



## IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE



### 1. WHY GROOMING YOUR PET IS IMPORTANT

Dog grooming has many benefits other than having an odor-free companion, it can help prevent ear infections, flea infestations, dental decay, and other health issues.

### 2. GRASS SEEDS IN DOGS

It is grass seed season again! These nasty little awns can cause a lot of discomfort to your dog, and frustration for your vet and groomer.

### 3. INTRODUCING A NEW PUPPY TO KIDS

Exposing your new puppy to children is a very important, but often overlooked, area of socialisation. However, it is not always an easy, straight-forward process.

## WHY GROOMING YOUR PET IS IMPORTANT

**Dog grooming is one of your dog's basic needs and an important part of dog ownership. Just like people, dogs need "me day" to look and feel their best.**

Fortunately, dogs do not need to bathe as often as people, but you do need to learn how much grooming your dog actually needs and keep it on a schedule. Generally, a dog's grooming needs depend on the breed and hair type. If your dog has a skin, ear or nail condition, follow your veterinarian's instructions regarding grooming your dog. It is also important to use the appropriate grooming tools. Here are some dog grooming basics to remember.

- Long-haired dogs usually require daily brushing to prevent matting and tangling of hair.
- Medium-haired dogs may be prone to matting and tangles and should be brushed at least weekly.
- Short-haired dogs can typically go a few weeks in-between brushing.

Regardless of hair type, you can brush your dog daily - especially if he enjoys it. Regular brushing will keep the coat shiny and healthy. More frequent brushing during shedding season can help prevent hair build-up and excess shedding. Consider products like the FURminator deShedding tool or the Bamboo Shedding Blade.

### 2. Nail Trimming

Nail trims are often hated by dogs and owners alike. Most dogs dislike even having their paws handled and know how much it hurts when nails are cut too short. Dog owners are often uncomfortable with the process for fear of hurting their dogs.

Dogs will develop an aversion to nail trimming once they experience pain from it. The best way to avoid this is to learn how to trim nails correctly and exercise caution. Ideally, a veterinary technician, vet, or groomer should teach you how to trim your dog's nails. Most dogs need monthly nail trims, but your dog may need more or less depending on the rate of growth.

An alternative to nail trimming is the use of a rotary tool to file down nails or an emery board. Consider the Peticure Grooming Tool for this task.



### 1. Hair Brushing

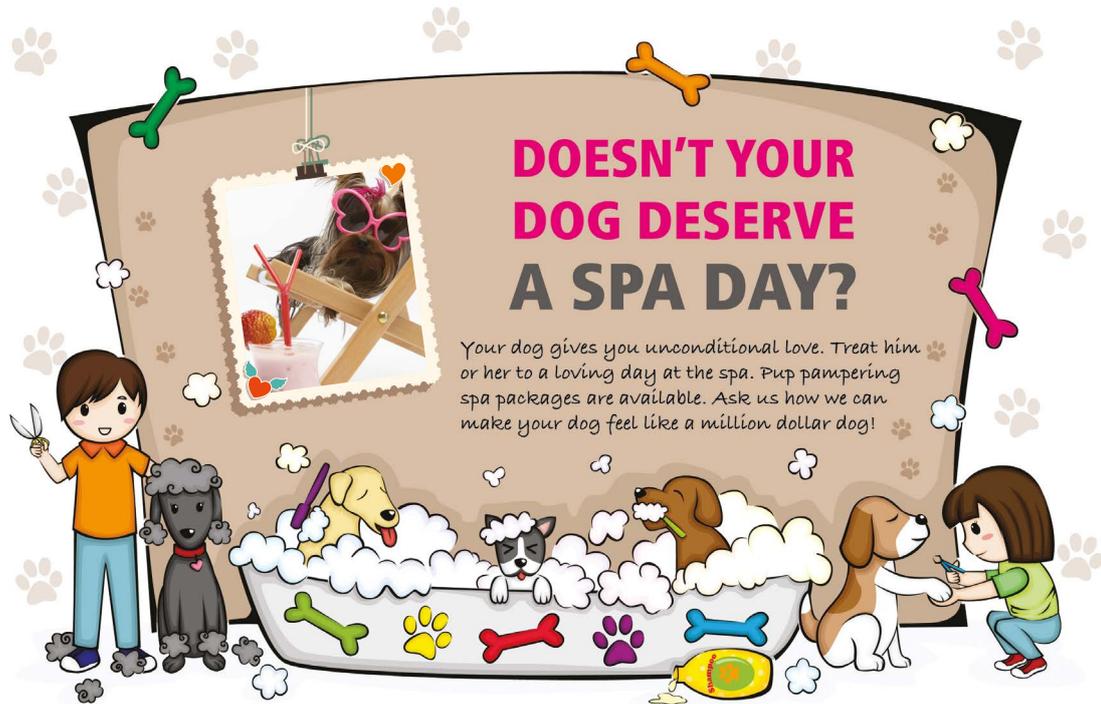
Most dogs enjoy being brushed, and sessions will strengthen the bond with your dog while maintaining a healthy coat. A dog's brushing needs depend on hair type. Choose the right tools and follow these minimum guidelines:

