



Cornell University  
College of Veterinary Medicine



# DOG Watch

Expert information on medicine, behavior and health from a world leader in veterinary medicine

Vol. 20, No. 10 ♦ October 2016

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## IN THE NEWS ...

### Research Will Focus on Inner-city Dogs' Health

Swedish researchers last year announced results of an extensive study that found children's early exposure to dogs could reduce the risk of asthma as much as 15 percent.

In an innovative twist on the topic, the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) has awarded a grant to Meghan F. Davis, DVM, MPH, Ph.D., at Johns Hopkins University to study skin and respiratory diseases in inner-city dogs living in the homes of children with asthma.

Dr. Davis and her team of researchers will enroll 100 dogs, collecting bacterial samples on the dogs' skin and following their health during home visits. They will also test whether the children and dogs share the same bacteria.

Their work will improve understanding of disease in urban-dwelling dogs, an often underserved population, the CHF says, adding, "It will deepen our understanding of how canine and human health intersect." The National Institutes of Health is funding the human component of the study. ♦

## Geography's Role in Ear Infections

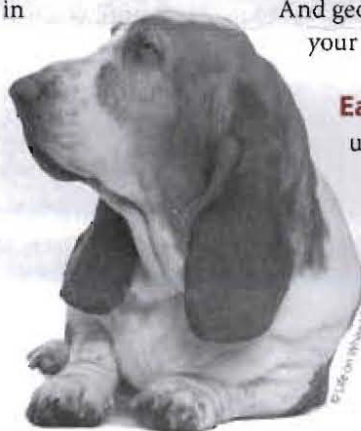
*It may help determine susceptibility, along with the prevalence in some breeds and frequent swimming*

Infections of the external ear are one of the most common conditions in dogs. They occur twice as often as in cats. The good news is that infections in dogs appear to be decreasing, at least by one account. They've dropped 6 percent in the past five years, according to Banfield Pet Hospital's 2016 State of Pet Health report covering more than 900 clinics.

You should be aware of two significant facts, however: The infections remain prevalent in certain breeds, affecting one in four Golden Retrievers

and one in five Labrador Retrievers.

And geography may help determine your dog's susceptibility.



The challenge for owners of dogs with floppy ears like Basset Hounds: ensuring the ears stay clean and dry.

**Ear Drum Damage.** Left untreated, the infections can become chronic, causing pain and irreparable damage to the ear canal or eardrum. "Beyond the discomfort the animal experiences, the infection can extend beyond the external ear canal," says dermatologist William H. Miller, VMD, medical director of the Cornell

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## Why They Scoot Along the Floor

*It could be to ease an occasional itch, but more likely impacted anal glands are causing pain and irritation*

If you see your dog scoot his rear along the carpet or suddenly stop mid-stride to lick his anal area or bite under his tail, the problem could be as simple as a passing itch or something more serious such as gastrointestinal disease, allergies or worms.

However, the chances are that his anal sacs are impacted — an uncomfortably itchy condition that causes painful defecation. Human food, rawhide and other low-fiber indulgences like table scraps could be the culprits in this very common canine condition, providing yet another reason to stick to a high-fiber pet food, particularly in susceptible dogs.

**Varied Reasons.** Obesity can impact the incidence, and small and medium-sized dogs seem prone to the disorder, but any dog can be affected. The anatomy of small dogs has not been identified as a cause. "There are a variety of reasons for anal sac disease — one of which is a stool that is too soft," says William H. Miller, VMD, medical director of the Companion Animal Hospital at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.

Here's why overly soft stools cause trouble: Your dog has an anal sac on each side of his anus, each filled with strong-smelling liquid that he uses to mark his territory. Every time

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## SHORT TAKES

### Saving a Far-off Genetic Legacy With Cornell Help

Cornell researchers are working to paint a more precise picture of dog diversity, and a Mongolian landrace of dogs is helping to fill in the blanks. Unlike pedigreed breeds, dogs described as a landrace are a loose population of canines with greater variation in appearance and temperament. They are physically adapted to a specific environment and often selected for working ability.

