

*All articles and links on the SSCNC Web Site are intended for educational purposes and should never be used as a substitute for Professional Training, Proper and Timely Veterinarian Care, Professional Grooming and old fashion Common Sense.*

***For informational use only ... always consult with your VETERINARIAN for the appropriate care, treatment & health of your dog***

## **(1) The winter & holiday season special precautions**

The holidays are not ideal for introducing a pet into your family. **New puppies and dogs** require extra attention and a stable environment, which the holiday season doesn't permit. Also, a puppy is not a toy or gift that can be returned. Instead, the AKC suggests giving a gift representative of the dog to come, such as a toy, a leash, or a bed.

Holly, mistletoe and poinsettia **plants** are pet poisons! Make sure they are kept in places your dog cannot reach.

Review **holiday gifts for dogs** to make sure they are safe. Items such as plastic toys and small rawhide sticks may be dangerous.

Remove **holiday lights** from lower branches of your tree. They may get hot and burn dogs or they can get tangled up in them.

Watch out for **electrical cords**. Pets often try to chew them and may get badly shocked or electrocuted. Place wires out of reach.

Avoid using **glass ornaments**. They break easily and may cut a dog's feet and mouth.

Refrain from **using edible ornaments**. Your dog may knock the tree over in an attempt to eat them. Also, commercial ornaments may contain paint or toxins in the preservatives.

Whether **your tree** is live or artificial, both kinds of needles are sharp and indigestible. Don't leave your dog unattended in the room with the tree.

**Tinsel** is dangerous for dogs. It may obstruct circulation and, if swallowed, block the intestines.

**Alcohol and chocolate** are toxic for dogs, even in small amounts. Keep unhealthy, sweet treats and seasonal goodies out of reach.

The holiday season is a **stressful time** for dogs. Try to keep your dog's schedule as normal as possible during all the excitement.

Always wash **your dog's paws after a winter walk** to remove salt. Use Pet Safe Products or Booties to keep the salt and Ice off their paws and keep the hair in between the pads trimmed to stop ice from sticking.

**Anti freeze** that leaks onto driveways and roads smells and tastes good to dogs. However, it is highly poisonous and can be lethal to your canine companion if ingested.

Dogs can become **dehydrated** in winter. Make certain he always has plenty of fresh water available. Snow is not an efficient alternative to water.

Like humans, dogs are more likely to experience **health problems** in winter. If your dog is listless, lethargic or experiences symptoms of illness, such as coughing, take him to the veterinarian as soon as possible.

**Woodstoves**, fireplaces and portable heaters can cause severe burns to your canine companion. Be sure your dog stays away from all heat sources.

**Before giving your dog over-the-counter medications**, be sure to consult your veterinarian. Like humans, there are some medications that shouldn't be given because of health issues and/or allergies

**Wind chill** causes colder conditions than what is read on a thermometer. Dogs shouldn't be left outside for long periods of time. Even a half hour in frigid temperatures can cause problems. Be sure to keep a sharp eye on your dog's body temperature and never leave him in the yard for more than 10 minutes when temperatures dip below freezing. Use a blow drier on a cold or wet coat after being outdoors. Always be sure your dog has **adequate shelter** where it will be warm and dry. Be sure that he isn't lying in a drafty area. Place his bed, blanket or pillow on tile and wood floors to give him a warm place to sleep.

**Groom your canine** companion on a regular basis. A coat that is well maintained is well insulated. Shorthaired dogs and those with coarse coats get cold easily. Consider purchasing a blanket, coat or sweater to keep your dog warm.

If your dog is in the cold and begins excessively shaking or shivering, get him back to warm shelter as soon as possible. **If you suspect your dog is developing hypothermia, bring him to a vet immediately**

If your dog is outdoors and/or active in colder weather consider feeding him more food. Conversely, if you and your dog are not out in the winter cold much, consider cutting back on the food intake.

