fearful pointer dogs. In both these cases, the lines of animals breed true, meaning that if a fearful animal is bred to a fearful animal, all of the offspring are fearful without exception, even when raised by a non-fearful non-biological mother.

How relevant are these findings to pet or working dogs? It turns out that personality is influenced by many, many genes, and if you breed for any other

traits in addition to temperament, like looks or performance, then your ability to guarantee particular results in the puppy goes out the window.

In the real world outside the laboratory, genetics rarely confers absolutes; instead, it confers risks. Outside the lab, behavior problems are almost never truly inevitable. They may, however, be extremely high risk.

Which leaves us with what we have: dogs who are bred for many different traits, and as a result produce puppies with personalities mostly similar to their parents', but sometimes quite different. Sometimes the results are wonderful, and sometimes not so much. We can decrease the risk of unwanted traits like fearfulness through careful breeding, but we can never completely weed those traits out.

STUFF HAPPENS

Just as we don't have complete control over the genetic contributions to a dog's personality, we lack complete control over the puppy's environment. By the time the breeder and then the owner are formally socializing a puppy, the little canine brain has already gone through massive amounts of development, and as a result has gone down some roads and abandoned others. The uterus is a rich source of experience for the fetal brain, which is profoundly affected by both reproductive and stress hormones. Early life in the nest with mom and siblings is also chock full of experiences that mold a young mind. The puppy is learning his place in the world and how to interact with other dogs from very early on.

All we can do, then, is do our best. We can provide innumerable positive and varied experiences for puppies to teach them that the world, in all its sometimes unexpected variety, is safe for them.

Just as importantly, we can prioritize giving dogs as solid a genetic background

as possible. Temperament should be the highest priority in breeding, closely followed by physical health. Animals with questionable temperaments should not be allowed to pass on behavioral problems, either through their genes, through stress hormones in the uterus, or through modeling fearful behavior to their puppies in early life. Temperament is more important than preserving stellar conformation or spectacular performance; in fact, in breeds with small gene pools, bringing in genetic diversity from outside the breed is preferable to breeding dogs with questionable temperaments.

So the question "Is this dog's problem genetic?" may not be meaningful, because all behavior problems are caused by genetic risk plus life experiences. However, the question "Can this dog be helped?" absolutely is.

We have powerful tools at our disposal to help dogs live in this complex human

world: thoughtful breeding practices, positive socialization experiences, and loving training and management. These are the tools Dr. Reisner uses with Asher to help him live a comfortable, happy life despite his fears. There's a lot we can do to make good dogs from the raw materials we're given. 🐾

Jessica Hekman, DVM, MS, completed her internship in shelter medicine at the University of Florida's Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program in 2013. She now studies the genetics of dog behavior in Illinois, where she lives with her husband and two dogs. Check out facebook.com/dogzombieblog, where Dr. Hekman posts about dog brains and behavior (and sometimes shelter medicine).

Starting on September 12, Dr. Hekman is teaching a course, "From Domestication to Inbreeding: Population Genetics and Companion Animals." For details, see page 24.

EIGHT STEPS TO A GREATER CHANCE OF A BEHAVIORALLY HEALTHY DOG

Note that you can start this process at any stage of a dog's life! Making positive associations is faster and easier for youngsters than adults, but it's always worth trying to teach new ways of thinking.

1. Choose a puppy from parents with great personalities. (Breeders: Breed only parents with great personalities.)
2. Choose a puppy who got lots of positive, varied experiences before you brought him home.
3. Bring the puppy home around eight to 10 weeks of age.
4. Give the puppy lots of positive, varied experiences.
5. Enroll in a puppy class with a trainer who understands the importance of socialization and uses scientifically supported methods to train.
6. Give your dog lots of exercise, mental stimulation, and positive experiences with other dogs and with people.
7. Take incipient behavior problems seriously and see a professional sooner rather than later.
8. Alternatively, adopt an adult dog who clearly already has a solid temperament.



What Makes You Want to Vomit?

Gastritis (stomach inflammation) can cause acute or chronic vomiting in your dog, and has many causes (fortunately, many treatments, too).

BY CJ PUOTINEN

Oh, that dreadful retching – followed by the up-chucking of anything from green bile to undigested dinners to things we’d rather not think about. How can you tell whether vomiting is serious enough for a vet visit or something you can treat at home? And what makes dogs throw up, anyway?

Vomiting is usually associated with gastritis, which describes inflammation of the stomach lining.

Acute gastritis causes dogs to vomit once or off and on for one or two days. The cause is usually some kind of dietary indiscretion, which includes the ingestion of spoiled food, garbage, cat litter, bones, plants, grass, molds, fungi, toys, socks, underwear, and other questionable items.

Fortunately, most dogs with acute gastritis recover without veterinary treatment. However, continued vomiting can lead to dehydration, depression or lethargy, blood in the vomit or feces, abdominal pain, a loss of appetite, or other complications that require medical attention. A dog who vomits repeatedly or can’t keep even water down should be seen by a veterinarian.

Chronic gastritis describes intermittent vomiting lasting more than one to two weeks. Prescription and over-the-counter drugs, infections, foreign bodies, various canine illnesses, or a prolonged exposure to allergens can be underlying causes. Chronic vomiting interferes with the digestion and absorption of nutrients. Dogs with

this problem can become finicky, have low energy, and develop a dull, dry, poor-quality coat. Chronic gastrointestinal problems are rarely self-correcting, so intermittent vomiting that persists for longer than a couple of weeks should be investigated by your vet to help correct a problem in its early stages.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

When dogs feel nauseated and are about to throw up, they often drool, lick their lips, swallow excessively, and stand head down looking worried. Many dogs look for or turn to their owners when

they’re about to vomit, which can signal alert caregivers to move their pets to a better location! In time you might be able to train your dog to throw up where it does the least damage. Chloe, my Labrador Retriever, occasionally vomits after eating grass, organ meats, or lamb shoulder bones, and she usually races out the dog door in time to reach the back lawn.

If you don’t already keep a health notebook for your dog, start now with basic information. If and when your dog vomits, write down what happened and when, what the dog ate, what came up, how long after eating the vomiting occurred, and what happened next. Include details like the amount of material vomited, the vomit’s consistency (food, liquid, foam, etc.), the vomit’s color, frequency of vomiting (note the date and time), and general observations about your dog’s appetite, attitude, appearance, and general health. Take photos if you can, gross as it may seem.

Should your pet develop chronic gastritis, this record will help your veterinarian make an accurate diagnosis. Should your dog be sensitive to a certain food or treat, your written and visual record will help you discover the connection.



Sometimes dogs can suffer symptoms for weeks before vomiting up something indigestible. Such was the case with the sock eaten by Race the Sheltie (right). Neither X-rays nor ultrasound had been able to detect the cause of his gastritis.



SIMULATION:
NOT THE ACTUAL SOCK ©

VOMITING ON AN EMPTY STOMACH

Some dogs vomit when their stomachs are empty for too long, perhaps because of irritation from the stomach acid that collects there. This is commonly called empty tummy syndrome, or more formally, bilious vomiting syndrome. Affected dogs usually vomit bile and foam in the early morning hours but are otherwise completely normal. Offering a small meal just before bedtime usually solves the problem.

If feeding more frequent meals doesn't help, the cause could be a foreign body, which is the general term for something a dog swallows that can't pass through the digestive system. Anything that stays in the stomach for too long causes irritation and can lead to vomiting, especially when the stomach is otherwise empty.

It's a relief when a dog throws up something he shouldn't have swallowed in the first place and the evidence explains what happened. But sometimes it's a mystery, especially when X-rays and ultrasound exams don't reveal everything in a dog's stomach.

In 2002, Lori Curry of Mc-Gaheysville, Virginia, couldn't figure out why Race, her one-year-old Shetland Sheepdog, threw up every morning at 3 a.m. "He was eating well, looked healthy, and had normal bowel function," she recalls, "but the vomiting went on for more than a month."

In addition to interrupting Curry's sleep, the formerly well-housetrained Race began having accidents in the living room.

For help, Curry turned to a canine nutrition forum, and WDJ contributor Mary Straus replied with ideas about what the problem might be, including swallowing a foreign object.

After an inconclusive ultrasound test, Race was scheduled for an endoscopy, a visual exam of the esophagus and stomach.

"I brought Race in for the appointment," says Curry, "and in the lobby while waiting to be seen, he threw up a very slimy, very old, thin nylon sock!"

Problem solved, Race went back to being housetrained and sleeping through the night.

In 2014, Quiz, a six-year-old Golden Retriever belonging to Clyde Surles of



Quiz vomited any time she hadn't eaten for more than about eight hours, for weeks and weeks, despite negative X-rays and an ultrasound exam and treatment with a number of medicines. Finally, an endoscopic exam was done, which revealed a plastic decoration in her stomach; she had consumed the star along with a cupcake she had stolen nearly three months earlier.

Nashotah, Wisconsin, was treated for hookworms. At about the same time, she had intermittent diarrhea and began vomiting bile on an empty stomach. Prescription drugs can upset a dog's stomach but symptoms like these don't usually last for weeks after a protocol ends.

"The bile vomiting recurred whenever her stomach was empty for eight hours or more," says Surles. "Her appetite remained good and she ate immediately after vomiting. But she was definitely not feeling as well as she normally did, and her coat became dull and dry."

Despite stomach-settling medications, a prescription diet, X-rays, lab tests, and an ultrasound exam, Quiz kept throwing up and no one knew why.