One such landrace is the Mongolian Bankhar Dog. In Mongolian, the word "bankhar" means "broad face," an apt description of these dogs who are members of the Mastiff family. Bankhars once worked as livestock guardians, but their use fell by the wayside in the mid-20th century.

Today researchers with the nonprofit Mongolian Bankhar Dog Project are working to bring the breed back to its original use — giving nomadic herders a nonlethal way to protect their livestock from predators. In the process they are contributing to research about the early beginnings of dogs.

That research began when geneticist Adam Boyko, Ph.D., assistant professor in biomedical sciences at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, felt that there was a gap in the scientific knowledge of canine genetics. "There're a billion dogs in the world, and easily 60 percent of them are village dogs," Dr. Boyko says. With the help of his brother, Ryan, then a graduate student at the University of California-Davis, he began collecting DNA samples of those often-overlooked dogs. Ryan is now CEO of Embark Veterinary, a dog genetics testing company he co-founded with Dr. Boyko in 2015.

"My brother was really interested in dogs, so for his honeymoon, he and his wife collected dog DNA from different places in Africa and we analyzed it back at Cornell," Dr. Boyko says. "It looked really interesting. It didn't look



**Cornell's study of DNA from Mongolian Bankhar Dogs** found they have more genetic diversity than dogs elsewhere, suggesting their Central Asia location may be where dogs originated. Today the dogs are returning to their roles as guardians of nomads' livestock.

like anything we'd ever seen before in the lab. Whereas a lot of people assumed street and village dogs around the world were just mutts, it was clear that in many, many of the places we visited, they were indigenous populations with a rich history and little if any admixture from the 'modern' dog breeds that were the basis of most previously canine genetic research."

At that point, they had analyzed the DNA of 80 different breeds. They received funding to sample as many interesting indigenous dog populations as they could around the world. The research took them to Indonesia, India, Vietnam, Lebanon and other countries.

While Dr. Boyko hasn't yet been to Mongolia, researchers in the Bankhar project have sent him DNA samples from their dogs. Dogs like the Bankhar and their distant cousin the Tibetan Mastiff have a lot more genetic diversity than dogs elsewhere. That's significant because it suggests that their Central Asian location may be where dogs originated. That doesn't mean, however, that the Bankhar and Tibetan Mastiff look the same way that dogs

(continued on page 4)

# Considering Pet Sitting or Boarding?

*Here's what you need to know to provide a safe, disease-free and low-stress experience*

When Carmen Rustenbeck adopted a 3-year-old Labrador Retriever from a shelter, she knew making him feel safe was a top priority. Java was highly stressed and shook at every sound. Even though she serves as director of the International Boarding and Pet Services Center Association, Rustenbeck felt hiring a professional pet sitter while she was away was the best decision.

"I knew I needed him to be comfortable in our home, and that's why we hired a professional pet sitter. "Eventually, as Java gained his confidence, we were able to take him to a cage-free boarding facility when we traveled, and I am happy knowing that he feels safe and happy there."

Whether you're away for business or a holiday get-away, your options, after friends and family, are hiring a professional pet sitter or taking your dog to a boarding facility. The choice depends on your dog's health, age, temperament and experience with other companion animals.

"Dogs who are shy, quiet and get intimidated by the presence of other dogs or loud barking will likely prefer to be at home than in a kennel," says Leni Kaplan, MS, DVM, a lecturer in the Community Practice Service at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. "Dogs who easily tolerate changes in their routines and environment, are used to being around other dogs and especially those who go to doggy day care are best candidates for boarding."