#### **Top Ten Winter Pet Items:**

1. Heated Bed Pads
2. Heated Water Bowls
3. Sweater / wind and wet resistant coat
4. Paw booties

5. Reflective vest / collars for those night walks
6. New I.D. Tags
7. Mud Rugs for the entry doorway of your home.
8. Collar Light for you and your dog.
9. Pop-Up Pet safe paw wipes
10. New Collar

## (2) THE DOG DAZE OF SUMMER

When the lazy days of barbecues and swimming pools roll around – here are a few summer pet safety tips, to keep your dog(s) healthy and enjoying the summer months... ***Never leave your pet in the car.*** Though it may seem cool outside, the sun can raise the temperature inside your car to 120 degrees Fahrenheit in a matter of minutes, even with the windows rolled down.

*As you're outside enjoying the warm weather, keep your pet leashed.* It will keep her from getting lost, fighting other animals, and eating and drinking things that could make her sick. Not to mention rolling in something lovely.

***Water, water everywhere.*** Whether you're indoors or out, both you and your pet need access to lots of fresh water during the summer, so check her water bowl several times a day to be sure it's full. If you and your furry friend venture forth for the afternoon, bring plenty of water for both of you.

***Swimming Pools.*** Just like children, pets need to be monitored around the swimming pool. If you want your dog in the pool and enjoying a quick dip, then train your friend on where and how to find the steps to get in & out of your pool. Better yet, invest in a small plastic wading pool just for your dog – assuming he does not enjoy digesting it in between dips. Better yet, invest in a small plastic wading pool just for your dog – assuming he does not enjoy digesting it in between dips.

***Say no to tangles.*** Keeping your pet well groomed will help her hair do what it was designed to do: protect her from the sun and insulate her from the heat.

If she has extremely thick hair or a lot of mats and tangles, her fur may trap too much heat, so you may want to clip her, but remember that a short clip may require you to use sunscreen until the hair grows in fuller.

· ***Watch out for antifreeze.*** Hot weather may tempt your pet to drink from puddles in the street, which can contain antifreeze and other chemicals. Antifreeze has a sweet taste that animals like, but it's extremely toxic. When you're walking your pet, in your garage or around cars, make sure she doesn't sneak a drink from the street.

***Make sure your pet doesn't overexert herself.*** Though exercise is an important part of keeping your dog or cat at a healthy weight, which helps her body stay cool, overdoing it can cause her to overheat. Keep the walks to a gentle pace and make sure she has plenty of water and exercise in the cooler morning or cooler evening hours. If she's panting a lot or seems exhausted, it's time to stop.

***Take it easy on pets that can't deal with the heat.*** Elderly, very young, and ill animals have a hard time regulating their body temperature, so make sure they stay cool and out of the sun on steamy summer days. Overweight dogs are also more prone to

overheating, because their extra layers of fat act as insulation, which traps heat in their bodies and restricts their breathing capabilities.

***Bring them inside.*** Animals shouldn't be left outside unsupervised on long, hot days, even in the shade. Shade can move throughout the afternoon, and pets can become ill quickly if they overheat.

### ***Quick and cheap cool down tricks.***

A quick romp through the sprinklers or helping with the garden watering can cool your pet off and provide exercise.

Purchase a remnant slab of tile or marble and keep it in the bottom of your freezer. Pull it out and lay it on a bath mat in the shade for an icy place to cool off.

On scorcher days, bring it out as a cool pad.

And those recycled water bottles – fill them with water and keep a couple in the freezer, they make nice head rests and can keep an outside doghouse cooler.

You may also want to purchase a “K9 Cool Coat or Vest” for your walks or a fan for their doghouse or crate

A nice web site to check out some summer cooling ideas for your pets is Abel Pets in PA.

<http://www.abelpetsupply.com>

### **Signs of Heatstroke**

Panting

Staring

Anxious expression

Refusal to obey commands

Warm, dry skin

High fever

Rapid heartbeat

Vomiting

Collapse

**Heatstroke is a medical emergency.** If you suspect your pet has heatstroke, **it is imperative to get the animal to a veterinarian immediately.**

Bring towels - soaked in cool water - to place the animal on for the drive to the Vet Hospital.