Mary Straus encouraged Surles to schedule an endoscopy, and that exam

revealed an inedible plastic decoration from a cupcake Quiz had swallowed, wrapper and all, nearly three months earlier. It was removed during the endoscopy, and Quiz has been fine ever since. "I've never been so happy and relieved," Surles says.

MAYBE IT'S THE FOOD

Not every food agrees with every dog, and food sensitivities can lead to stomach upsets. Repeated exposure to problematic food leads to chronic inflammation of the stomach and intestinal tract. If you suspect that this might be your dog's problem, try switching to a food with different ingredients, add digestive enzymes to your dog's dinner, give probiotic supplements, and/or experiment with different brands or types of food.

Wheat and other grains along with

Slow-feeding bowls are useful tools that can force a dog who eats too fast to eat more slowly. This is the Rock 'N Bowl from Paw5, our current favorite in slow-feeding bowls. It can ordered directly from Paw5's website (paw5.us) or from Uncommon Goods, (888) 365-0056.



soy and other legumes can contribute to canine indigestion. When comparing labels, look for foods that list animal proteins first. Grain-free and soy-free foods have become popular because many owners and veterinarians report improved digestion and other health benefits in dogs after making the switch.

Transitioning from dry to canned food or to a raw or cooked fresh-food diet or upgrading to improved ingredients may make a difference. Check WDJ's annual ratings of dry and canned foods for recommendations. Feeding a home-prepared diet makes it easy to avoid grains and other ingredients to which your dog may be sensitive. See "You Can Make It" by Mary Straus (WDJ July 2012) for guidelines. If feeding a commercially prepared raw diet, see "Cold, Raw Truth" by Karen Becker, Steve Brown, and Mary Straus (September 2015).

Dry food can trigger vomiting because it absorbs moisture in the stomach, expanding in size and causing regurgitation. Soaking dry food before feeding or mixing dry with canned food may help.

Rotation diets can help identify problem ingredients. In a rotation diet, you feed a different type or family of food every day for four or five days before repeating a food, such as chicken on Monday, beef on Tuesday, lamb on Wednesday, and salmon on Thursday. Monday is the only day for eggs because they come from chickens. Salmon oil can only be given on Thursday. Waiting four or five days before repeating a food is thought to give the body sufficient time to eliminate it so it no longer triggers symptoms.

Because it's practically impossible to perform a good rotation diet test while feeding commercial pet food – there are too many overlapping ingredients – some dog lovers prepare their own simple menus for a month or so. This requires keeping careful track of ingredients and the dog's reactions. Feeding a limited diet for up to a few weeks is safe for adult dogs, though not for growing puppies.

A dietary elimination trial takes a different approach by eliminating every

food ingredient the dog has ever eaten, and replacing them with food ingredients the dog has never experienced. As explained in "Food Elimination Trial: A Valuable Tool (When Done Correctly)" in the April 2011 issue of WDJ, a valid food elimination trial consists of three phases: elimination, challenge, and provocation.

In the first ("elimination") phase, the owner identifies and chooses a single protein source and single carbohydrate source that the dog has never eaten, such as pheasant and barley or rabbit and amaranth. The dog is fed these two ingredients and nothing else – no leftovers, bones, chews, treats, or supplements are allowed. If the dog goes for eight to 12 weeks without vomiting or showing other signs of digestive distress, those two ingredients are probably safe to feed on an ongoing basis. If, however, the dog shows distress, a new trial is begun, using a diet with another novel protein and another novel grain. (If, after these two trials, you still see no improvement, the problem is probably not linked to food allergies.)

Many people stop the experiment once their dogs improve on an elimination diet of the two novel ingredients. But to prove that there were ingredients in the dog's former diet that were causing his symptoms, one should undertake a second ("challenge") phase of the trial. Resume feeding the dog whatever food he used to be fed and watch to see whether the old diet again triggers vomiting or other symptoms within one week.

In the third ("provocation") phase, you would go back to feeding the effective diet (consisting of the novel protein and novel carbohydrate that did not trigger the dog's symptoms) – only now, once

your dog's condition has again stabilized, you'd add a single new ingredient. If the dog develops symptoms, remove that ingredient and try something else. Eventually you'll have a variety of ingredients that agree with your dog, and you'll know which foods trigger problems.

As noted in WDJ's 2011 article, "This is not a fun project. It takes commitment, extraordinary observation, and total control of your dog's environment for weeks on end. However, identification of the ingredients to which your dog is allergic will enable you to simply prevent him from eating those ingredients, and stave off both the uncomfortable symptoms of allergy and the potentially hazardous treatments sometimes required to make him more comfortable."

Whatever you feed, keep your dog's food bowl and water bowl clean. Consider switching from plastic serving bowls to ceramic or stainless steel in case your dog is sensitive to the chemicals in plastic.

TOO MUCH TOO FAST

One common reason for canine vomiting is eating too much or too fast. If your chow hound inhales his dinner, try the following strategies:

- Feed your dog alone rather than with other pets, as the threat of competition can lead to stress and rapid eating.
- Spread food over a cookie sheet, so it takes longer to find and swallow.
- Feed multiple small meals during the day rather than one or two larger ones.
- Place an unopened soup can, smooth

stone, clean brick, or similar heavy object in your dog's bowl along with food, which will slow your dog's eating. Be sure the object is larger than anything your dog can swallow.

- Try a "slow feeder" bowl with raised bumps or dividers that prevent a dog from eating quickly.
- Feed treats in Kong toys, food puzzles, or other devices that prevent immediate swallowing.
- Scatter your dog's food outdoors on the lawn, indoors on an easy-to-clean kitchen floor, or on a "snuffle mat" – a fabric mat with long fibers that hide the kibble and force the dog to sniff out and lick up each piece of kibble individually.
- If you feed raw meaty bones, try teaching your dog to chew (rather than swallow things whole) by holding one end while your dog tackles the other.

WHAT TO DO FOR A VOMITING DOG

If your dog vomits after ingesting or being exposed to something dangerous, time is of the essence, so go at once to a veterinary clinic.

As mentioned, most cases of acute gastritis resolve on their own without medical intervention. Here are nonmedical guidelines for treating acute gastritis in dogs who otherwise appear and act bright, alert, and normal.

- Withhold food for 24 hours, which gives the digestive tract an opportunity to rest.
- Provide small amounts of water every hour or so. If a small amount of water provokes vomiting, seek veterinary treatment.
- After 24 vomit-free hours, feed small amounts of a low-fat food that is easy to digest. Some veterinarians recommend small amounts of a bland diet such as white rice and skinless, boneless chicken.
- After that, resume feeding small meals totaling half of your dog's regular daily diet, divided into four or six servings.

- Over the next two to three days, gradually increase food amounts to normal levels.
- Notify your veterinarian if vomiting resumes.

WHEN TO CALL THE VET

In addition to notifying your veterinarian if your dog continues to vomit, be ready to call for help when:

- The vomiting is severe and comes on suddenly.
- Your dog has a fever or is lethargic or in pain.
- You know or suspect that your dog swallowed a foreign object.
- Your dog has bloody diarrhea.
- There is blood in the vomit or it has an unusual color or consistency (save a sample for your vet).

If medical care is needed, your veterinarian may take an X-ray or do an ultrasound in an effort to discover what your dog might have swallowed. Blood tests may be useful to help rule out other causes such as pancreatitis or acute kidney failure. Surgery may be required to remove an object that blocks the intestines or a large object in the stomach, such as Gorilla Glue, which swells to a large mass after ingestion.

If no cause is discovered, you may need to consult a specialist for an endoscopy, where a tube is inserted through your dog's mouth and esophagus into the stomach. Small objects in the stomach

can be removed with the endoscope. If no obvious cause is found during endoscopy, a biopsy of the stomach lining can be taken to provide additional information.

Your dog might be treated with gastrointestinal protectants such as sucralfate (Carafate), an anti-ulcer medication; with anti-emetic or anti-vomiting medications such as metoclopramide (Reglan or maxolon), H2 (histamine-2) receptor antagonists such as famotidine (Pepcid) or ranitidine (Zantac), which are used to reduce stomach acid; or proton pump inhibitors such as omeprazole (Prilosec or Losec), which are used in cases of severe stomach ulceration.

SHOULD YOU MAKE YOUR DOG THROW UP?

Veterinary exams, lab work, X-rays, ultrasound tests, endoscopies, and surgery are expensive, so we do what we can to avoid them. Still, dogs will be dogs. Let's say you just saw your dog swallow a sock. What should you do?

Several online forums and blogs give detailed directions for making dogs vomit with emetic agents such as hydrogen peroxide or by using other methods. However, inducing vomiting is not always the best option. We recommend consulting your veterinarian or the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) before taking such a step.

Note that some widely recommended methods are potentially harmful. Syrup of ipecac, which for decades was given to pets and people, is no longer considered the standard of medical care because of its toxic effect on the heart and circulatory system and because it tends to result in prolonged vomiting, lethargy, and diarrhea. Sticking your finger down



A dog with chronic gastritis undergoes an abdominal ultrasound. Sometimes, X-rays and an endoscopic exam are needed to diagnose the cause of the dog's discomfort.

a pet's throat to stimulate a gag reflex (called digital vomiting induction) can result in injury to both you and your pet. Soaps, mustard powder, and table salt are not reliable, and their potential toxicity is a concern.

Instead, follow these instructions from the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center. Read through them now so you understand the basic procedure, keep a copy with your dog's health notebook, keep the necessary supplies on hand, and review the instructions again before calling for help.