Keep in mind when making your choice that all dogs need and deserve



Services at Paradise Ranch in Sun Valley, Calif., include cage-free boarding and a cooling swim.

time alone for sleeping, eating and relaxing. "Those caring for your dog need to recognize signs of stress," Dr. Kaplan says. "They also need to know if your pet needs to be examined by a veterinarian and can administer medication if needed."

She suggests owners take a favorite dog bed, toys, clothing with the owner's scent and the dog's own food bowl as sources of comfort during boarding. Additionally, to avoid GI problems while boarding, owners should provide the dog's regular food to the facility.

In choosing a professional pet sitter, consider one who belongs to a professional

pet sitting organization, such as the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters, [www.petsitters.org](http://www.petsitters.org), and Pet Sitters International, [www.petsit.com](http://www.petsit.com). Members must show proof of being licensed and bonded.

Take the time to set up a meet-and-greet between a sitter and your dog at home to gauge compatibility. "Finding a pet sitter who is familiar with your dog is also great, as this may decrease your dog's anxiety when you are out of town since he or she knows the person," she says. "Find one who expresses an interest in what your dog likes and strives to maintain your dog's schedule."

Yvette Gonzalez, president of NAPPS and owner of the As You Wish Pet Sitters in Denver, says, "Our philosophy is that the companion animal is healthier and happier in his own surroundings. When you take them out of their familiar smells and sur-

roundings, it can be stressful. Deviation from routine can throw off your dog's health and psyche."

She recommends senior dogs in particular be cared for by pet sitters, citing her dog, Skippy, an 11-year-old Portuguese Water Dog, who has a set daily routine. "My senior dog spends much of his time sleeping. Skippy gets up at 6, likes to follow the sun to take his naps and knows dinner is 5 p.m." She doubts he would adapt well to a high-energy boarding facility.

Both NAPPS and PSI offer membership lists for the public that identify each member's credentials, types of services

*(continued on the bottom of page 5)*

**GENETIC**... (continued from page 2)

did 15,000 years ago, when it's estimated that dogs were domesticated.

The first dogs in Central Asia were likely scavenging large game killed by human hunters, and only after the domestication of livestock did the development and breeding for large livestock-guarding dogs begin. "You'd need archaeological records to figure out when they actually took the form that they have today," Dr. Boyko says, "but it is consistent with these being ancient groups of dogs."

Bruce Elfstrom founded the Bankhar project in 2011 after he learned of environmental challenges facing nomadic herders in Mongolia. Predators such as snow leopards, wolves and brown bears threaten flocks of sheep, goats, horses, camels and yaks. Those same predators face being shot, trapped or poisoned by herders intent on protecting their animals.

Elfstrom, a biologist by training, wondered if livestock protection dogs were the answer. They could not only protect flocks but also protect predators — some like the snow leopard that are endangered — by preventing herders from having to kill them. He discovered

that some herders in remote areas of Mongolia still used Bankhar dogs for that purpose.

The Bankhar's job is to go out with the flocks and protect them round the clock. The dogs are calm, intelligent and powerful, even playful, but in an instant their bark — in one case prompted by the unexpected raising of a camera — gives more than a hint of underlying menace. "They definitely give you the sense that they would be a fierce fighter," says Greg Goodfellow, project scientist.

Although the population of the dogs had dwindled, they were still highly thought of, almost revered, by Mongolians, many of whom remembered their parents or grandparents talking about the dogs' bravery. That made them a good choice for the project.

"Livestock guard dogs are used throughout the world," Goodfellow



Scientists with the Mongolian Bankhar Dog Project weigh and measure a dog for their research.

**Bankhar puppies wait in a temporary kennel.** Adults both protect livestock and prevent herders from having to kill predators.



says. "We could have chosen some other type of dog that's already working in other countries, but .... we figured why not just use a Mongolian solution to a Mongolian problem."

They searched the country to find examples of the dogs and came across a dog breeder who had acquired a number of the dogs with a similar idea. His dogs, plus others, comprised the foundation stock.

