

DIY FIRST-AID FOR DOGS

Seven Natural Home Remedies

by Karen Becker

Many pet parents check their kitchen cabinets first when treating their canine companion's minor health issues. Three helpful basics are canned, 100 percent pumpkin, povidone iodine antiseptic and 3 percent hydrogen peroxide, plus apple cider vinegar and coconut oil.

1 Constipation, Diarrhea and Other Minor Digestive Issues

Solution: Canned pumpkin. For occasional mild tummy upsets, give a teaspoon of pumpkin for every 10 pounds of body weight, one to two times a day, either in food or as a treat, for non-allergic dogs. Pumpkin's soluble fiber can ease diarrhea and constipation.

2 Minor Skin Abrasions, Cuts, Infections or Hot Spots

Solution: Povidone iodine. The gentle Betadine brand can allay staph, yeast and most common bacteria. It's safe if a pet licks it.

Dilute the povidone iodine until it looks like iced tea, soak a clean cloth and gently wipe infected skin areas. Rinse the cloth, wipe the skin, and then pat dry. Repeat twice daily for a minor issue.

3 Itchy, Irritated Paws

Solution: Footbaths. About 50 percent of a dog's foot licking and chewing can be alleviated by simply rinsing off allergens and other irritants from its paws. For large

dogs, soak one foot at a time in a bucket. Stand small dogs in a sink or tub, or dunk one paw at a time in a small container of solution.

Dilute povidone iodine to the color of iced tea and add to the footbath. Swish it around while the dog stands in it for two to five minutes. Talk soothingly and offer treats as needed.

4 Fleas

Solution: Apple cider vinegar (ACV). It doesn't kill fleas, but helps deter them. Put a solution of equal parts raw, organic ACV and water in a spray bottle and spritz the pet before they head outdoors plus dog bedding. Consider adding it to a dog's food as well; one teaspoon for every 20 pounds of pooch.

During baths, pour diluted ACV of one cup of vinegar to one gallon of water over a freshly bathed dog (avoid the head) for a flea-preventive rinse. Massage the ACV solution into their coat and towel dry. Don't rinse. Alternatively, add about two cups of apple cider vinegar to their bathwater.

5 Crusty Skin and Nails

Solution: Coconut oil. Skin treatments using 100 percent organic, cold-pressed, human-grade coconut oil can reduce flaking and improve skin quality, especially for seniors with crusty patches of skin and funky nails.

Bathe the dog, and then rub the oil into the skin all over their body, especially on dry areas. Let it absorb for about five minutes. Follow with another bath (not much lather) and a very light rinse. Also, dab it directly on hotspots, eruptions and rashes after disinfecting.



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6 Skunk Encounter

Solution: Skunk rinse. In a pail, mix one quart of 3 percent hydrogen peroxide, one-quarter cup of baking soda and two teaspoons dish-washing liquid. For a large dog, double, triple or quadruple the mixture, based on their size and coat.

Apply the mixture to the dog's dry coat, taking care to avoid the eyes. Massage the mixture into the coat and skin for about five minutes or until the skunk smell starts to dissipate. Use a sponge to apply the solution to the chin, cheeks, forehead and ears. Rinse thoroughly. When rinsing the head, tilt the dog's chin upward to protect the eyes. It may be necessary to repeat the entire process up to three times. Rinse off the solution completely.

7 Toxin Ingestion

Solution: Hydrogen peroxide to induce vomiting. Use 3 percent hydrogen peroxide and give one teaspoon for every 10 pounds of dog weight. Add a little vanilla ice cream or honey to encourage swallowing, or simply syringe it down their throat, if necessary.

Walk the dog for a few minutes—movement helps the hydrogen peroxide work—which typically occurs within 15 minutes. If the dog doesn't vomit in



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15 minutes, give a second dose. If after another 15 minutes they still haven't vomited, call a veterinarian.

Don't induce vomiting if the dog is throwing up already, has lost consciousness or can't stand, or it's been more than two hours since they ingested the toxin. Harsh chemicals can cause burning both as they are swallowed and come back up. For these problems, seek veterinary care immediately.

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