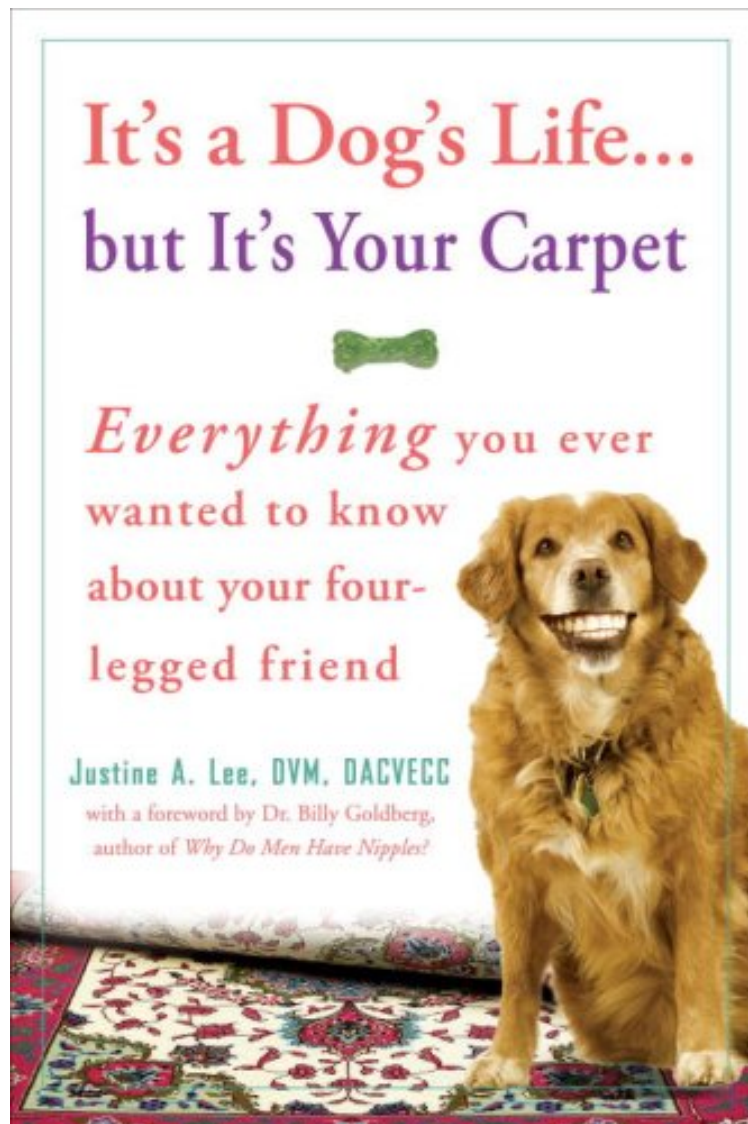


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## It's a Dog's Life...but It's Your Carpet: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Your Four-Legged Friend

Justine Lee

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**Justine Lee : It's a Dog's Life...but It's Your Carpet: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Your Four-Legged Friend** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised It's a Dog's Life...but It's Your Carpet: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Your Four-Legged Friend:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Had me laughing out loud late at night!By GoldenLoveDogThis

book is so well written, in a style combining solid information that can be used in everyday situations with "laugh out loud" humor that kept me wanting to continue reading long after I should have gone to bed! The author has such a unique style, simple and easy to read, drawing the reader in with great questions and answers. At the same time, she keeps the reader informed about serious issues and I found myself wishing the book would somehow magically "add pages" as I got closer to the end! I would recommend this to any pet lover, and will keep it and read it again! (My sweet Golden Retriever, Rosie, enjoyed the parts I read out loud to her as well!)<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. Love this book  
By Karjinx  
Read it cover to cover in 2 days. If it wasn't for having to go to work and other obligations, I wouldn't have put it down. Since then I have loaned it to other family members. They enjoyed it too. Now part of my permanent book collection.<sup>1</sup> of 1 people found the following review helpful. It's a Dog's Life...but It's Your Carpet  
By Robert Douglass  
The book is excellent, dealing with questions humans have about canines. Dr. Lee's writing is funny and seriously educational at the same time...I laughed and learned all the way through the book. Chapters offer concise information and advice for a wide range of pet problems...from "Is it my boyfriend or Skippy farting, and can I give him Beano?" to "Can second smoke affect Fido?" to "Why do male dogs have nipples?" to "What are the ten top dog toxins?" Dr. Lee's knowledge of veterinary medicine and her love for dogs shines through every page. This book will stay on my reference shelf forever. I highly recommend it to all dog owners and potential owners.  
Diane Douglass (Mrs. Robert Douglass)(a happy dog owner who now uses Beano for my two canines!)