The main kennels are set on the grassland steppe about 60 miles west of the capital city Ulaanbaatar. Since 2014, approximately 19 dogs have been placed with herders in various parts of the country, including near Hustai and Gorkhi Terelj National Parks and in the South Gobi. It's early yet to know how successful they will be, but Goodfellow is hopeful that they will make a difference. Dr. Boyko agrees. "You're not just safeguarding a genetic legacy but a lifestyle where those genes make sense," he says. ♦

KIM THORNTON, WHO HAS AN INTEREST IN CONSERVATION AND CANINE EVOLUTION, VISITED THE MONGOLIAN BANKHAR DOG PROJECT TO REPORT ON IT IN THE SPRING.

**SCOOT...** (continued from cover)

he defecates, the action under normal circumstances releases a little of the fluid through tiny openings.

Firm stools provide the pressure needed to help release the fluid. Soft stools don't help — so fluid builds up in the sacs, and the sac openings can become clogged. The distended, swollen sacs make it painful to defecate. Abscesses can form. If they burst, bloody pus oozes, and the infection requires veterinary treatment.

**Muscle Tone.** Other problems can give rise to anal sac disease and the need to scoot, including structural abnormalities of the anal sac, decreased tone of the anal musculature and various other disorders. "Increased fiber won't help these latter causes," Dr. Miller says. "The veterinarian should decide if the stool consistency is the issue and how to address it."

Anal sac disease can occur alone or with any disease that brings anal-area irritation or inflammation — such as diarrhea, upset stomach or other gastrointestinal diseases that impact the firmness of stools. Many dogs with allergies also have anal sac disease, as do dogs with neurologic diseases that impact the nerves of the anal region, Dr. Miller says.

What's owner to do? Besides improving the dog's diet, the other way to bring relief — faster — for ordinary cases is to express, or empty, the anal glands when they're full. "No one should do it without prior instruction on how to do it safely and effectively," Dr. Miller stresses. "This needs to be demonstrated and not described." Ask your dog's veterinarian to show you.

When you see telltale signs of full anal sacs, such as licking, scooting and frequent spontaneous discharge of secretions, then the dog's anal sacs should be expressed — a process of gentle manual palpation that usually takes only a matter of minutes once the supplies are readied, Dr. Miller says.

If there is infection or impaction, the process will take longer and probably will be uncomfortable to painful, he says. "Animals with very inflamed anal sacs may require tranquilization." If the liquid in the sacs is too dry to express, veterinarians can infuse saline or another softening agent into the sacs to help.

If the anal sacs aren't full, however, don't bother your dog, Dr. Miller says. "I believe that 'If it isn't broken, don't fix it.' If there are no signs of anal sac disease, I do not believe the sacs should be expressed." While uncommon, the action

**THOSE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE**

Small and medium-size dogs appear to be more susceptible to anal gland infections and impactions, including:

- ◆ Basset Hounds
- ◆ Beagles
- ◆ Chihuahuas
- ◆ Cocker Spaniels
- ◆ Lhasa Apsos
- ◆ Miniature and Toy Poodles



Miniature and Toy Poodles are among the vulnerable breeds.

could cause problems such as inflammation and infection, leading to an abscess.

A schedule for expressing the glands depends on the individual. Dogs with other diseases need their anal sacs expressed more often, Dr. Miller says. Those who develop frequent recurrent episodes of infection, inflammation and abscesses can be put on a regular schedule to prevent future symptoms. ♦

**BOARDING...** (continued from page 3)

and geographical areas they cover. Both organizations also provide on-going

education for their members through webinars, conferences and publications.

**THE MUST VACCINES**

Boarding centers should maintain high health standards and require a copy of a dog's vaccine certificate to show he's up to to date on rabies protection, as well as vaccinated against bordetella (kennel cough — the No. 1 health problem in kennels), distemper, hepatitis and parvovirus.