- Contact your local veterinarian or call the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center at (888) 426-4435 or the Pet Poison Helpline at (855) 764-7661. Both hotlines are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and are available to pet owners at a small charge.
- Be ready to describe your dog's breed, age, approximate weight, any health problems the dog suffers from, what he may have eaten, and when he may have eaten it. If you are instructed to induce vomiting at home, proceed as described below. Otherwise follow the directions given by the veterinarian you have spoken with.
- To induce vomiting, assemble these supplies: a fresh, new, unopened pint or quart of 3-percent hydrogen peroxide, available at any drug store or supermarket; a large syringe (no needle) or turkey baster; a measuring teaspoon; latex or rubber gloves; paper towels; water; cleaning solution; and plastic bags.
- If the dog has not eaten within the last two hours, offer a small meal. This makes it more likely that the dog will vomit, but is not essential if the dog is uninterested in food.
- Measure 1 milliliter (ml) of 3-percent hydrogen peroxide per pound of dog weight, using either the syringe or teaspoon. One teaspoon is approximately 5 ml, so this is about one teaspoon per five pounds of body weight. There are three teaspoons in a

tablespoon, so a 15-pound dog would need one tablespoon. The maximum amount of hydrogen peroxide to give at any one time is 45 ml, (about nine teaspoons, which is three tablespoons) even if a dog weighs over 45 pounds. Squirt the hydrogen peroxide into the back of the dog's mouth using the syringe or turkey baster.

- If vomiting has not occurred within 15 minutes or so, give one more dose of hydrogen peroxide measured as described above. If vomiting still does not occur, call back to your veterinarian or the pet poison control center hotline for instructions. It's important that the hydrogen peroxide not remain in your dog's stomach.
- Once vomiting occurs, collect a sample in a leak-proof container. Bring this to your veterinarian's office for identification, especially if you are unsure of exactly what your dog may have eaten.
- Unless instructed otherwise by your veterinarian or the pet poison control center hotline, immediately take your dog to a veterinary clinic for evaluation.



Of course, if you are concerned, don't wait for a veterinary receptionist to insist that you bring your dog in; they don't know your dog like you do. A case in point is Lori Curry's other Sheltie, Raz, who was famous for eating paper money, a utility glove that he passed whole, and a dryer sheet that made him sick until he vomited it up a week later. When he was 14, Raz grabbed and ate a raw corn cob from the back of a kitchen counter. Curry called an emergency clinic. "They recommended taking a wait-and-see approach," she says.

As the veterinarian predicted, Raz passed *most* of the corn cob safely. But five days later, he suddenly declined, and despite thousands of dollars for surgery and round-the-clock emergency care, he almost died. "Corn cobs are dangerous, and when another time my dogs got into corn cobs, I insisted on inducing vomiting. I don't take a wait-and-see

approach for that problem anymore!" Curry says.

CANINE DISEASES THAT CAN CAUSE GASTRITIS

All kinds of illnesses trigger gastritis, so vomiting is never a defining symptom by itself. Here are several conditions that cause vomiting in dogs.

■ **BLOAT** – Also known as gastric dilation-volvulus or torsion, bloat is a serious condition affecting all types of dogs but especially large breeds with deep chests like Akitas, Great Danes, German Shepherd Dogs, and Doberman Pinschers. Dogs at greatest risk are those who rapidly eat a single large meal once daily – or dogs who break into food supplies and overeat. Gastric distention occurs as the stomach fills, and physical activity shortly after eating can cause the stomach to twist, which closes the esophagus and leaves the dog unable to expel gas or excess food by vomiting or belching. Symptoms include a distended abdomen, pain, drooling, and repeated, unproductive attempts to vomit.

Bloat is a medical emergency of the highest order; immediate veterinary attention is essential.

■ **PARASITES** – Although roundworms tend to cause diarrhea rather than vomiting, if the infection is severe a puppy may vomit live worms. Other parasitic infestations can contribute to gastrointestinal symptoms.

Giardia, an intestinal parasite caused by a single-celled organism, affects an estimated 11 percent of all pets and up to 50 percent of puppies. It is easily transmitted through contaminated food, water, or soil, and through pet-to-pet contact. Giardia infections cause diarrhea and vomiting, although a dog may go without obvious symptoms for long periods. **Coccidia**, another single-celled organism that infects the small intestine, can produce vomiting, watery stools, bloody diarrhea, fever, depression, and life-threatening dehydration.

Multiple fecal parasite and giardia tests may be needed before these causes can be identified or ruled out because "false negative" results can occur for various reasons. Empirical treatment with fenbendazole (Panacur) for giardia and most intestinal worms, or diluted Ponazuril for coccidia, may be tried to see if symptoms improve.

■ **PANCREATITIS** – Inflammation of the pancreas can cause diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and a loss of appetite. Because its symptoms are shared by so many other canine illnesses, pancreatitis can be difficult to diagnose, though there are now blood tests for canine pancreas-specific lipase that are more accurate for diagnosing both acute and chronic pancreatitis. In cases of chronic gastritis, your vet will look for underlying causes, including pancreatitis.

■ **INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE (IBD)** – This is another hard-to-diagnose digestive illness. In IBD, inflammatory cells take over the intestine, leading to scar tissue throughout the digestive system's lining and chronic vomiting, diarrhea, and weight loss.

■ **LIVER DISEASE** – This can trigger the vomiting of bile, which tends to be thin, clear, yellow, or brown and sometimes frothy. The stool can become ribbon-like and have an orange tint. A bile acid test can confirm the diagnosis.

■ **ADDISON'S DISEASE (HYPOADRENOCORTICISM)** – Caused by adrenal insufficiency, Addison's can produce vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, loss of appetite, and general weakness that tends to come and go over time. While Addison's is a treatable condition, an Addisonian crisis in which the patient goes into shock can be fatal. See "The Great Pretender" (WDJ October 2011) for information on Addison's.

■ **PERITONITIS** – This is an umbrella term for any inflammatory or infectious disease of the visceral lining (peritoneum) of the abdomen. It usually involves most of the abdominal organs (liver, stomach, intestines, spleen, kidney, reproductive organs, and bladder). Peritonitis results in the accumulation of fluid within the abdominal cavity. It can be associated with abdominal trauma, abdominal surgery, or pancreatitis. Its symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, fever, loss of appetite, abdominal distention, and abdominal pain.

■ **PYOMETRA** – An infection of the uterus, pyometra is most common in intact females who have never been pregnant. Most are age six or older. The infection occurs after a heat cycle that does not result in pregnancy. Symptoms

can include vomiting, lethargy, depression, fever, lack of appetite, excessive thirst, frequent urination, a distended abdomen (due to the enlarging uterus), vaginal discharge, excessive licking at the area, and weakness in the hind legs. Some spayed females may develop "stump pyometra" from a remnant of the uterus left behind.

■ **HEMORRHAGIC GASTROENTERITIS** – This condition is unusual in dogs, but it can be frightening, expensive, messy, and sometimes fatal. The cause of hemorrhagic gastroenteritis remains unknown, but its symptoms, which can affect any dog at any age, are dramatic – slimy vomit followed by blood in the vomit and bloody diarrhea. If your dog develops these symptoms, seek veterinary treatment at once. See "Bleeding at Both Ends" (WDJ July 2009) for details about identifying and treating hemorrhagic gastroenteritis.

OTHER CAUSES

In addition to illnesses and diseases, there are a number of things that dogs can ingest or be exposed to that can cause acute or chronic gastritis.

■ **ANTIBIOTICS, ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES, CHEMOTHERAPY DRUGS, AND OTHER MEDICATIONS** – All of these can have numerous side effects, including vomiting. The same is true for vitamin D poisoning, which can occur from supplementing too much vitamin D3 (see "D is for Dogs," WDJ July 2016) or from ingesting rodenticides (drugs that kill rats and mice) that contain vitamin D3.

Exposure to chemical irritants can cause vomiting, as can heavy metal poisoning and other chemical exposures. Never induce vomiting when a caustic substance was swallowed. Describe the symptoms to your veterinarian and provide a list of medications and supplements your dog has been taking. In cases of rodenticide poisoning or chemical exposure, contact your vet or the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center at once.

■ **PLANTS, FUNGI, AND BACTERIA** – Dogs are famous for eating grass and throwing up, and most are none the worse for wear. But an alarming number of plants are toxic to dogs. See the ASPCA's list of nearly 500 toxic plants posted at [aspc.org/pet-care/animal-](http://aspc.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/dogs-plant-list)

[poison-control/dogs-plant-list](http://aspc.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/dogs-plant-list).

The most common plants that are problematic for dogs are the autumn crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*), azalea (*Azalea nudiflora*), cyclamen (*Cyclamen spp.*), dumbcane (*Dieffenbachia*), hemlock (*Conium maculatum*, which is a poisonous plant and not related to the coniferous hemlock tree), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), mistletoe (*Viscum album*), oleander (*Nerium oleander*), thorn apple or jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*), yew (*Taxus spp.*), and any mushroom or toadstool that you cannot identify as safe. Avoid planting any of these near where your dog will walk or play.

Pythiosis is an infectious disease caused by a fungus-like organism, *Pythiuminsidiosum*, that inhabits wetlands, ponds, and swamps. Dogs can develop pythiosis after swimming in or ingesting contaminated water, and their key symptom is vomiting. While most cases occur near the Gulf of Mexico, inland dogs have developed it, too. Young male retrievers are especially at risk if they retrieve and then chew on sticks from infected water.

Cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae) are microscopic bacteria found in freshwater lakes, streams, ponds, and brackish water that can cause vomiting in dogs. The bacteria colonize to form "blooms" that give water a blue-green or "pea soup" appearance. Algal concentrations are most abundant during hot summer weather. While most blue-green algae blooms are not toxic, it is impossible to determine the presence of toxins without testing. Therefore, all algae blooms should be considered potentially toxic and avoided because even small exposures, such as a few mouthfuls of algae-contaminated water, can be fatal.