### 3. Bathing

Bath time does not mean fun to most dogs and owners. It may bring forth an image of a wet dog running from the tub, dripping all over the house. Bathing does not have to be this way if your dog can get used to it. He may not like the bath, but he'll be easier to manage. Learn how to bathe your dog properly and make the experience as positive as you can for you and your dog.

Most dogs only need to be bathed when they seem dirty or itchy. Many people like to bathe their dogs monthly, but bathing as often as once a week is not considered harmful. Always use a soap-free shampoo that is intended for dogs. Depending on the condition of your dog's skin and coat, your veterinarian may recommend a specific shampoo. In this case, be sure to follow your veterinarian's instructions about bathing.

Source: <http://dogs.about.com/od/grooming/tp/5-Basics-of-Dog-Grooming.htm>



## GRASS SEEDS IN DOGS



It is grass seed season again! These nasty little awns can cause a lot of discomfort to your dog, and frustration for your vet and groomer.

Grass seed infections can be a great source of frustration for you and your dog, particularly in late spring and summer. They commonly lodge themselves into dogs' paws, ears and eyes. It is important to recognise the signs of a possible grass seed problem early, as this can make treatment more straight forward. There are also a number of important preventative measures to put in place to prevent this problem occurring.

### How grass seed infections affect your dog

The shape of grass seeds with their sharp tip means that they can very easily penetrate through your dog's skin or lodge themselves in your pet's ears or eyes. Most seeds have an awn that fans out and makes it almost impossible for the grass seed to go backwards – similar to the action of the tip of a fish hook.

Grass seeds can lodge themselves into any part of your dog's body. Grass seeds will generally start their journey when they get caught in your dog's coat during a walk or play in long grass. From there, they are able to penetrate the skin and if undetected, can travel to various areas of the body. Grass seeds carry infection through the skin and into the body and will generally cause a painful swelling which progresses to cause an abscess in your dog.

### Symptoms of grass seed infections

Signs of grass seed related problems depend on where the grass seed is lodged. This will often cause a swelling at the site of lodgement, which you dog will often become very irritated with.

Often dogs will try to lick, scratch or chew the affected area.

### Symptoms to look out for include:

Infected area	Complications
Toes and feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swelling on the foot, often with a 'weeping' hole</li> <li>• Excessive licking or chewing</li> </ul>
Ears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaking head or scratching ear</li> <li>• Painful to touch ear</li> </ul>
Eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Squinting or rubbing eye</li> <li>• Swollen eye with or without discharge</li> </ul>

### Diagnosis

Diagnosis can often be done based on the history and clinical examination of your animal, and it is confirmed with the findings of a grass seed in an affected area.

