



### **Got Fleas? .. with the rain and the heat what a perfect environment for fleas!**

Many are asking about natural approaches, given the reported health issues associated with regular use of chemical solutions. Click onto this article from Whole Dog Journal for more information about the health risks of chemical spot on products.<http://www.apnm.org/publications/resources/fleachemfin.pdf>

Looking at eliminating fleas the natural way, requires a good understanding of the flea life cycle and addressing four key elements

1. Promote a healthy immune system for your dog. Animals are less likely to have flea allergies and healthy dogs will naturally repel fleas or have less fleas.
2. De-flea your dog regularly using natural topical solutions and a flea comb is a must
3. Eliminate fleas and eggs in the house and yard
4. Eliminate fleas and eggs in the bedding.

In summary you need patience and perseverance if going down the natural pathway!

In Part 1 of this 4 part series, tips to improve your dogs immune system are listed below.

#### **Tips**

1. Feed your dog a raw natural food diet incorporating meat protein, meaty bones. The Vets All Natural Complete Mix (sensitive skin ) is a good veg/oat/whole food vitamin mix that can be added to meat to create a balanced meal.
2. Add bovine colostrum or Transfer Factor (4Life brand) to the diet
3. Application of Immupower, oregano and/or thyme Young Living essential oils – 6 drops of each along the spine and massage on a regular basis.
4. Echinacea , a herb that can be added to the diet.
5. Reduce exposure to chemicals, toxins and drugs
6. Alternate the use of mineral tissue salts over a period of 4 weeks at varying intervals during the year. Ferrous Phosphate, Magnesium Phosphate, Natrium Chloride and Silica help improve

and maintain a healthy immune system.



### Got Fleas ? .. Topical Solutions

As a preface to the recipes below, the key thing that needs to be emphasized is that you regularly need to apply the topical solutions and systematically use a flea comb through your dogs coat working from head to tail ( at least daily and more often if you have a real flea problem). If your dog has "handling" issues, then more than likely this routine is likely to be stressful for him or her, so again bear that in mind. It is suggested that if sprays are not well received, then using your hands to apply through the skin and coat, may be the only option available.

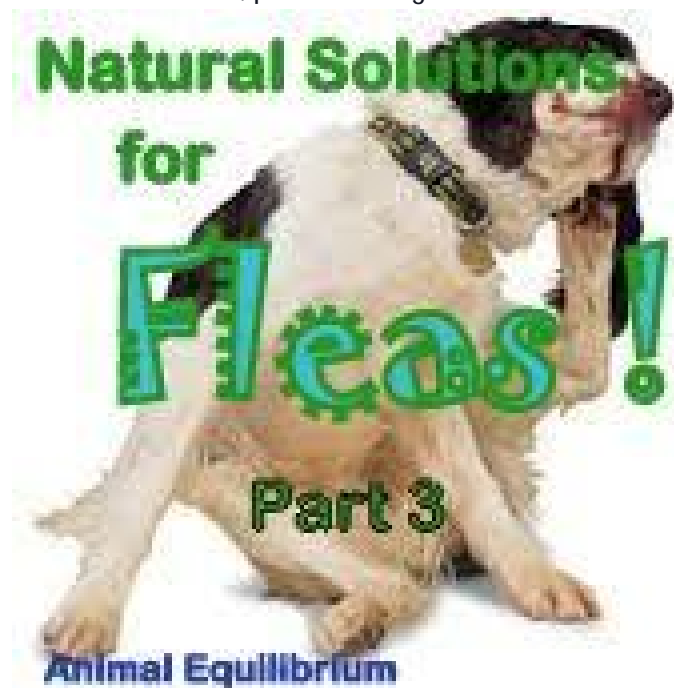
Organic Neem Seed Oil – this is a vegetable carrier oil that comes from India, cold pressed from Need seek kernels. To use to repel fleas, ticks etc, then you use a ratio of 15% neem oil with some emulsifier (vegetable glycerine is an example) in water. Alternatively mix with white vinegar and water equal quantities. Then use to spray the body, comb against the fur and then re spray to ensure full coverage. If you have a heavy infestation of fleas, then mix 10 mls of neem oil with an equivalent amount of shampoo or conditioner and leave on for 10mins, then rinse. After washing, apply the spray as a repellent and flea comb your dog. You can also mix neem oil with coconut oil and apply directly to the skin and coat, as it helps with flea dermatitis and mange. The neem oil is 15% of the mix.

Other essential oils – you can use the following essential oils in the same way or add to the above mix for extra potency. The most repelling oils include citronella, lemon grass, rosemary, myrtle, melaleuca alternifolia (tea tree), lavender and clary sage. Apply 12 drops, a blend of these oils along spine and tail region and rub through the body. The Young Living brand have a blend called Purification which has all of these oils, except for Clary Sage. "Young Living" oils are recommended as there are no chemical additives. Helen knows of cases where cheap citronella oil has been linked to seizures in dogs after being applied or inhaled. If using essential oils, you

must use good quality therapeutic grade, so do your research. If you can buy at Bunnings, supermarkets or even chemists, more than likely it is not a suitable oil to use. If you do not want to source these oils yourself, then contact Helen for more information. Further details can be made available or blends can be made and posted anywhere across Australia if needed.

