

What To Do About Fleas

by: William H. Marshal

Fleas are a nuisance both to animals and people, causing pain and irritation. It was because of fleas carrying bubonic plague that brought about the Black Death starting in the 14th century. It all started in south-western Asia and spread all through Europe and into Great Britain. It has been estimated that over a third of the population of Europe died during the Plague.

There's Always Good News

The good news is, there haven't been very many cases of bubonic plague in recent years, so you're pretty safe from catching that from your dog's fleas.

The bad news is that you can contract other nasty things, including: Murine typhus (endemic typhus) fever, tapeworms, and Hymenolepis. So, the question is, how do you get rid of these malicious mongrels?

There are multiple ways of treating flea bites, with several working better than others. The first method is pretty traditional, although it's not very effective. All you have to do is grab a pair of tweezers, and go at it; picking out any black and brown speck of the dog's hair and skin. While this method has to be the oldest available, I don't recommend it at all. Since one female flea can lay up to 10,000 eggs, this method would be extremely time consuming.

The Three-Step Process

Seriously, there is a three-step process in getting rid of a flea epidemic in your household. The first step is

BATHE: In this step, bathe your dog with a flea killer shampoo. Lather up your hands with some of this stuff, and scrub down your dog until you are completely satisfied. I recommend about fifteen minutes in the bath - just to make sure the dog is completely covered. After the bath, comes the next step:

APPLY: Now, you are ready to apply a medicine onto the dog, making sure that the fleas will be completely killed. I use Frontline.
frontline flea medicine

This is applied directly to the back of the dog's neck. The medicine will be absorbed into the dog's oil glands, and then will be distributed evenly throughout the entire body. Any flea on his skin will be killed within 24 hours. The Final Step is:

CLEAN: This is the hard part. Everything that the dog has come into contact with needs to either be vacuumed or thrown into the washing machine. All of the toys, stuffed animals, rugs, and blankets go into the washing machine with lots of soap and bleach. Vacuum all the carpet and hardwood floors. Most of the flea population lives in the carpet in the larva and pupa stage. Just getting rid of the fleas on the dog is not enough, as more and more fleas will emerge from their eggs. Simply vacuuming will eliminate most of the eggs and larva, and the rest who make it to adult fleas will hop onto the dog, only to be confronted with Frontline flea killer.