A vaccine is available for the H3N2 canine influenza, a highly contagious respiratory disease spread

through coughing, sneezing and contaminated objects. It is a non-core vaccine, meaning only dogs with increased risk of exposure, such as those boarding or attending day care, would benefit from having the vaccination.

If your dog is not up to date on these vaccines, you should provide a letter from his veterinarian in advance, explaining his exemption.

If you have an energetic, social dog, he may enjoy boarding because it offers both supervised play and individual sleeping rooms at night. "A quality boarding facility staff will make you and your pet feel welcome when you walk in and be willing to answer your questions, conduct a tour," Rustenbeck says. "The ideal boarding facility will not raise stress levels in your pet. We also recommend boarding facilities that have someone on site at night."

If you choose to board your dog, Dr. Kaplan recommends you visit the premises beforehand to assess cleanliness and odor. Ask how often dogs are allowed out of their rooms and exercised and if the center has had any outbreaks of disease. ♦

**BEHAVIOR**

# **EARS** ... (continued from cover)

Companion Animal Hospital. "It can also spread into the middle and inner ear and cause neurologic signs and deafness."

Banfield reports a higher incidence of canine ear infections in Alabama, Florida, Michigan, South Carolina and the territory of Puerto Rico. Says Kirk Breuninger, VMD, MPH, with the Banfield Applied Research & Knowledge team called BARK: "We aren't certain why these are the states with the highest prevalence, but pets usually get ear infections because of an underlying issue."

Possible reasons for the effects of location may include climate and local vegetation, Dr. Miller says. For instance, he says heat and humidity can alter the flora in the ear canal. "This doesn't cause the ear infection but makes it easier for an infection to occur when there is minor trauma to the ear canal."



An otoscope permits the veterinarian to assess the ear for inflammation and the presence of a foreign body and tumor.

Another possible reason is that breed popularity can vary around the country. It may be that the areas that Banfield cites have a larger population of dogs prone to ear infections.

The company's report found the prevalence of otitis externa, or inflammation of the external ear, to be 12.9 cases per 100 dogs. Otitis media is inflammation of the middle ear, and otitis interna is inflammation of the inner ear. Infections

of the middle ear usually result from infection that has spread from the outer ear canal. Signs of both external and middle ear infections can be similar.

You can become the first line of defense in identifying an ear infection. Simply check your dog by giving his ears a quick rub — something you probably do everyday. Whether he shows pleasure or discomfort is a clue to the ears' condition. "If there is pain or if the animal really gets into it

and rubs the ears against your hand, he probably has a problem," Dr. Miller says.

**At-home Inspection.** For a closer inspection, give the ears a good sniff. They should be odor-free. Look inside. Normal, healthy ears have a nice pale-pink or grayish color. Redness, especially if the tissue also appears swollen, signals inflammation or infection. Anytime your dog shows these

## **THE BEST REGIMEN: BENIGN NEGLECT**

Unless they swim frequently, most dogs' ears remain healthy with a regimen of benign neglect. They rarely need to have their ears cleaned. "The normal ear comes with its own built-in ear-cleaning mechanisms," says dermatologist William H. Miller, VMD, at Cornell. "If ear cleaners are used when they aren't needed, they can damage the normal cleaning mechanisms."

If your dog has a history of ear problems, it's wise to check his ears weekly for signs of infection. Clean his ears only if his veterinarian recommends it for an active ear infection, or he is recovering from an ear infection or injury. Given the go-ahead, here's what you should know:

- ◆ Use a mild cleanser made for dogs such as Oti-Clens, available from veterinarians and pet supply stores, or another cleaning solution the veterinarian recommends.
- ◆ Never clean ears with alcohol, which can sting or dry delicate ear tissue.
- ◆ You can use a cotton-tipped applicator to clean the folds and creases near the surface of the ear, but

don't push it into the ear canal. That can pack debris deeper into the ear.