SETTLE, STOMACH!

It's encouraging to know that most dogs who vomit have acute rather than chronic gastritis, that its cause is probably benign, and that most vomiting dogs recover on their own without medical treatment.

But sometimes vomiting is a serious symptom, and it's worth studying its possible causes so that if and when your dog throws up, you'll have a better idea of how to respond in order to keep your best friend healthy. 🐾

CJ Puotinen is author of The Encyclopedia of Natural Pet Care and other books. See page 24 for purchasing information.

No Escape

How to contain dogs who go over, under, around, or through fences.

BY PAT MILLER, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA

Responsible dog owners go to great pains to make sure their canine family members stay safe at home and don't go roaming unescorted around the neighborhood. The risks for a free-roaming dog are legion, including, but not limited to: getting hit by a car, shot by an irate neighbor or a police officer protecting public safety, attacking or being attacked by other animals, being picked up by animal control, or simply vanishing, never to be seen again. Yet some dogs seem hell-bent on escaping – doing everything they can think of to get over, under, around, or through their humans' containment strategies. What do you do when you have a dog who is dedicated to escaping his yard?

REASONS FOR ESCAPING

Before we even address ways to stop your dog from escaping, we need to examine reasons why your dog may be so dedicated to breaking out of your yard. If all we do is to block his exits, he may put all his energy into finding new ways out. If we address his motivation for escaping, he may stop trying, or at least not be as dedicated to overcoming the new obstacles you put in his path.

■ **BOREDOM** – Your dog may be bored. Adding more mental and physical stimulation to his life and his backyard might help him become more content to stay home. Kiddie wading pools offer a huge variety of entertainment options. If your dog loves water, fill the pool with water

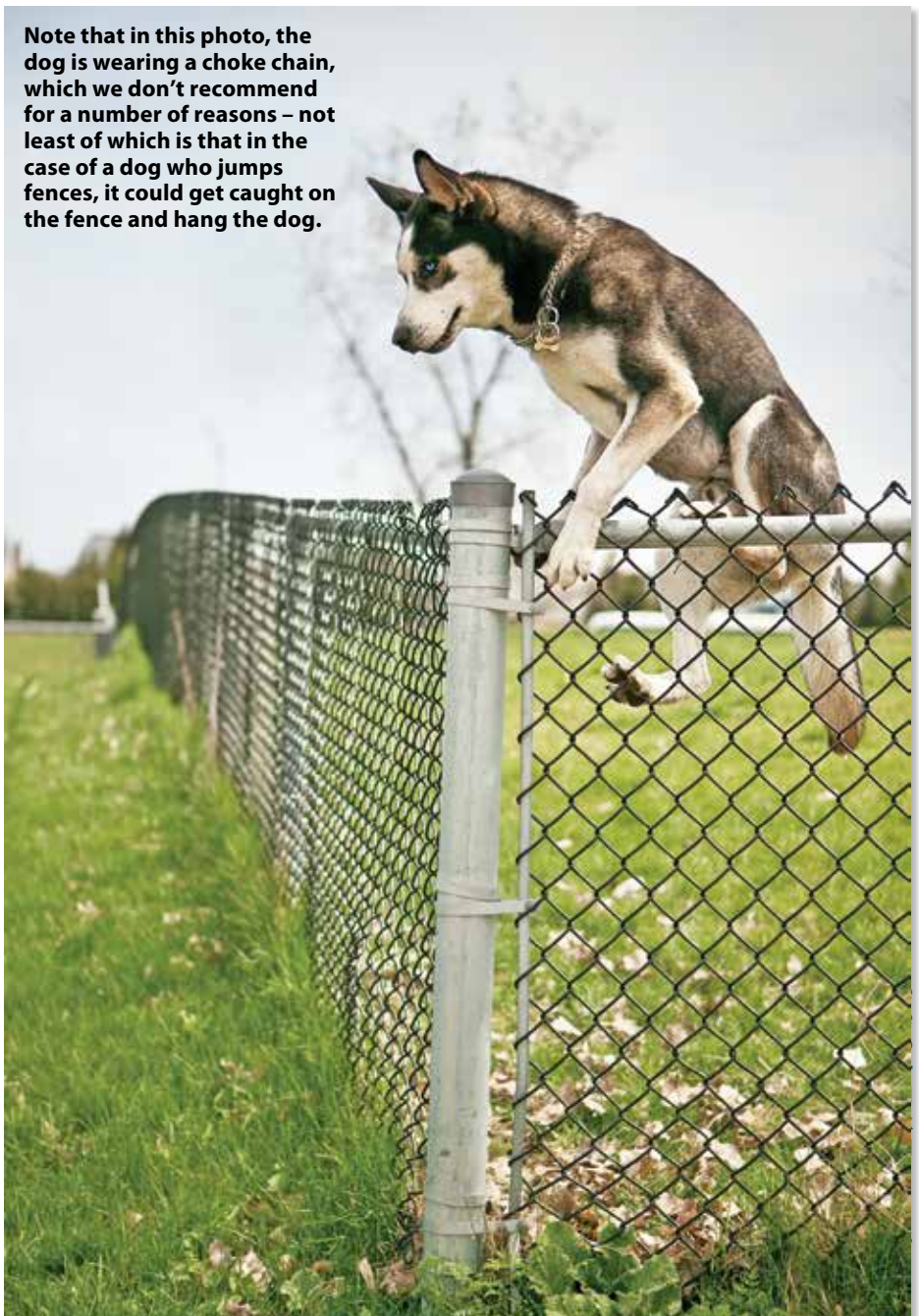
As well-built (and expensive!) as this fence is, it's not tall enough to contain athletic dogs, and, like all wire fences, it does nothing to block a dog's view of everything going by. Dogs who are continually exposed to passersby are more likely to get aroused and try to escape than dogs who can't see through their fences.

for actual wading and splashing fun. For a dog who loves to dig, fill the pool with dirt or sand and bury toys and treats for him to find. If you don't want the mess of dirt or sand, fill the pool with plastic balls of various sizes and let him pounce among the balls looking for his toys and treats. There are now tons of puzzle toys that can keep him engaged in his yard; Kong Wobblers and other Kong treat-dispensing toys are some of my favorites.

By the way, speaking of boredom: your dog should not be left in the yard for long periods of time (long enough to get bored) and should never be left in the backyard all day (while no one is home) or all night (when he could easily be safely and happily indoors with you).

■ **AROUSAL** – Getting stimulated by the sight of exciting things is another

Note that in this photo, the dog is wearing a choke chain, which we don't recommend for a number of reasons – not least of which is that in the case of a dog who jumps fences, it could get caught on the fence and hang the dog.



© FELIX RENAUD | DREAMSTIME.COM

All gates that contain dogs should have a sign on them, asking people to make sure they are closed securely to protect the dogs inside. If kids are in the household, an extra layer of prevention for unlatched gates is advisable.

reason dogs are driven to escape their yards. Chain link and other livestock-wire fences are the scourge of good dog containment. They are certainly easier on the wallet than a privacy fence, but many dogs are compelled to escape when they are constantly overstimulated and frustrated by seeing a parade of dogs, humans, cars, trucks, motorcycles, skateboarders, bicyclists, mail carriers, and more passing by their yards. The added danger here is that an aroused, frustrated dog who escapes is likely to be aggressive when he finally has access to his targets.

If you can't install a privacy fence, consider attaching something solid to your wire or chain-link fence so your dog can no longer see through it.

■ **SEX** – With the current trend to wait longer to sterilize (not a trend I necessarily support, but that's another article), there are more dogs, especially intact male dogs, who are very motivated to escape to court the neighborhood female in season. The obvious solution here: neuter.

■ **ANXIETY** – This category brings up a whole different class of behavior challenges. Dogs who suffer separation or isolation anxiety or thunder phobia are driven to escape by their panic. Because severely stressed dogs can become destructive, owners sometimes leave these dogs *outdoors* to avoid damage to their homes. This is not an acceptable solution, as the panicked dog who escapes is even more likely to run in front of moving vehicles, bite someone who tries to help him, and/or run fast and far away, decreasing chances that he will be found and returned home.

You must treat the anxiety, often with medication as well as behavior modification protocols, and never leave these dogs alone outdoors. (See “Scared to be Home Alone,” July 2008.)

■ **FUN** – Finally, with a history of reinforcement for escaping, your dog may simply have learned that it's great fun to run loose, loot garbage cans, chase cats and other small animals, play



with the neighbor kid, read pee-mail without interruption, romp with other neighborhood dogs, and engage in lots of other forms of canine mischief. Make it more fun for your dog to stay home, and keep on reading for thoughts on how to make it more difficult for your dog to breach your fence. (Note that I didn't say impossible . . .)

MANAGEMENT

Now that you understand some of the possible motivations for your dog's obsession with escape, let's talk about an overall management strategy.

First things first: If he escapes when you leave him in the yard on his own, don't. You must always be with him in the yard, whether it's a brief potty break or an extended “enjoy the sunshine” session. If he *can* escape, even if he doesn't do it every time, he simply can't be trusted by himself. *Ever*.

If he escapes even when you're watching him, ignoring your calls to come back as he scrambles over or squeezes under, then he only goes out in the yard on a leash or a long line. Every. Single. Time. Remember, every time he gets loose and has fun chasing cats around the neighborhood, visiting his pals and getting into garbage cans, he has been reinforced for escaping, making it more than likely he will try that much harder to escape the next time.