### Treating grass seed infections in your dog

Treatment depends on the location of the grass seed and how deeply the seed has lodged itself.

If a patient is cooperative the grass seed can sometimes be removed during a consultation, so long as it hasn't travelled too deeply into the body and the patient is cooperative. Many dogs however, will require sedation or a general anaesthetic to allow probing for the seed, especially if the area is painful.

If the area affected is located in the skin, the affected area can be probed with a special tweezer-like



## INTRODUCING A NEW PUPPY TO KIDS

Exposing your new puppy to children is a very important, but often overlooked, area of socialisation. However, it is not always an easy, straight-forward process. Here are some things to keep in mind to help ensure your puppy becomes familiar with and happy around children:

Socialise your puppy to children of all ages. Developmental changes in kids happen quickly. Infants make loud sounds, toddlers make unpredictable movements and lack impulse control, and a 5 year-old girl is very different from a 9 year-old boy. Socialising your puppy to your friends' children is a great start, but don't stop there. Be sure to cover all bases so your puppy becomes familiar with many different types of children.

Find a venue and prepare ahead. Soccer games, playgrounds and friends' houses are great places to have your puppy meet and socialize with children. Showing up a few minutes early, without your puppy, will help you determine the best place to sit, the types of children in attendance, and the best strategy for positive introductions.

Focus on quality, not just quantity. Over-socialisation or unpleasant socialisation can be just as bad as insufficient socialisation. Taking your puppy to the local soccer game and letting 10 children pet him at once may be overwhelming, and in some cases actually undermine the socialisation process. Sit in an area where you can monitor how many children approach your puppy and end the session before your puppy can get overwhelmed or over stimulated.

Go at your puppy's pace. If your puppy is nervous around children, it is important to build up his confidence slowly. Begin the process by playing sounds of children while at home and pairing it with something positive like food or play. Next, determine how close your puppy can be to children and still be comfortable. Then begin pairing fun activities like playing or eating treats with your puppy seeing children at his comfortable distance. Gradually decrease the distance between your puppy and children as his confidence grows. If your puppy is fearful of kids, consult a professional, positive reinforcement dog trainer to help you with this process.

Supervision is key. It is imperative that children and puppies never be left alone without adult supervision. You don't want your puppy to accidentally harm your child or vice versa. If you have to leave the room, bring the puppy with you or put him away in a child and puppy proof area.



instrument. Grass seeds in the ear can be retrieved with special long tweezers and grass seeds in the eye will often require removal with a cotton tip or tweezers – your dog's eye will need further examinations and medications if the grass seed has caused damage to the eye.

If a grass seed is highly suspected, but no seed is found with probing, surgical exploration may be required to locate the seed. Antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medication are usually required after removing a grass seed as they usually carry infection into the body where they have lodged and cause inflammation in the surrounding area.

### Expected outcome

The expected outcome if the grass seed is removed is excellent. Infection and inflammation caused by the grass seed will usually resolve within a week without further problems. If the grass seed is not removed, infections will remain and seeds can travel to other areas or cause more severe complications.

### Prevention

It is important to be vigilant during the late spring and summer months when there is a greater risk of grass seed problems. Important tips to prevent grass seed problems are listed below:

- Keep your grass and weeds under control at home with regular maintenance.
- Avoid long grass when on walks.
- Keep long haired **dogs groomed, particularly around their feet** and ears.
- **Inspect your dog all over after each walk**, making sure you check in between and under all toes and underneath the ears.
- See a vet immediately if you suspect a grass seed problem, the earlier the problem is detected, the better chance you will have of finding the grass seed before it causes further problems or becomes very difficult to locate!