### (3) **Your Pets in a Disaster...**

Some local breeder friends and I were sitting around our local park recently discussing the various fires we've had in California so far this year and also those pesky earthquakes.

We were laughing at the fact that being dyed in the wool dog show people that we could create a "tent city" in our local dog park with the gear and doggy stuff we keep in our cars, not to mention our storage sheds, homes or RVs. Most of us had crates, sun shades, treats, poop bags, bottled water, extra collars, leads and harnesses, crate pads, camp chairs, first-aid kits, flashlights, and one or two even had pop-up tents in their vehicles on a regular basis.

We decided at that moment that if an earthquake hit our community that our local dog park would be the place we all would meet up at or post messages for each other, if an emergency hits our city.

It got me thinking, that probably a lot of pet owners are not as well prepared as dog show folks to take care of their animals in a disaster or an emergency. I put together some hints for kits and tips from the Red Cross and the AKC Disaster web sites.

A very good storage container for your dog or cats' **9-1-1 Kit** is actually their un-used crate. Using a Tupperware container that is size appropriate, you can stash 3 days worth of food, treats and water into the crate. It is also a convenient place to put extra I.D. Tags, toys, collar and lead(s) for your pets. Don't forget a supply of your pets' medicines and take time to talk to your vet about preparing a pet specific Emergency Kit and about having a microchip implanted —**JUST DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER THE CHIP**—AKC CAR is the largest data base in the U.S. for pet recovery success.

**First aid kit.** Most kits should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors; antibiotic ointment; flea and tick prevention; latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Include a pet first aid reference book. A small bottle of bleach can be used for sanitation and also 16 drops per gallon of water can help sanitize water if necessary. Place copies of your pet's registration information, adoption papers, vaccination documents and medical records in a clean plastic bag or waterproof container and also add them to your kit. Include a photo or two of the pet and one with you and your pet for additional proof of ownership.

Pets, like humans, are under incredible stress during disasters, so they may not act or react like themselves, even when re-united with people they are familiar with. You may also want to include information about persons you authorize to claim your pet if you are injured or hospitalized. Let your neighbors know what to do with your pets if you are not home when disaster strikes.

Make a list of contact information and addresses of area animal control agencies including the Humane Society or SPCA, and emergency veterinary hospitals. Keep one copy of these phone numbers with you and one in your pet's emergency supply kit.

Obtain a "Pets Inside" stickers from you local Humane Society or Red Cross and place them on your doors or windows, including information on the number and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker where you could be reached in an emergency.

Create a sticker for your Emergency Kit that you can place on your front door, if time permits, with the words "**Evacuated with Pets**", should you flee with your pets. Include a list of contact number for you if you know where you will be.

What I did on my computer was to create little K9 passports for each of my dogs. It includes a photo of each dog and a photo of myself. I have listed their call names and registered names. Their microchip and tattoo information (as applicable), sex, breed information, colors, etc... If they are on any medications or are allergic to any foods or medications. I have copied their Rabies Certificate and Spay/Neuter Certificate (as applicable) and their City License information. I have also listed out of state relatives and local friends and my Veterinarian and his Staff, who I have given permission to take custody of the dog (s).

Lastly, I've included a list of their commands and personality quirks, such as *Irene responds best to Herding Commands, Tank LOVES tennis balls. Senate is trained in German and English.* Anything that would separate my dogs from someone else's in a line-up or sheltering situation can help.

Another great way to be prepared for any emergency is by taking Red Cross courses in First Aid and CPR and also Animal First Aid. Each course averages about \$50.00. You can check out other courses on-line at

You can check out your Local Red Cross chapters for classes in the Sacramento, South Bay and Wine Country communities.

If you have fore-warning that you may need to evacuate, make plans outside of your area with kennels, your relatives or friends to take your pets in **before** you are forced to evacuate in an emergency. Check with local hotels regarding pet policies and be sure you know which directions are safe to use before you are on the road.

Preplan for home supplies such as batteries, bottled water, easy or self contained foods, flash lights, that your cellular phone is charged.

It's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region as well as emergency plans that have been established by your state and local government when you have to evacuate. Talk to your family and friends before an emergency happens

For more information about how to prepare, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or call **1-800-BE-READY**.