You also need to make sure everyone in the household is on board with your management plan. It does no good for you to implement scrupulous management if your dear spouse or offspring blithely open the back door and turn Houdini loose to escape one more time.

Another important piece of management is teaching a fail-safe recall so if and when he *does* get out, you can get

him back easily without reinforcing his “Catch Me If You Can” game of keep-away. (See “Rocket Recalls, September 2012.) When you do get him back, make sure to do something delightfully fun with him so coming back to you doesn't mean the fun is over. Then start improving your fence so he can't escape.

DOGS WHO GO OVER

Some dogs are aerial artists, sailing over or scaling barriers with the greatest of ease. Although not exclusively, these tend to be the athletic herding, sporting, and working dogs, as well as the lean and lithe sighthounds – although some of those little terriers can surprise you with their physical abilities. If your dog is going over your fence, you're most likely to succeed if you make the fence significantly higher. If you raise it by six-inch increments, you are simply training him to jump or climb higher and higher a small step at a time. Raise your four-foot fence to six feet in one fell swoop (assuming your local ordinances allow a six-foot fence) for the best shot at stopping your escape artist in his tracks. (Note: Also make sure there are no handy “launching pads” near the fence – a dog house, a firewood box, your child's trampoline; even a tree can give your dog a head start over your fence.)

Some American Ninja Warrior dogs find it a simple matter to scale or sail over almost any fence, regardless of height. You can install the canine equivalent of the “warped wall” by adding an extension to your fence that angles inward at the top. This makes it much harder for your dog to judge the fence height, and ensures he can't grab the top and pull himself over. The longer the inward extension, the harder it is for your dog to navigate a jump or climb.



Pat Miller's Kelpie, Kai, poses next to some fence repairs he facilitated. Checking all of your fences when you get a new dog is advisable; dogs you've owned a while often don't challenge the status quo.

If you know he is climbing rather than sailing over, consider the “Coyote Roller,” either the commercially available product (coyoteroller.com) or a do-it-yourself project, suspending PVC pipe on a wire at the top of your fence. Originally designed to keep coyotes out, it can be just as effective at keeping your dog in your yard. When he scales the fence and tries to grab the top to pull himself over, the pipe rolls, he can't get a grip, and he drops back inside his yard.

Another tactic that works for some for jumpers (but not all) is to plant shrubbery inside the fence line at his take-off point, so his flight path is interrupted. Of course, bushes take time to grow, so this would be a longer-term solution.

DOGS WHO GO UNDER

Some dogs are masters at burrowing under fences. While no particular type of dog has a patent on digging, terriers and scent hounds do logically seem to excel in this behavior, given what they were bred to do. A quick fix for the groundhog dog might be to set heavy cement blocks (as in “so heavy you can barely lift them”) all along the inside perimeter of the fence. This might stop some of the more faint-hearted diggers, but chances are it may only stall your dedicated digging dog while you plan and implement the more work-intensive project of burying wire 12 inches deep along the bottom of your fence, setting the cement block into the hole and covering it with dirt.

If you're just putting up a new fence, be sure to bury it six to 12 inches into the ground to save later headache. If you want to go the landscaping route, try planting

something with thorns along the inside of the fence.

DOGS WHO GO AROUND

Beware the door dashers and gate crashers! Gate crashers are close kin to door darters, but perform their escape maneuvers from within the yard rather than the house, charging through the gate as soon as it is opened a crack by some unwary human. There doesn't seem to be any particular type of dog that favors this behavior; any sufficiently motivated dog can learn the dash-and-run routine.

It's not always the dog who is at fault; those most often guilty of aiding and abetting gate crashers include children, meter readers, visitors to your home, and other adults who aren't fully committed to keeping your dog in his yard.

The best way to foil a gate crasher is to install a double-gate system like those used at many dog parks. This handily keeps the dog away from the gate to the outer world while the human enters the yard, secures the first gate behind herself, and then opens the gate into the dog's inner yard. Other than that, your best option is to padlock all your gates and only enter the yard through the house.

Of course, you can teach your dog a solid “Wait” cue, and use it every time a gate is opened. But then you are relying on children, meter readers, visitors and non-committed adults to remember to use the “Wait” cue when they go in and out the gates. So, even better, teach your dog that the opening gate is the cue to “Wait” until he is invited out. While you're working on that, though, better install those padlocks!

DOGS WHO GO THROUGH

Then there are those dogs who just blast their way through a fence. Big, strong dogs (Rotties, Pitties, etc.) have the best shot at this escape technique, although if the fence is weak enough, smaller dogs can do it, too. Most fences seem to have boards nailed on the outside – probably for aesthetic reasons – so if nails are loose or boards are starting to rot around nail holes, a good shove from the inside can push them off.

To foil these escapees, either repair your fence so boards are solidly nailed on, or nail a solid barrier on the inside of the fence. If you are putting up a new fence, try nailing boards on the inside instead of the outside, or installing pre-built panels so boards are on the inside. Thorny landscaping might also help you here, but, again, plants take time to grow.

A STAY AT HOME KAI

Last year we adopted a year-old Australian Kelpie we named Kai. We knew our four-foot, somewhat dilapidated fence might not be adequate to contain this energetic, athletic dog. Fingers crossed, we let him into the backyard with our older dogs.

All was well for several days. Then, one morning as I was feeding chickens in the lower barn, I heard a ka-thump from the backyard. Next thing I knew Kai had joined me at the chicken coop. Clearly, he had found a way out. I prayed that he had gone through, not over. Tightening up our boards would be a much easier (and cheaper) fix than raising the fence or installing a new one.

I reported the news to my husband, Paul, also known as our farm handyman. Upon inspecting the fence, he found the loose board, and spent the afternoon re-placing and re-fastening any boards that were the least bit suspect. Kai hasn't escaped since. Phew!

May your own escapee fixes be as simple – or at least as successful! 🐾

Book author and trainer Pat Miller, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, is WDJ's Training Editor. She and her husband Paul live in Fairplay, Maryland, site of her Peaceable Paws training center. See page 24 for contact information.

WHY WE DON'T RECOMMEND SHOCK FENCES

The industry calls them underground containment systems. The public tends to call them by the most commonly known brand name – “Invisible Fence.” I unfailingly call it a “Stupid Underground Shock Fence” (SUSF). Because that’s what it is.

Sadly, SUSFs are popular for several reasons:

- ✗ They are less expensive than a physical fence, easier and faster to install.
- ✗ Many homeowners associations prohibit physical fences (don’t even get me started . . .).
- ✗ SUSF companies, other shock-collar companies, and trainers who use shock tools, have done a very good job of convincing many dog owners that these tools are effective and harmless, using deceptive terms such as “stim,” “tickle,” “e-touch,” and “electronic” to disguise the true nature of the shock. Incredibly, some even claim that they are using positive reinforcement when they use shock.

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

SUSFs are, after all, legal to sell. They can’t possibly be that bad, can they? Yes, they can. Here are some of the bad things that can happen if you use a SUSF. I have seen the fallout firsthand and heard credible reports time and time again:

- ✓ Some dogs become very aggressive, associating the shock with whatever was passing by at the time: another dog, a skateboarder, a child . . . I had a lovely Golden Retriever client who was ultimately euthanized as a dangerous dog because of this. Even after the SUSF representative came out and “retrained” her by putting a second shock collar around her groin to keep her in the yard, this previously aggression-free dog continued to run through the fence and attack dogs and humans passing by. Her aggression generalized to other non-fence situations, and her owners ultimately decided they could no longer trust her.
- ✓ Some dogs are so traumatized by the shock that they are terrified to step foot into their own yards.
- ✓ Some dogs are so traumatized by the warning beep associated with the shock that other, similar beeps – such as the beep of a camera,

microwave oven, smoke alarm, electronic watch alarm – will send them into a total panic. I had a Greyhound client who was misdiagnosed with separation anxiety for this reason.

- ✓ A SUSF doesn’t protect your dog from intruders (other dogs, humans) and hence puts her at risk from them (maybe an aggressive stray dog, a rabid fox who wanders into your yard, or a human with evil intentions), and puts innocent intruders at risk (a child, perhaps) especially if your dog has become aggressive due to the shock association.
- ✓ Some dogs learn how to run through the fence. Some ignore the shock in a moment of high arousal over a passing dog, car, human, or other exciting stimulus. Some will deliberately accept the shock as the price they pay for their freedom. Still others learn to stand in the beep zone until the collar battery dies from the constant beeping and the dog crosses the fence line shock-free.

POSITIVELY NOT

Despite what those who market them might try to have you believe, there is nothing positive about an SUSF. Certainly they do work to keep many dogs contained in their yards, but at a high price. Shock is a very strong aversive. That’s not even open to debate. Even if you’re convinced you’d like to try one (shame!), you won’t know until it’s too late if your dog is one of the many who suffers one or more of the above-listed problems. The potential damage to a dog’s emotional health and physical safety should put these products in the “Never, Ever” category for any caring dog owner.



Most dogs learn to associate the boundary lines of their underground shock fences with getting “zapped.” Unfortunately, this makes many of them associate whatever they saw that drew them toward the boundary – other dogs, kids riding bikes, elderly pedestrians, etc. – with the unpleasant shock. It shouldn’t come as a surprise, then, when they begin to show anxiety or aggression in the presence of these stimuli (whether or not they are near the boundary, and whether or not they are wearing “that” collar).

A New Great Bait Bag

Too late to be included in last month's review, we found a pouch that tops our list of favorites.

