

Northwoods Humane Society – Deanna Persson, President

The spring brings bugs and I imagine most of us have done some scratching just at the thought of mosquitoes and we certainly give thoughts to fleas this time of year and of course the dreaded ticks. We currently have two dogs – Chip and Lola. Chip is a terrier mix and Lola is a Yorkie. Both are small and furry. Ticks like Chip but usually not Lola.

Recently we have been using NexGard which is a chewable treatment for killing fleas and ticks. It must be prescribed by your veterinarian. Full disclosure -Mike, my husband, and I have had ticks too – but we have not been treated. However, we do have both of our Covid 19 vaccines. Please consult with your vet as to which preventative tick and flea treatment to use. Not all are equal and some might be hazardous to your pet's health.

This is so weird – but just now, I felt something on the side of my face. You are right! It was a tick! I had been rubbing my face against our cat Belle. As usual, she was helping me write this article. How timely was that?! She is pretty much an indoor cat – a mystery with several potential solutions.

I have a little paperback book entitled “Ingenious Home Remedies for Dogs and Cats” which is published by Rodale Press. The authors state that their treatments are not intended as a substitute for any treatment that may be prescribed by a veterinarian – but it is designed to help you make informed decisions about your pet's health and care. Some of the thoughts in the little book are vet inspired.

The first tidbit to share is “Tick Removal 101”. If you spot a feeding tick on your dog or cat, it's important to remove it quickly. The longer it feeds, the more likely it is to transmit Lyme disease. Veterinarian Walter Doolittle suggests the following:

1. Gather together a pair of tweezers, a jar partly filled with rubbing alcohol, a lid for the jar, and an antibiotic ointment. If needed, get someone to hold your pet.
2. With the tweezers, grab as close to the tick's head as possible and gently pull it out.
3. Drop the detached tick into the jar. Cover the jar and dispose of it, or keep it to show your vet in case your pet develops symptoms of Lyme disease.
4. Dab the antibiotic ointment on your pet's wound. Ticks don't die just because they're detached. If you throw them in the trash or toilet, they can crawl out and strike again. Check your pets daily! If your pets acts sluggish, feverish, lethargic – see your Vet.

Fleas don't like bad smells. To help repel fleas, add a garlic and soy sauce condiment to your cat's food. Mix 1/8 teaspoon tamari soy sauce with 1/8 teaspoon water. Add on crushed whole clove of garlic. Marinate the garlic in the liquid for about 10 minutes then remove it. Add 1/16 to 1/8 teaspoon soy liquid to each ½ cup cat food. Use the condiment immediately.

Do you think you might have a flea problem in your house? Here is a way to lay a trap. Wherever you think there might be fleas, plug in a night-light and put a wide pan partially filled with water underneath

it. Since fleas are attracted to warmth, some will leap toward the light and make a splashdown in the water, where they'll drown (this doesn't sound very humane like but.....). You'll get an idea of what you are up against.

About 25% of animals will be more repellent to fleas if you use garlic and brewer's yeast in their diet regularly. On a daily basis, give ½ clove of garlic to cats and ½ to 2 cloves to dogs, depending on their size. Give 1 teaspoon yeast to a cat and 1 teaspoon to 3 tablespoons to a dog. Some animals like these flavors and some don't, so experiment.

Washing your pet's bedding at least once a week will help keep fleas at bay. Protect the thick beds with a sheet or towel that are easy to wash. Roll the towel or sheet up as you carry it to the washing machine.

This is my favorite tip about flea management health care – get more pets! Get worms – Nematodes are little microscopic worms that prey on the larvae and pupae of many insects, including fleas. You buy them at pet or garden store. A 330-gram canister contains about 100 million little worms – you don't have to name them – just let them do their thing.

Heartworms for pets are an ugly thing. A suggestion to cut the risk that your pet will get heartworms and reduce the mosquito population is to encourage purple martins in your yard. Again, more pets – got to love it!

Dates to save:

May 28 – Summer Sizzle – Dining for Cats and Dogs – Lynn's Custom Meats and Catering – Highway 63 N in Hayward – 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

June 3 – Purple Cat Van – Free Spay and neuter for cats of fixed and low income families and for feral cats. Call NHS from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to schedule an appointment – 715-634-5394.

September 12 – NHS and OCSA Dog Walk and Ice Cream Social – NHS Shelter – Noon to 2 p.m.

October 6 – 10<sup>th</sup> – NHS On-line Auction sponsored by Kubarek Auction House