Most Disaster Preparedness training has us prepare for three days of self sufficiency before community help can be in place, so make sure you have food, water, medicines, supplies, and a network in place to help you through those first few days of uncertainty for you, your family and your pets.



#### **(4) Your Schnauzer has met his first Skunk and it did not end favorably for your Schnauzer – now what?**

Step 1: Keep your dog outside if possible. It could take weeks to remove this noxious odor from your house and it can permeate into fabric and food.

Step 2: Don rubber gloves and examine your dog:

- Check your dog's eyes and skin for any signs of irritation from the skunk spray. If you do notice that your dog's eyes are red and irritated, try rinsing them out with water or using eye drops made of saline solution.
- If the redness seems extreme, however, it is best to consult your vet. You should be able to tell after a few hours, if your dog's eyes are still very red or he seems uncomfortable.
- Other signs that you may need your veterinarian's help include foaming at the mouth, vomiting, and extreme lethargy.
- It is also very important to check your dog for any deep scratches or bites. Skunks can carry rabies, so get to your vet right away if you see any bleeding. A skunk out during daylight hours is not a healthy animal – they are usually dusk until dawn creatures.

Step 3: Use paper towels or a rag (*you're not sad about later burning*), and wipe down your dog. As you're wiping down your dog, you should be able to get an idea of where he was hit. Usually it's the neck/shoulders area because your dog probably tried to avoid the spray.

Step 4: Wash your dog as soon as possible to get rid of the skunk smell. First use warm water to wet your dog – some believe applying a shampoo first and then using the skunk remover for odor is best and others like to use the odor remover first, second, third, and then end with shampoo.

Step 5: Allow the skunk odor remover to sit for 10-20 minutes and rinse between applications. Be sure to rub the skunk odor remover into the coat and down to the skin. If you have an energetic dog, a large plastic tub may help you contain him. Concentrate on the spots that were directly hit by the skunk spray.

Step 6: When the odor is out, use the doggy shampoo of choice and dry the dog thoroughly outside and ensure the stench is out before allowing him into the house.

Step 7: Wash your clothing and any rags that are salvageable in the same skunk odor remover as utilized on the dog.

Step 8: Apply moth balls around the area where the dog met the skunk if it is around your home and ensure that any crawl spaces under your home are boarded up to prevent further skunk incidents.

### **The Kitchen Chemistry Skunk Odor Remover:**

*Word of caution regarding the Hydrogen Peroxide is that it can bleach coats. If this is a concern, try substituting vinegar for the peroxide. Or use the traditional soaking agent, Tomato Juice*

Wash the dog with this solution while it is still foaming, because it is the oxygen which reacts with the thiols in the skunk stink to neutralize the odor.

Mix the ingredients in a large bowl or bucket outside of the house, because it will boil up like Vesuvius.

**\* 1 QT. OF 3% HYDROGEN PEROXIDE**

**\* 1/4 CUP OF BAKING SODA**

**\* 1 TEASPOON OF A LIQUID SOAP** (*DAWN* is recommended as it breaks down oils well)

**BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO GET THE MIXTURE IN YOUR DOGS NOSE, EYES, EARS OR MOUTH.**

**DO NOT STORE leftovers of the Kitchen Chemistry concoction.** The chemical reaction from being closed up in a container can cause an explosion!

(5) *Not All Dog Shampoos Are Created Equal.*

We are blessed that the Standard Schnauzer is generally a clean and odor free pet that normally does not require a full bath or that doggy colognes to be applied by the gallon. We do still bathe our show and family pets with some regularity.

That our breed's good health rarely translates to skin or allergy issues in the environment is also a bonus of ownership.

In this modern world we live, exposure to chemicals and pollutants in daily lives that can cause issues for the young, the old, and those Standard Schnauzers in frail health. To this end, here are some things to watch out for that indicate allergic reactions in your dog; and also some things to be aware of in doggy shampoos that may cause issues for the young, the old and the frail.