BY NANCY KERNS

Ihaaaate it when this happens: We review a category of products, and then, after the issue comes out, a brand-new contender in the same product category comes out, and it is even *better* than our top pick in the review that the ink is still drying on. Argh!

That's exactly what happened this month with the Ollydog Treat Bag Pro, a product with one very significant improvement on both Ollydog's older and smaller bag (the Treat Bag Plus) as well as every other treat pouch on the market: A belt that threads through the fabric of the pouch itself, rather than just the plastic

clip that is riveted to the bag. On most bags, if the plastic clip on the back of the bag breaks (or breaks off the bag), the bag is rendered useless. On Ollydog's Treat Bag Pro, even if the plastic clip broke (and it's less likely that this could even happen, because of the way the clip on this bag is riveted inside the bag), the belt would still work fine. Genius lies in small details!

This bag is also big enough to hold enough treats for more than one dog on a long hike, making it ideal for both professional trainers or people walking with several dogs. And yet, it's not as unwieldy or as heavy as the next-deepest bag we reviewed (Doggone Good's Rapid Rewards Pouch). Also, the magnet that closes this main pouch is strong enough to prevent the treats from bouncing out of the bag, even if you run while wearing it – or to prevent a naughty dog schnozz from



Detail of the back of the Ollydog Treat Bag Pro: This is the only bag we've seen with the attachment that is this secure.

snuffling its way into the bag, helping himself to treats – but is not so strong as to necessitate the use of two hands in order to get to the treats. Perfect!

In addition, the front pocket is large enough to hold a tennis ball, and the hidden, zippered pocket in the back is large enough to hold a large cell phone. The side mesh pockets on Doggone Good's bag are too small to hold anything but a clicker or a waste bag or two; just as a test, I jammed my large (Samsung Galaxy S5) phone in the pocket of the Ollydog Treat Bag Pro to see if it could fit; it did, rather snugly, but quite securely!

At \$25, this product is priced among the most expensive in the category, but given its thoughtful features and fine construction, it should last for years.

OLLYDOG'S OTHER POUCH

Ollydog's smaller bait bag, the Treat Bag Plus (\$17), is very similar to a product that tied for third place in our review last month, the EzyDog Snak Pak Treat Bag. However, both of these products would have been bumped down a notch in our review – tied for fourth – had we included the Ollydog Treat Bag Pro from the get-go. If you wanted a smaller bag with just one compartment, you might still consider it. As for me, now that I have the "Pro" model, I'm not looking back. 🐾



RANK	PRODUCT, PRICE, CONTACT INFO	FEATURES
1	OllyDog Treat Bag Pro \$25; (800) 655-9364; ollydog.com	Magnetic closure. Fastens with belt (maximum 45 inches) or plastic belt clip. Belt has best tactic for attaching the bag to the belt of all bait bags we've seen. Main pocket is roomy and deeper than most. Second zippered pocket on back of bag is large enough for a large cell phone. Mesh pockets on sides of bags are large enough to hold clickers, keys, or waste bags; elastic straps at the top of these pockets don't close the pockets, but provide enough security for most items. Front pocket has hook-and-loop closure and easy-open tab. About 8 by 8 inches. Comes in two solid colors and three colored patterns.

Unique Cues

Readers tell us about interesting and useful behaviors that they taught their dogs – or behaviors that their dogs taught them!

BY PAT MILLER, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA

In the June 2016 issue, I shared descriptions of some unique and useful behaviors that some of my trainer friends had taught their dogs – mostly by noticing, capturing, and reinforcing behaviors that their dogs had started doing on their own. They had taught their dogs to do things such as guiding them to hidden poop in the yard (at pick-up time), to drop “inside toys” inside the threshold (before going outdoors) and drop dirty “outside toys” outside the door (before going in the house), to come and sit to “take a pill” at medication time, and to stand in a certain spot and pose to have the dog’s hind end cleaned (for a dog with chronic diarrhea). At the conclusion of that article, I challenged our readers to share some of the neat, cute, or helpful behaviors and cues they had taught their dogs – or that, more precisely, their dogs had learned on their own through association!

I have to say, I didn’t expect many. As a prize for one randomly selected response, I offered something small – a copy of one of my training books. I certainly didn’t expect *hundreds* of submissions, but that’s exactly what we received! Wow! Thank you! And *great job* to all of you amateur and professional dog trainers! Developing these skills in our dogs takes – first and foremost – an owner who is interacting with her dog and *paying attention* to what the dog “says” in the conversation. That’s the very foundation of a good relationship between two individuals of any species!

The following are some of my favorite submissions from among the hundreds that WDJ subscribers sent in – including one selected at random to win one of my books! We had to make a random selection; there were too many great submissions to choose “the best” one!

■ TAKE A BREAK

I loved the article on “Unconventional or Unintentional Cues” in the June issue. I especially liked the idea of teaching dogs to “find the poop” – brilliant!

I talk to my dogs all the time, explain-

ing what we are doing, naming objects, actions, places, etc. Dogs can learn so much and I think it enriches their lives to keep learning new things. I have used various unconventional cues over the years. Here are a few of them:

One cue was for a ball-crazy Boston Terrier who is no longer with us. Peaches loved playing with her basketball so much that I had to teach her to “take a break” so she didn’t become exhausted and overheated. At first I had to take the ball away and put it out of reach, giving it back once she had rested and cooled down. Eventually all I had to do was say, “Take a break!” and she would stop, look longingly at the ball, then come in for a rest, knowing the ball would be there when she went out to play again later.

I walk my Sheltie-mix on a country road that is generally quiet, with little traffic. It is narrow, curvy, and has only a very narrow shoulder between pavement and ditch. For much of the walk I let Sasha range on a long leash ahead of me, sniffing as we go. She now knows when I say, “Car!” to move over into

the ditch and wait for the car to pass. Often she will move over as soon as she hears a vehicle coming before I even have a chance to give the cue.

Sasha likes to lie out on the back deck. Often, when I open the door and say, “Come on in!” she will duck her head and look hopeful that maybe I will let her stay out awhile longer. If I am not in a hurry for her to come in I will say, “Okay, you can stay out,” and she relaxes. But if I say, “Not optional!” she knows that she has to come in. – *Pam Kutscher, Falmouth, KY*

■ SNOOZE BUTTON

Here is one of the accidental but useful cues I’ve taught my 13-year-old miniature Dachshund. Chile has an internal alarm clock that she generously uses to tell me when it’s time to get up (and feed her). But every good alarm clock also needs a snooze button!

Chile sleeps in her own orthopedic bed on the floor by our bed. Every morning she comes to my side of the bed; for some reason, she thinks my husband deserves to sleep in more than I do! She puts her paws up and whines until I lean over and pet her. Since I’m often not ready to get out of bed yet, I started petting her and then saying, “I want to snooze!” I didn’t want to use “back to bed,” because that is a trained cue I use at other times, and she often gets a food reward for that behavior. She quickly figured out that after I said “snooze” she would get no further attention until I got out of bed, so she would go curl up in her blanket. This bought me an extra 10 to 20 minutes of time before I had to get out of bed.

Now that she understands that “snooze” means she’s done her job by waking me up, she goes back to her bed and takes a little nap until I’m ready to get the day started and, of course, feed her! – *Tina Flores, KPA-CTP, CSAT, Doggy Einsteins Training, San Diego, CA*



■ SPECIAL DELIVERY

My German Shepherd, Eli, started to grab at the mail when I went to the mailbox, so I would hand him a piece of junk mail to carry. At first he would want to rip it up, so I would take it away and he did not get a reward. When he carried it in the house without ripping it, he got jackpot rewards.

He also started to want to carry deliveries from UPS. If he can fit it in his mouth, he can carry it: boxes, grocery bags, mail, etc. When he does a good job, he gets his jackpot reward.

For Eli, this is all self-taught; I just captured it and rewarded it. Plastic grocery bags are still a challenge since his teeth punch holes and then the bags tear, so I don't let him carry bags with anything soft or fragile. But I always know when the mail or UPS guy comes!
– Jill Pinder

■ DANCING WITH FRIENDS

The article made me think of my much-loved yellow Labrador, Sonny, now departed for many years. He was a young dog when the television series “Friends” was popular, and we were regular viewers. Every Thursday, at 8 p.m., we were in front of the television (prior to the DVR days!). When the peppy theme song came on, Sonny and I would jump up from the couch and dance around the living room. It didn't take too long before Sonny recognized the theme song himself, and he would jump up and give me that “Are we going to dance?” look.

As he got older, and the series went into reruns, we watched the reruns, and he always looked at me with that sparkle in his eye when the theme song came on, even if we didn't dance so much because of his arthritis. Makes me happy and sad at the same time now. Sonny passed many years ago, but whenever I hear that theme song now, it still brings the sweet memory and a smile to my face. – Rhonda Klick

■ REACHING OUT

My Lab-mix loves to play fetch. She's so great at chasing a tennis ball anywhere. She will always come running back with it and kind of toss it back at me to throw again.

If we're playing in the backyard and I'm sitting down and she tosses it out of reach, instead of getting up from my chair and getting the ball I simply say, “Can't

CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

We neglected to acknowledge that we got the idea for the “unconventional or unintentional cues” article from a letter from a WDJ subscriber, Sonja Williams of Cottage Grove, Oregon! She described some interesting behaviors she taught her Australian Cattle Dogs, including Pumba, Savannah, and Roy. Sonja hikes with her dogs a lot, often in unfamiliar terrain. Capitalizing on her dogs' excellent sense of smell and navigation, she has taught them to lead her way back to their car, in case she gets disoriented.