- ◆ After he swims, thoroughly dry the interior of your dog's ears. Depending on the ears' sensitivity, and veterinary advice, treat them with a 50:50 or 25:75 solution of white vinegar and water to acidify the ear canal. The acidification helps to inhibit the growth of bacteria and yeast.
- ◆ Use one hand to tilt the dog's head downward. With the other, squirt enough cleanser into the ear to fill it. Gently massage the outer part of the ear to move the fluid into the ear canal so it can loosen any dirt and debris inside.

When you're done, stand back and let your dog shake his head. That helps to remove the dirt inside. Finally, wipe the ear with a cotton ball to remove any excess cleanser as well as any remaining debris the dog shakes loose.

signs, he needs to see the veterinarian. At-home treatment with eardrops may be useless or even counterproductive if the medication is aimed at the wrong cause. Veterinarians prescribe medications specific to the type of infection.

In addition to odor, these are signs your dog's ears are troubling him, and he should have a veterinary examination:

- ◆ Shaking the head frequently
- ◆ Scratching at the ears
- ◆ Tilting the head
- ◆ Showing pain when you touch an ear
- ◆ Discharge, especially if it resembles coffee grounds
- ◆ Swelling of the ear flap or ear canal
- ◆ Depression or irritability

Otitis externa has many different causes, including allergies, bacterial or yeast infections, or infestation by ear mites. Yeast or bacterial infections can

take hold any time the ecology of the ears changes, Dr. Miller says. Foreign bodies, tumors and ticks are also fairly common causes of single-ear infections. When both ears are infected, the causes can be allergies, swimming and overzealous cleaning. (See sidebar.)

Allergies are associated with a number of different breeds, and most allergic dogs will develop an otitis externa, Dr. Miller says. Food allergies, allergies to drugs and atopy, which is a reaction to airborne allergens, can all trigger ear infections.

Another possible cause of ear infections is foreign objects that become lodged in the ear canal. In parts of the country where grass awns (foxtails) are



**Frequent head scratching** and head shaking are among the signs of an ear infection.

found, they may be a cause of ear infections in active outdoor dogs.

Veterinarians begin their diagnosis by examining the ears through an otoscope to look for inflammation and the presence of a foreign body. A history can help determine the possibility of an allergy, and cytology — a microscopic exam of a tissue sample — may be necessary to determine the presence of bacteria, yeast, mites or inflammatory cells. Culturing the sample to identify the specific organism usually isn't necessary. Most cases of otitis externa can be managed with topical treatments.

**New Remedies.** Depending on the infection's cause and severity, relatively newer treatments may be prescribed. "They are designed to last in the ear canal one to four weeks so the owner does not have to treat the ears daily," Dr. Miller says. "Because the medication can't be disturbed, the ears cannot be cleaned during the treatment, so these products are the best for dogs who do not produce lots of wax."

The drugs are fairly potent, and at each application some of them are absorbed into the dogs' body, Dr. Miller says. "If these products are used on a routine and regular basis, there is the possibility of developing systemic side effects from the absorbed drugs."

Treating ear infections isn't fun, but if done early on the infection can be eliminated quickly. ♦

## LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR INFECTIONS

Breeds more likely to suffer ear infections include:

- ◆ Those with drooping ears such as Spaniels, Beagles and Basset Hounds. The pendant ears themselves don't cause the problems but make an existing infection much more difficult to resolve. Owners simply need to make more of an effort to ensure the ears stay clean and dry, says dermatologist William H. Miller, VMD, at Cornell.
- ◆ Schnauzers and other dogs with hairy inner ear canals like Bichons and Poodles. "They can be predisposed either because the hair is plucked from the ear while the dog is being groomed can cause irritation or the hair blocks the normal cleaning mechanism of the ear canal," Dr. Miller says.



**King Charles Spaniels who love to swim** face an extra risk of ear infection unless their ears are kept dry — breed vulnerability and exposure to water.