Signs / symptoms of allergies: welts or hives, or hotspots or hot feeling skin, sneezing, excessive chewing, hair loss, odor on the body or ears, excessive scratching.

SHAMPOO: Chemicals that can cause allergic reactions or sensitivities include:

- SLS or SLES: Sodium Lauryl Sulfate or Sodium Laureth Sulfate which are chemical detergents
- Parabens: Chemical preservative
- Phthalates: Artificial fragrance
- EDTA: Chemical stabilizer and binder
- Formaldehyde: Chemical Preservative
- Propylene glycol: Petrochemical solvent used in antifreeze
- DEA, MEA or TEA: Ammonia-based emulsifiers and foaming agents
- Artificial ingredients of any kind

## **(6) *RATING THE INGREDIENTS IN OUR DOGS' FOOD***

Check out The Dog Food Project <<http://www.dogfoodproject.com/>> for explanations of good/bad ingredients. It is not sponsored by any dog food maker. The woman who does the research also does consultations.

How to grade your dog's food:

Start with a grade of 100:

- 1) For every listing of "by-product", subtract 10 points
- 2) For every non-specific animal source ("meat" or "poultry", meat, meal or fat) reference, subtract 10 points
- 3) If the food contains BHA, BHT, or ethoxyquin, subtract 10 points
- 4) For every grain "mill run" or non-specific grain source, subtract 5 points
- 5) If the same grain ingredient is used 2 or more times in the first five ingredients (i.e. "ground brown rice", "brewers rice", "rice flour" are all the same grain), subtract 5 points
- 6) If the protein sources are not meat meal and there are less than 2 meats in the top 3 ingredients, subtract 3 points
- 7) If it contains any artificial colorants, subtract 3 points
- 8) If it contains ground corn or whole grain corn, subtract 3 points
- 9) If corn is listed in the top 5 ingredients, subtract 2 more points
- 10) If the food contains any animal fat other than fish oil, subtract 2 points.
  - 11) If lamb is the only animal protein source (unless your dog is allergic to other protein sources), subtract 2 points
  - 12) If it contains soy or soybeans, subtract 2 points
  - 13) If it contains wheat (unless you know that your dog is not allergic to wheat), subtract 2 points
  - 14) If it contains beef (unless you know that your dog is not allergic to beef), subtract 1 point
  - 15) If it contains salt, subtract 1 point

### **Extra Credit:**

- 1) If any of the meat sources are organic, add 5 points
- 2) If the food is endorsed by any major breed group or nutritionist, add 5 points
- 3) If the food is baked not extruded, add 5 points
- 4) If the food contains probiotics, add 3 points
- 5) If the food contains fruit, add 3 points
- 6) If the food contains vegetables (NOT corn or other grains), add 3 points
- 7) If the animal sources are hormone-free and antibiotic-free, add 2 points
- 8) If the food contains barley, add 2 points
- 9) If the food contains flax seed oil (not just the seeds), add 2 points
- 10) If the food contains oats or oatmeal, add 1 point
- 11) If the food contains sunflower oil, add 1 point
- 12) For every different specific animal protein source (other than the first one; count

"chicken" and "chicken meal" as only one protein source, but "chicken" and "" as 2 different sources), add 1 point

and "chicken meal" as only one protein source, but "chicken" and "" as 2 different sources), add 1 point

13) If it contains glucosamine and chondroitin, add 1 point

14) If the vegetables have been tested for pesticides and are pesticide-free, add 1 point

94-100+ = A

86-93 = B

78-85 = C

70-77 = D

<70 = F

## **(7) The Best Kind of Health Care for Your Senior Pet is Prevention**

On average, animals age 5 to 8 times faster than humans. It is especially important that pets seven years and older have an annual examination to detect, treat and prevent health problems before they become serious or life-threatening, and when they can be corrected more easily and with less expense. Senior wellness exams include a complete physical exam, blood profile and urinalysis.