Savannah, Sonja, Pumba

Sonja says, “When out hiking I found it was important for the furkids to know just what ‘Find the car’ meant. However, if used far from home in rough country, it can get you in trouble, as my gang would always head for the Jeep ‘as the crow flies’ – not a good thing when deadfalls, steep ravines, rough brush, and brambles can be encountered! I learned through trial and error to teach my furkids ‘Go back!’ Now they would backtrack until I recognize where we left the main trail, or all the way to the car!”

“I would like to see people teach these skills to their dogs. Four or five months ago, some people were out in our area fishing along the river and they lost their dog. They drove home without her. She was found again a week later by hikers, but I think if she would have been taught to ‘find the car,’ she would have been found waiting for her people right there!”



Pumba, Savannah, and Roy

After reading Sonja's letter, we thought we would ask trainers for their ideas on interesting or unusual cues and behaviors – and forgot to credit Sonja! Thanks, so much, Sonja, for the great idea. It really struck a chord with WDJ readers!

reach it.” She has learned that means I can't reach the ball to throw it to her again. When I say, “Can't reach it,” she will go and get the ball and drop it right at my feet so that I can reach it and throw it for her again.

When people see us do this, they all think it's the craziest, coolest thing! I didn't actually train her to do it, but, boy does it come in handy! – Debbi Merrill and Gumbo, Bartlett, IL

■ THE UNDRRESSER

Apache, my soon-to-be 13-year-old Sheltie, takes my socks off for me at night. When he was younger he liked to chew on socks. So I simply held my foot out for him to pull the sock off before he could chew it. Then I would have to “buy” the sock back with treats. Otherwise he would keep and chew on it. In all the years that he's been doing this, he's never

hurt my foot or toes at all. Sometimes if the sock is a little damp he has to work at getting it off, but he is very gentle doing it.

I'm trying to get him to teach my 14-month-old puppy, Scout, how to take the socks off, but Scout isn't sure he wants to take over as the official “sock remover.”
– Ruth Ann Furze, Kansas City, MO

■ ALTERNATE DIRECTIONS

Like some other readers, I inadvertently taught my Papillon boy, Remy, “Inside/Outside” going to and from our backyard for potty breaks. Last week Remy shot past me out the front door straight for the street. His recall (which is “Here!”) isn't rock-solid yet, so I faked a cheerful “Inside!” Fortunately, this turned him around and got him back indoors safe and sound.

While learning his “Inside/Outside” cues, Remy learned “Behind,” too. That's

what I say when he looks behind him and finds the treats I've tossed that fall short instead of out in front of him.

Remy will also "Spin" on cue, which is not only cute but useful for drying his feet on the patio rug coming in from a rainy bathroom break. Spinning is one of Remy's natural expressions of exuberance, so I didn't have to wait long to capture this behavior and put a cue on it! – *Anu Roots, Dog mom to Remy*

■ DON'T STOP NOW!

My dog, Phoenix, always drops his ball at our feet for us to pick up to throw for him to play fetch. After a back injury, I was unable to bend over to pick up the ball. I would say, "Sorry Buddy, but I can't reach it." He eventually realized that if he would pick it up and put it in my hand, then I would throw it.

Even though my back has long since been better, I continue to say "I can't reach it!" (just because I'm too lazy to bend over to pick it up). He will then pick the ball up from the ground at my feet, and place it into my hand. – *Sarah*

■ MAKING DAD LOOK GOOD

I don't know if it was inadvertent conditioning or just that she had a *sublime* command of English, but my girl, Boo, learned the phrase "Put her in her kennel, please." If I asked my husband to do that, she would quietly get off the sofa and go stand in her kennel until my husband came to close the crate door.

Since this was not something she ever got reinforced for doing in conjunction with that phrase, I'm not sure why she was willing to go, but she was! – *Always Training*

■ SENIOR SAFETY PATROL

Sadie is my older Cocker Spaniel; based on the shelter's guess, she's 16 years old, plus or minus two years, and her eyesight and hearing are failing. Her best buddy is my Ozzie, an 8-year-old Spaniel-mix. When Sadie is laying down resting or circling around at the park to make sure where we are (I'm never far away), I tell Ozzie to "Go get Sadie." He runs to where she is and punts her in the muzzle and they both come back to me for a treat.

This is really handy, especially when we need to leave and she's snoozing on

the lawn or getting distracted on which way to go. The other people at the park enjoy it, too.

Ozzie will also "Go get Sadie" at home from her hide-away resting spots when it's time for a meal, go in the car, or just to find her. Oz really takes care of his older "little" sister. – *Sharon*

■ LEARNING FIGHTS FEARS

We greatly enjoyed the June article about inadvertently teaching your dog something useful. Here is our story, with one unintentional behavior taught, and one unconventional solution to nip a problem in the bud.

The behavior that we unintentionally taught our dog, Leah, was to go out to the back porch when the (front) doorbell rings. Our last two dogs (one of whom is 11-year-old Leah) always exhibited high arousal when our front doorbell was rung, with loud barking and charging around the house. Since usually the doorbell represented the arrival of an uninvited stranger or someone coming to perform work, the dogs were not allowed to go to the door; instead, we would first shoo them out to the back porch.

After our older dog passed away, we started to try desensitizing Leah to the doorbell sound and training her to remain in place for rewards when the bell was rung. That training got sidetracked by some other events, including health problems. Fast forward to a few months ago when the front doorbell rang, and Leah started barking as usual but went straight for the back porch door. At that point I realized that we had actually trained her to think, "That sounds means I should go out on the porch and mind my own business; I don't need to be involved with the activity out front."

This is a better solution for Leah behaviorally, since she is not good at greeting people and is wary of strangers. I plan to try to reinforce the response by having treats near the back porch door so I can throw some out there as she goes out. She's highly food-motivated so this would be meaningful to her.

Which leads us to our next trick! The unconventional behavior we taught her was to expect treats from the bedroom closet. Leah sleeps in our bedroom in a small ex-pen. The master bedroom has a closet with sliding doors on wheeled tracks. A month or so ago, she reacted

fearfully to the rumbling sound of the closet door opening after she had been confined in her pen for the night. She is sound sensitive and afraid of thunder, gunfire, etc., but this sound had never appeared to bother her before. We had to come up with a solution to reverse this.

We started with treats dropped on the floor near the closet, then inside it; at first, she was a bit hesitant about retrieving them – but not scared enough to shy away. We stored a small container of treats in the closet, and made sure she saw that the treats came from this container and that it was put away there after she had a few. Then we started giving her a treat any time she was within earshot of the closet and we opened the door, to associate the sound with a treat.

Almost needless to say, she now comes to the closet for a treat when she hears the door open. If the door is already open and she shows up in the bedroom, she goes to the closet to see if there are treats on the floor. No more scary closet; now it's a pantry! – *Marlys Ray*

■ OUR WINNER: ABSOLUTELY AWESOME

I had to laugh when I saw the title "Fun and Useful Unconventional Cues and Behaviors." Our Shepherd-mix, Captain Awesome, picked up two that are quite interesting.

First was something that we called "beating up the bed." Whenever Captain was excited about something, he'd go into bow position and beat up whatever was underneath him – he'd dig and scratch and scrunch up a bed, rug, or blanket. Unintentionally, we said every time, "Captain, you're beating up the bed!" One day, I said, "Hey, Captain, beat up the bed!" – and he did!

The second one was "Wanna Greenie?"

When Captain was a puppy, he loved Greenies.

We'd always ask if he wanted one. We kept the wrapped ones

in a basket, and whenever we said, "Wanna Greenie?" we'd go grab one from the basket. One day, I asked Captain, "Wanna Greenie?" and he went to the basket, grabbed one himself, and brought it to me. What a good boy! – *Jennifer O'Neil Cote*



■ OFF LIMITS

Buddy, my Golden/Lab/Collie-mix, wouldn't stop digging up my flower bed around the corner of the house. While I sat on the patio, enjoying reading my Whole Dog Journal, Buddy would dig up the soil. Every time I removed Buddy from the flower bed, I would tell him, "Off limits to you!" and take him away from the area to a grassy spot that he likes.

One day, too lazy to get up, I simply called his name and said, "That is off limits to you." He looked at me for a moment and then walked away to the grassy spot. Curious, I started using "off limits" when I didn't want him somewhere. Now he turns around and goes to a spot that knows is "on limits" for him. Truly, one of the easiest commands he has mastered, probably because he doesn't associate it with anything from obedience classes! – *Karen Wentzel*

■ BEFORE CELL PHONES

As a 10-year-old with *no* knowledge of learning theory, I inadvertently taught my dog to go find another family member. Growing up, we had a 55-acre weekend farm. Our German Shepherd, Spur, always went with us. Our family was often scattered in various locations around the farm. There were occasions when Spur would follow me down to the boat dock, but I would not want her to get caught in fishing lures and hooks, so I would shout out to my parents to call Spur. They would call her and she would go to them.

It didn't take her long to figure out that "Call Spur!" was the cue to go to the distant family member, without them ever calling her. This became a useful behavior in the pre-cell phone world!

Spur became a great courier. For example, Mom would place a note on Spur's collar and then give the cue "Call Spur." She would come running to find me with a note that would say something like, "Dinner will be served at 6 p.m." – *Jen*

■ CAN'T WAIT, WON'T WAIT

When I walk my four dogs in inclement weather, only one of them has sufficiently furry paws that she requires rinsing off in my walk-in shower. One

morning after such a walk, I removed the harness from my Golden Retriever-mix, Mandy, at the door. I asked playfully what I must have absentmindedly said many times before: "Who's got muddy paws?" I finished removing harnesses from the other dogs and wiping their paws with a towel.