Cedarwood oil has been reported to have insecticidal and repelling properties, but it is only the oil extracted from a certain type of cedar tree. Many of the US based topical solutions like "Triple Sure" and "Dr Bens Paws & Claws" source the cedarwood oil from the right trees. The cedarwood oil in the "Young Living" range does not have these properties and other well known proprietary brands available in Australia have not upon Helen's usage, demonstrated those properties. The US products that also contain peppermint oil, do have a repelling action on fleas.

As a mild deterrent to fleas, you can always steep in 2 litres of boiling water, 10 cut up lemons, thyme, sage, rosemary and oregano leaves in boiling water overnight. Strain and then use as a spray. Not as good as the oil solutions but does have a repelling action. So if you grow these herbs, put them to good use.



**Your Got Fleas? ... Part 3 in the series : Flea Repelling Powders – for topical uses and for use on bedding and carpets**

These 3 powders can help with the repelling of fleas and soothing of flea dermatitis. Ideally they are used together, in equal amounts if using on dogs.

Diatomaceous Earth - this is a soft powder made up of fossilized remains of tiny aquatic organisms called diatoms. Their skeletons are made of a natural substance called silica. Under a microscope, DE is very sharp, allowing it to puncture the exoskeleton of insects and causing them death by dehydration. Diatomaceous Earth kills insects by physical action, not chemical. It's important to note that DE particles are so small so it just feels like a fine baby powder to humans and pets. It is simply a mineral silica. Food grade, fresh water DE is harmless to humans and pets. You can use this to put through the coat, or sprinkle on carpets and bedding. Best to leave for a few days for it to work and then vacuum. Spray versions of DE have been manufactured and if only using in small areas can be useful, however for larger areas, purchasing Food Grade DE is much more cost effective. With hardwood floors, fleas can still get in the cracks, so a spray may be a better option.

Neem Powder – works like neem oil .The compound in neem, azadirachtin, disrupts the metamorphosis of insect larvae. So by inhibiting molting, neem keeps the larvae from developing and they die without producing a new generation. Another neem compound is called salannin and it's equally as effective as a repellent.

Yarrow Powder - Yarrow's is an anti-inflammatory for skin conditions and soothes irritated skin. It is also anti-microbial and has pain relieving properties. Because pets with fleas tend to get secondary infections from flea bites, yarrow protects from those secondary infections and also helps soothe red, irritated skin.

Hot soapy water will kill fleas, so washing bedding regularly and thinking what type of bedding you buy to make this easy is important.

The last comment goes to the use of Pyrethrins/Pyrethrum and Boric acid, which is an ingredient in some products often pushed as "natural". Both are toxins, but less toxic than some of the chemicals used in flea bombs and other products. So if you do have a major flea infestation problem, weight up what you are using and the frequency you are using it and alternate with non toxic natural alternatives.

For more ideas about natural methods for flea management around the home, click onto this article written by Dr Christine Mackowski DVM, one of the better articles on the net. <http://www.motherearthnews.com/homesteading-and-livestock/natural-flea-control-zmaz85mjzraw.aspx?Pageld=5#axzz3Q4lJyXrN>



**Got Fleas? – Part 4 and the final chapter in this story is looking at some of the impacts fleas may have on our 4 legged companions, namely the possibility of tapeworms.**

Although the appearance of tapeworms is revolting, they are seldom a big threat to our adult dogs health. If our dog is healthy and has a strong immune system, infestation is usually short term and harmless. So remember those nutritional tips from Part 1!

Deworming usually involves the use of strong chemicals, but there is a body of holistic veterinary evidence to suggest that there are milder herbal, homeopathic and other natural approaches that can be used. Below is a summary of some options, but also click onto this article, written by a holistic veterinarian for more information.

[http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/1\\_10/features/5283-1.html](http://www.whole-dog-journal.com/issues/1_10/features/5283-1.html)

Another good article is : <http://www.dognotebook.com/12-awesome-home-remedies-for-dogs-with-worms/>

Raw, organic pumpkin seeds (not the salted seeds from the supermarket!) contain the amino acid called cucurbitin, which paralyzes and eliminates the worms from the digestive tract. Best way to give is to grind them up and add to the meals. A teaspoon per 5kgs once or twice a day for a short period of time is sufficient.

Filix Mas and Granatum in low potency are homeopathic remedies that have been used to eliminate tapeworms by veterinary homeopaths.

There are also common foods reported by Dr Pitcairn DVM that work to prevent tapeworms attaching themselves to the intestinal walls. These include grated raw carrot, turnip, beets and oat bran and grated raw garlic. Usually between half to 2 teaspoons of the foods and up to 2 cloves of garlic depending on size of the dog.

Food grade Diatomaceous Earth (mentioned in Part 3) can be added to the meal to help rid

tapeworms, but mix in well, up to a teaspoon.

Organic unpasteurized apple cider vinegar up to a tablespoon in the meals have lots of nutritional advantages and can also help with tapeworms.

Okay, so hopefully you now have some options for managing fleas, ranging from nutrition, topical solutions, environmental approaches and ways to manage the secondary problems such as tapeworms. If you have some other solutions, then feel free to share.



As with all complementary therapies the advice and healing given does not replace the services, views and opinions of your veterinarian.

Animal Equilibrium does not dispense veterinary advice, diagnosis or prescriptions. Whenever a person feels that they require veterinary advice, I encourage the person to seek such advice from their veterinarian as soon as practical.

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