Why does my dog lick his balls? Admit it; you've always wanted to know. Well, finally there's a professional out there who's not too embarrassed to answer bone-fide veterinarian, critical-care specialist, and dog lover Dr. Justine A. Lee. It's a Dog's Life . . . but It's Your Carpet takes you behind the scenes to look at the training and off-the-record opinions of a certified vet, and answers all the questions you've always wanted to ask about your dog, including: Is a dog's nose a good indicator of his health? Can a Chihuahua and a Great Dane mate? Why do dogs eat their own poop? What's the smartest breed? Can I get my dog's ears pierced? Why does my dog roll around in rotting feces? If I mix food coloring with Fluffy's kibble, will it make her poop easier to find in the yard? Written by one of two hundred veterinary board-certified emergency critical-care specialists in the world, It's a Dog's Life . . . but It's Your Carpet offers factual and funny answers to some of the most common, offbeat questions about our beloved companions. Whether you're looking for advice on pet rearing, solutions to your dog's most frustrating habits, explanations of his weirdest quirks, or simply a good laugh, this book is sure to inform and entertain dog lovers of every breed.

About the Author JUSTINE A. LEE, DVM, DACVECC, is an assistant clinical professor at the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine and a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Emergency Critical Care. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. CHAPTER 1 PET PECULIARITIES If I had a quarter for every time I heard, Oh, you're a vet? followed by a dime for each time I heard Well, his nose was dry, so I knew . . . well, then I wouldn't have to write this book to pay off my veterinary school loans. Forge on ahead to see if your dog's nose is an accurate indicator of his overall health. Will his schnoz really tell you how sick he is? This chapter is the insiders guide to dog ownership. If you're too embarrassed to ask your vet dumb questions about what to do with your dog's stinky farts or how to prevent him from destroying your lawn, read on! Can't figure out how well your dog can see or smell, or if he really hates cats? Not sure why he likes to sniff other dogs' butts? Not sure if you need to quit smoking for your dog's sake? Want to know if there are any tricks of the trade to minimize his shedding all over your nice, new Italian microfiber sofa? This chapter reviews common medical questions about dogs that you never knew you could ask a vet (without sounding like one of those owners), and explains some of the peculiarities of owning a pet. On the other hand, if you don't have a pet yet . . . find out what you're about to get into! Is your dog's nose an accurate indicator of his overall health? The truism goes that the eye can lie, but the nose knows. However, I think that when Anonymous wrote this gem, she was referring to the guilty party with the perfume-scented collar rather than the hairy housemate in the leather collar. In general, Fido's nose is not an indicator of how sick or healthy he is. Check out your dog's nose. You may notice it fluctuates between slightly dry to soft and moist, depending on the day, weather, and humidity. A dog's nose usually feels wet due to the lateral nasal glands' secretions that keep it moist.<sup>1</sup> There is, however, no direct correlation with the health of your pet and their sniffer. If you notice that your dog's nose is excessively thickened, cracked, or bleeding, then that might warrant a vet exam, as certain conditions, such as pemphigus or lupus, can present this way. But the difference will be very obvious. Just remember this handy little rhyme: If it's dry or wet, no vet; but if it looks sick, get hip! This should help you weed out your parental anxieties from the true emergencies. Why do dogs like to sniff butts? Why, hello there! Ever wonder why dogs like to sniff each other's butts in the dog park? Dogs have two anal glands just on the inside of their rectum. They release a foul brownish discharge with a strong, unique scent. Both male and female dogs have these, and that's why you may notice dogs identifying each other by a sniff of their scent glands. While this may seem crude to you, it's the dog equivalent of a handshake and introduction. Thank dog that evolution got us out of that one. How well do dogs smell? Isn't it great how Tracker can find that dead, decaying carcass in the woods from hundreds of feet away? Dogs have an amazing sense of smell, which they used to hunt and survive in the past, and to find and dig up things better left alone in the