Pets seven years and older are at a higher risk for developing:

Arthritis  
Dental Disease  
Heart Disease  
Cancer  
Diabetes  
Skin Problems  
Kidney Failure  
Thyroid Disease  
Obesity

For some pets, these maladies never occur and for others they happen, sadly, at a young age. Age 7 years has been agreed upon as a generally acceptable age at which veterinarians and pet owners should begin taking special notice of variations in a pet's health and be especially diligent in treating problems early.

A pet's true biological age, however, is difficult to judge. While its chronological age might be 8 years according to the calendar, a well-cared-for, active dog like yours might be as healthy as the average 5-year-old dog, or even younger.

Of course, a hard life or poor nutrition or health care can lead a middle-aged person or dog to seem older than their years also.

Smaller pets like cats and small dogs usually live longer than larger dogs.

According to accepted corresponding-age charts, a pet of the following weight ranges equates to a 65-year-old person at the following ages:

- 20 pounds: 12 years
- 20-50 pounds: 11 years
- 50-90 pounds: 9 1/2 years
- Over 90 pounds: 8 1/2 years

Bear in mind these are rough approximations and are no more accurate than thinking of everyone at a given age as being in the same physical condition.

For the sake of completeness, the way that ages are calculated at the beginning of a pet's life, regardless of body size, is as follows:

The first year counts as 15 human years.

The second year counts as nine more years.

After that, each year counts for between four and eight years, depending on which weight category a pet fits into and what age they are at the time the calculation is being made.

Bigger dogs simply seem to age faster.

**Signs of Arthritis Include:**

Lagging behind on walks.

Tires Easily.

Difficulty rising from a resting position.

Reluctance to climb stairs.

Stiffness or limping.

Canine Arthritis affects 1 in 4 dogs in the US.

Arthritis is a progressive disease with no cure.

Arthritis pain can be controlled with weight management, medication or surgery.

The sooner management is started, the better long-term outcome.

## **(8) HEMORRHAGIC GASTROENTERITIS (HGE)**

March 2009 SSCNC Stripper Article

We recently had a member of SSCNC whose three year old Schnauzer experienced an episode of HGE. HGE stands for **H**emorrhagic **G**astro**E**nteritis and left unattended, it can be a deadly syndrome.

The cause of HGE is unknown and symptoms can mimic colitis, ulcers, parasite infections (worms or giardia), bacteria infections, parvo or corona virus, as well as cancer, foreign body obstruction or toxic poisoning. To determine the cause of the dog's illness, the veterinarian may need to order blood tests, fecal exams and x-rays or ultrasound to rule out other disorders.

HGE is a disorder in dogs, more common in toy and smaller breed between two and four years of age, but no dog is immune and it can strike any breed, at any age, of either gender. With prompt and aggressive treatment, most dogs recover fully. Literature suggests that about 10% of dogs will continue to have re-occurring bouts of HGE throughout their lifetime. Currently there are no tests or indicators available to identify those dogs who will continue to have HGE episodes, although Poodles and Schnauzers appear to be hardest hit by the syndrome.

HGE symptoms include a sudden on-set of bloody diarrhea, explosive vomiting, not eating, depression or lethargy. Pets may have a fever or painful response to abdominal palpitations. With the loss of fluids, dehydration and shock can occur quickly. Blood in stools is usually bright red, but blood can also so up as coffee ground materials and/or a brownish-red tint to stools.

HGE is diagnosed or characterized from other diseases by a high hematocrit (red blood cell) count (aka PCV – packed cell volume). The elevated hematocrit is a result from fluid shifting out of the blood vessels as a result of the excessive fluid loss through the intestinal tract. The bacterium called *Clostridium Perfringens* has been isolated from intestinal cultures in some dogs but the exact role it has played is unknown currently.

Treatment HGE is intravenous fluid replacement with IV fluids continuing for as long as the diarrhea persists. Antibiotics and steroids are used to fight any bacteria present and to combat the affects of shock. Blood transfusions may be necessary in extreme cases.

After the initial symptoms are under control, the dog may continue on a bland diet for several weeks, similar to diets prescribed for other intestinal disorders.

Delayed or left untreated dogs may suffer permanent consequences from HGE in the form of higher liver enzymes, bleeding disorders, seizures, and cardiac arrhythmia.