**Source:** <http://www.pethealthclub.com.au/dog-grass-seed-infections-abscess.html>

### Potential complications can include:

Infected area	Complications
Toes and feet	The grass seed has the potential to travel up your dog's leg between tendons and ligaments, even up to the shoulder or the groin!
Ears	Grass seeds lodged inside the ear canal can cause chronic infection, and even rupture of the ear drum, causing serious problems with the deeper structures of the ear (the middle or inner ear canal).
Eyes	Occasionally grass seeds can penetrate through the cornea (outer layer of the eye) and there is a risk that your dog may lose that eye.
Inhalation or ingestion	Grass seeds can get into airways and cause pneumonia, or even a collapsed lung once inhaled or swallowed. They can be very difficult to detect and a life threatening condition can quickly ensue. In rare cases, they can penetrate through the digestive system into nearby tissues or organs when not well digested.

Monitor and Manage Interactions. Here are some "dos and don'ts" that will help make socialising your puppy to children go as smoothly as possible:



- **DO** have an adult around to supervise the child participating in the introduction. You'll be able to focus on your puppy and you'll find that an extra set of hands guiding the child is very helpful.
- **DO** teach your puppy a simple exercise like hand targeting. Hand targeting is easy for children of many ages and skill levels to cue and it keeps your puppy from developing bad habits like jumping or mouthing.
- **DO** deliver treats to your puppy yourself or ask children to toss treats on the ground near your puppy so he doesn't learn to "mug" food from their hands.
- **DO** know when to walk away from a situation that could be detrimental to the socialization process. If you know your puppy will get too excited, or that a child is going to be too much for your puppy, kindly (and in some cases firmly) say "no" and move away.



- **DON'T** force your puppy to interact with a child if he doesn't want to.
- **DON'T** allow kids to pick up, hug, or heavily pet your puppy. Puppies that are exposed to this can learn that children are no fun and the best thing to do is avoid them all together — or worse.
- **DON'T** allow your puppy to interact roughly with kids. That includes nipping, chasing, biting, etc. When kids are running or wrestling, redirect your puppy with some obedience work, a game, an interactive toy, or put him away in a puppy-proof area that your child cannot access to prevent him from practicing bad behavior.
- **DON'T** punish your puppy for growling or snapping at a child, instead, get help from a qualified professional dog trainer as soon as possible.

Socialising your puppy to children is a lot of fun. Not only are you teaching your puppy that children are wonderful, but when you educate a child on proper dog etiquette and safety, you are doing your part in preventing child-dog bites. Please remember that if you

are having difficulty or are struggling during the socialiation process, consult a professional, positive dog trainer as soon as possible.

*Source: <http://www.operationsocialization.com/blog/44-blog/198-the-ins-and-outs-of-socializing-puppies-to-children.html>*

**Sherwood Boarding Kennels**  
Nambeelup

**Pete & Gerri Scott**  
19 D'Rayne Glade, Nambeelup  
(off Lakes Rd) Mandurah

**NOW TAKING BOOKINGS - Ph: 9583 4444**  
Email: [sherwoodboarding@hotmail.com](mailto:sherwoodboarding@hotmail.com)

**Sylvia's Dog Training**

Mobile: 0421 360 208  
Fax: (08) 9524 6626  
Email: [tagsport1@bigpond.com](mailto:tagsport1@bigpond.com)

**PORT KENNEDY**  
Veterinary Hospital

**ADDRESS**

1/9 Fielden Way,  
Port Kennedy WA 6172  
(just off Warnbro Sound Ave)

**Telephone:** 08 6555 5149

**Fax:** 08 9524 6626

**Email:** [admin@portkennedyvet.com.au](mailto:admin@portkennedyvet.com.au)

**Web:** [www.portkennedyvet.com.au](http://www.portkennedyvet.com.au)

/PortKennedyVeterinaryHospital

**BUSINESS HOURS**

7am until 7pm Monday – Friday  
8am until 5pm Saturday & Sunday  
9am until 5pm Public Holidays

**CONSULT HOURS**

**AM:** 9am until 1pm Monday – Friday  
**PM:** 3.45pm-6.15pm Monday – Friday  
9am until 4.30pm Saturday & Sunday  
10am until 4.30pm Public Holidays.