When I looked up, Mandy had disappeared. I walked down the hall and into the bedroom, where I saw a trail of muddy paw prints on the carpet going back and forth from the shower. Since I had delayed, Mandy had gone into and out of the wet shower multiple times before I arrived! Now I know whenever she hears "muddy paws," she's headed for the shower (and I get there faster!). – *Marty Metzler*

■ FLOWN AWAY

I am a balloon pilot and have been for more than 30 years. My husband, Peter, who passed away 12 years ago, was also a balloon pilot and taught me how to fly. We've had Golden Retrievers for many years, and a year and a half after my husband died I got a Golden puppy, Sam (Samantha). I took her along whenever I went ballooning – not in the balloon, but in the chase vehicle, where she was well looked after by my incredible crew.

At the end of each flight we pack the balloon envelope back into its bag. The fabric tends to hold air, so after the envelope is in the bag and tied securely, we usually have kids or crew jump on it to get some of the air out. When Sam was almost a year old she started, on her own, jumping up on the bag and sitting there, posing for pictures.

At times I would land in a field or park and Sam would be sniffing around within sight of us, and all I had to do was say, "Sam! It's time to do your job!" and she would stop whatever she was doing,

and, to the surprise and delight of my passengers and spectators, she would run and jump on the bag, patiently waiting until we were ready to load it back into the chase vehicle. During this waiting period, there were *many* pictures taken of her – alone, and with the crew, passengers, and spectators.

Unfortunately, Sam passed away in early March of this year, after a short bout with cancer, just short of her 10th birthday. She was very social and petted by thousands of people. – *Susan Stamats*

■ CASUAL TRAINING

What a fun subject! I have two examples. The first one was taught by, of all people, my hubby, who is not a trainer by any means. Our German Shepherd, Gus, would bark when he heard a doorbell or dog barking on TV. My hubby would just say, "It's the TV!" in a normal, conversational tone, and to my surprise – no treats involved! – Gus quickly learned to ignore everything on TV. After his initial, brief bark, when he heard "It's the TV!" he would shush, though he still had that look in his eyes like, "I am not sure if I believe you!"

Our current German Shepherd, Danja, has a strong prey drive and used to bark at the sight of deer in our yard. Whenever she saw a deer, she'd bark, and I would go to her, pet her, and say, "They're our friends!" Again, there were no treats involved, as these situations came up so unexpectedly. Now, when she sees a deer, Danja still might bark very briefly, but then she will look at us and we say, "They're our friends!" Then she'll be quiet while we watch them together.

I'm impressed how dogs can learn so quickly with these casual methods. And even more impressed with my husband teaching Gus to be quiet at the TV sounds. It is the only training I have ever seen him do in all the 35 years I have known him! – *Irma Kapsenberg, GOOD DOG! Gentle Training, Corvallis, OR*

THANKS!

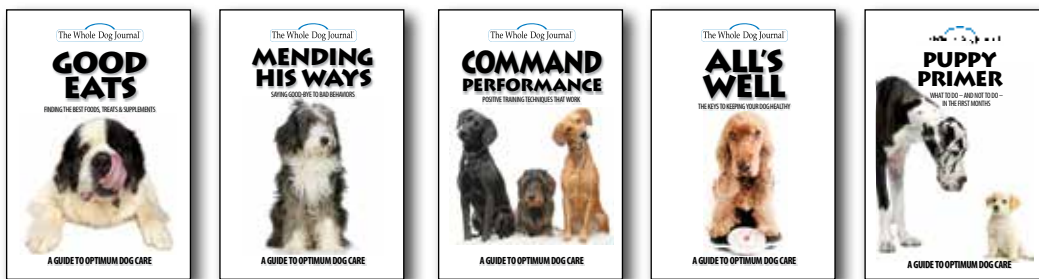
All we can say after reading all of these (and hundred more!) submissions is: *Training rocks*, whether it's on purpose or accidental! Thanks to everyone who submitted an account of their dogs' behaviors and cues, and keep up the great work! 🐾



Sam, Chief Balloon Crew

Shouldn't you have the answers before the questions arise?

Take the confusion and hesitation out of your dog's care! Be fully ready for anything—and everything! Accept this risk-free invitation and discover...



- 🐾 Positive solutions to your most stubborn training challenges.
- 🐾 Smart decisions for safe, natural, and nutritious feeding.
- 🐾 Meaningful measures to strengthen good health and reinforce resistance to illness.
- 🐾 Essential fundamentals to starting your puppy off right.
- 🐾 Proven techniques to end problem behaviors.

YOU WANT THE BEST FOR YOUR DOG!

Five brand-new books from Whole Dog Journal will show you how to provide the vigilant care you want to give—and your dog deserves!

Because foresight is far better than hindsight when it comes to your dog's health and training, nothing beats having a solid game plan. **Whole Dog Journal's Guides are playbooks for winning and effective dog care.** It is a series everyone who has a dog should own!

Good Eats: Finding the Best Foods, Treats and Supplements

- Basic Food Selection • Canned Foods • Dry Foods • Weight Control • Treats
- Food Disasters • Diet and the Older Dog • Special Needs Diets • Home-Prepared Diets
- Pica and Coprophagia

All's Well: The Keys to Keeping Your Dog Healthy

- Exercise and Injury Prevention • Selecting a Holistic Vet • Old dogs • Anesthesia
- Dental Health • Creating a Healthy Home • Vaccinations • NSAIDs • First Aid
- Preventing Heat Stroke

Command Performance: Positive Training Techniques that Work

- Positive Training Basics • Leash Manners • Getting a Sit • Encouraging Self-Control
- The "Come" Command • Greeting • Tricks and Games • Park Behavior
- Teaching Wait and Stay

Puppy Primer: What To Do—And Not To Do—In The First Months

- Pre-Puppy Prep • Housetraining • Crate Training • Vaccinations • Grooming
- Bite Inhibition • New Dog Do's and Don'ts • Socialization • Building Good Manners

Mending His Ways: Saying Good-Bye To Bad Behaviors

- Dealing with Anxious Dogs • Remedial Housetraining • Crating Problems
- Destructive Chewing • Escape Artists • Reactive Behaviors • Growling • Barking
- Multi-Dog Households

30-Day Risk-Free Examination Privileges for Whole Dog Journal Readers when you order now, your satisfaction is assured with our 100% money-back guarantee. If you are not completely satisfied, you may return your Guides within 30 days for a full and unquestioned refund.

A WEALTH OF INFORMATION— AT MONEY SAVING PRICES!

- 🐾 **Save \$5.00 on each Guide!**
- 🐾 **Buy 4 and get the fifth guide free!**

Three convenient ways to order...

1. Call 1-800-571-1555
2. Online at www.whole-dog-journal.com/dogcare
3. Mail this coupon

Whole Dog Journal's GUIDES TO OPTIMUM DOG CARE

YES send me the following Guides

- Good Eats
- All's Well
- Command Performance
- Puppy Primer
- Mending His Ways

___ Guides @ \$14.95 = \$ _____
Add Postage & Handling \$ 2.95
TOTAL AMOUNT \$ _____

- All 5 Guides for \$62.75
including p&h!

Check enclosed (payable to WDJ)
Postage & Handling \$2.95

Charge to: Amex VISA MC

Account No. _____ Exp Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: **Whole Dog Journal Books**
PO Box 221004, Beachwood OH 44122-2449

**Just \$14.95 each—
\$5 off the cover price!
Buy 4 Guides
and get the 5th Guide FREE!**

BEST VALUE

 RESOURCES 

TRAINING AND INSTRUCTION

❖ **Stephanie Colman**, Caninestein Dog Training, Los Angeles, CA. Offering training for basic through advanced obedience, competition dog sports, problem-solving, and more! Private lessons and group classes. (818) 414-8559; caninesteintraining.com

❖ **Jessica Hekman, DVM, MS**, will be teaching an online course for the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC), from September 12 through October 2, 2016. Titled, "From Domestication to Inbreeding: Population Genetics and Companion Animals," the course will discuss how domesticated animals evolved, how new traits spread through populations, and what the implications of population genetics affects how domesticated animals are bred today. For more information, see iaabc.org/courses/population-genetics

❖ **Pat Miller**, CBCG-KA, CPDT-KA, Peaceable Paws Dog and Puppy Training, Fairplay, MD. Group and private training, rally, behavior modification, workshops, intern and apprentice programs. Trainers can become "Pat Miller Certified Trainers" (PMCT) by successfully completing Pat's Level 1 (Basic Dog Training and Behavior) and both Level 2 Academies (Behavior Modification and Instructors Course). (301) 582-9420; peaceablepaws.com

BOOKS AND DVDS

❖ WDJ Training Editor Pat Miller is author of many books on force-free, pain-free, fear-free training. All of these, and her newest book, **How to Foster Dogs: From Homeless to Homeward Bound**, are available from dogwise.com and wholedogjournal.com



TRUST ME

The fastest way to change your mailing address is to go to www.WholeDogJournal.com and then click on "customer service"

WHAT'S AHEAD ...

❖ **ARTHRITIS**

A series on how to keep your arthritic dog moving.

❖ **DOG HOUSES**

Designing and decorating with your dog's comfort and convenience for you in mind.

❖ **FEED ME**

What should puppies eat before and after weaning, and for their first year? And how much?

❖ **"PUPPY SHOTS"**

How many do they need?

❖ **SEPARATION ANXIETY**

The latest treatments and strategies for dealing with dogs who are distressed when left alone.

❖ **CAN IT**

2016 Canned Food Review