Water-loving dogs are also at risk. When the already warm interior of a dog's ear gets wet, it creates a perfect environment for the growth of bacteria and yeast. Hair inside the ears acts like a wick, drawing water up into the ears. If ears aren't kept clean and dry, bacteria multiply, causing an infection that leads to constant itching and scratching.



**Katherine A. Houpt, VMD, Ph.D.,** here with her West Highland White Terrier, Yuki, provided the answer on this page. Dr. Houpt is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and emeritus professor at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.

**Please Share Your Questions**  
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## COMING UP ...

SECOND  
OPINIONS



INDOOR  
WINTER SAFETY



MITRAL VALVE  
DISEASE



HEAD PRESSING

## Jack Patrols his New Fenced Yard but Won't Urinate in it

**Q** After much consideration, research and lengthy neighbors' and homeowners' association approval, I had a lovely PVC white picket fence installed last week in my back yard. I still walk my Maltese-Poodle morning and evening but want to let him out in the yard during the day to urinate and enjoy fresh air.

The fence allows me to work with fewer interruptions — I have a home-based business — and still provide Jack with exercise and stimulation as he watches squirrels in the trees and neighbors walking in the next block. Here's my problem: He's really not much interested in the fence. Jack prefers to sit on a chair on the indoor patio facing it. Or walk the interior perimeter as if conducting an inspection. Or roll in whatever unseemly debris he finds.

But he won't urinate, nor will he romp around, even with my encouragement, although the fence is a generous 18 by 38 feet. He seems to enjoy sitting and staring, but I'd hoped he'd embrace the fence as his own. I look for snakes before letting him out and frequently supervise when he's outside in case critters or loose dogs are lurking around. How do I train him to urinate in his yard?

**A** You are not alone. Many pet owners have with the best intentions in the world and provide their pet with an expensive addition to the environment only to find that the pet does not like it. For example, when Denver, my beloved Cairn Terrier, died suddenly, I decided to get a livelier dog for my Ragdoll cat Hadley. Hadley had lived happily with a Border Collie and had mostly ignored Denver, but when Yuki the thousand-dollar Westie puppy arrived, she took an instant dislike. She hisses at her, threatens her with her claws and lives four feet off the ground. They will sit peacefully within 18 inches of one another when turkey is on offer, but that is as friendly as they get.

But I have digressed. The real question is why is your Maltipoo not playing or eliminating in his fenced enclosure. Dogs can be as fussy as cats about the substrate on which they urinate. When you take him out to urinate, where does he urinate — that is, which surface does he choose? Does he like grass, concrete sidewalk, asphalt, the street or a weedy patch? You may have to provide a similar substrate in your yard for him.

You can also make the yard smell more appropriate to him by putting a piece of paper on which he has urinated in the yard. The reason you wanted the yard was to relieve you of the duty of taking him outside, but he has learned that you will always be there to protect him from the big scary world. I recommend going out with him on leash for a week and reward him with a tiny treat as soon as he urinates.

After a week of that, put his leash on but do not hold it. Yes, it will get dirty but can be washed. In the third week, just go out with him, still rewarding urination. He should be willing to urinate in the yard and you will have to reward him only sporadically.

The big question may be how can you get him to urinate in the yard the first time so you can reward him. You know when he always has to go — probably first thing in the morning. Take him to the yard then instead of taking him for a walk.

His inspection of the fence and general vigilance indicate that it is slightly scary. I love those white vinyl fences, but their bright color may be aversive to him. The scene is interrupted by the white panels, and that may be disorienting to him, especially when he moves his head. It would be interesting to know if a wooden fence would have provoked the same reaction.

The good news is that he should habituate to it after a while — weeks or months. If he has a doggy friend with whom he likes to play, a play date in the yard may help him to relax there. As for rolling in disgusting things, that is a whole different subject but indicates that he feels relaxed enough to anoint himself. ❖

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