present. (Hey Ma! Look what I found!) For comparison, humans have approximately 5 million olfactory sensory cells that we use to smell with, while dogs can have up to 220 million. That's the reason why police use bloodhounds and drug dogs to make their busts: their sense of smell is a million times stronger than a human's! I once had a patient named Kilo who was a police dog; as his name suggested, his schnoz was able to sniff out illicit drugs behind drywall, in crawl spaces, and in all the hidden spots where druggies hide their stash. Unfortunately, he started passing out when he got excited, due to a heart arrhythmia, but since we put a pacemaker in him, Kilo is back to bustin' the bad guys! Given the state of urban living today, I suppose we should be thankful our sniffer isn't stronger. Why don't dogs get hairballs? Unlike cats, dogs are not particularly fastidious when it comes to cleaning themselves—remember, they roll in dead, decaying animals, race into murky bodies of water like they're on fire, and don't mind eating each other's poop. I'm not quite sure why dogs tolerate being dirty, stinky, and messy, but like many children and some human males, they just don't seem to mind. Cats, on the other hand, groom excessively (and therefore don't require baths). They have a naturally barbed tongue that grabs shedding hair, which they later purge all over your carpet. Because dogs don't groom (or don't care), they don't develop hairballs. Instead, they develop weird smells and doggy dreadlocks as they are waiting for you to brush and bathe them! Why do dogs shed? My boyfriend thinks that I leave my hair everywhere to purposely mark my territory, but since he only dates brunettes, it wouldn't really help me. Hair isn't effective as a territorial flag, anyway—stray winds and foot traffic make it unlikely to stay put. Strategically abandoned clothing, on the other hand . . . well, let's just say we all shed things for different reasons. Dogs shed to help them regulate their temperature as the seasons change. Since your little furball doesn't have the option of donning a warm parka in the winter or getting buck naked in the summer, his coat has to be able to adapt to environmental changes. In extreme conditions, not only does hair protect him from cold, heat, and damaging UV light rays, but it also provides a protective barrier against any skin trauma while he's running through the woods, playing with other dogs, or getting bitten by insects. During periods of short daylight, your dog's brain tries to maintain a thicker coat for warmth. He'll even grow in secondary hairs in the fall and winter to add more warmth. In the spring and summer months, you may find yourself Swiffering your house much more frequently, because your dog's brain is now affected by the longer photoperiod (the amount of daylight he is exposed to), and he will begin to shed more aggressively. Often, he will only shed his shorter undercoat and develop a coarser, longer hair coat during the spring and summer; this helps act as a protective buffer and provides a cooler layer around the skin. For this reason, we don't advocate shaving dogs that spend time outdoors, as they will (a) sunburn, (b) get attacked by insects, (c) get hotter (despite looking naked), and (d) get ridiculed by neighborhood dogs. How do I make Fido shed less? My non-vet friends always fearfully ask, "Is something wrong with your cat?" before they reach over to pet one of them. The thing is, I often shave my short-haired cats down to a peach fuzz level. I do it because I can't stand the extra hair shedding in the house, and no, it's not infectious (unless I don't like you). Maybe it's not a typical, normal, healthy way to decrease shedding in the house, but hey . . . I'm a vet, and the clippers are just too accessible. And to be honest, aside from constant clipping and grooming, there's not much you can do besides shaving to stop shedding at the source. While there are liquids, ointments, liniments, sprays, and other supplements advertised, don't believe the hype otherwise we'd all be using it, and several iconically bald actors would be short a career. In general, dogs shed more in the spring and summer, so it's important to brush Fido daily (or at least weekly) in these months, particularly if he's got medium to long hair. The more hair you brush or rake out (with those circular scrapping brushes), the less it will cling to your furniture, floor, and feet like a bad sympathy prom date. There are a few breeds that don't shed, such as the poodle or bichon frise, but even these dogs need to be groomed frequently. Why do dogs shed more at the vet? Even the courageous Underdog gets nervous at the veterinary clinic, and you may notice that he starts shedding massive amounts of hair when he walks in. This is the fight-or-flight instinct kicking in. Not only does the heart rate increase from stress, but so does the respiratory system—he starts panting or breathing harder in an attempt to get more oxygen into his lungs. Your dog recognizes where he's at, and his body is preparing for escape mode (Help me! I sense a mean vet coming in!). At the same time, all the blood vessels and hair follicles are dilating to allow blood to flow to the escape muscles, and for this reason hair may start to shed like mad. Don't worry too much (or your own hair may start to come out); signs should resolve shortly after you bring him home. And hopefully next time, your dog will remember that there are no mean vets in existence—or so we like to think! Why do dogs peel out and scrape their back legs after urinating or defecating? Dogs have scent glands in their paw pads, and often scrape their back legs to mark their territory after they urinate or defecate. My dog, JP, a pit bull that I rescued from the ghetto streets of Philly, loves to scrape his back legs after he poops—it's his manly (albeit neutered) way of telling other dogs that JP was here, and he keeps it real. While peeling out is a predominant trait among intact males (read: the testicled ones), neutered males and even females have been known to do this as well. They're basically trying to tell the next dog that they were here and that this was their spot. Remember lunchtime in the high school cafeteria? Sort of like that, but with the added bonus of public defecation. Incidentally, male deer will also do this (it's called scraping), and hunters use the scrape mark as identification that a buck is in the area. When I take JP out in the woods during the fall (in fluorescent orange garb, of course), I don't exactly mind that he fakes out the hunters by scraping the ground. I just wish that PETA were paying him! Is Fido's front limb an arm or a leg? Anatomically, we generally consider the forelimb an arm and a hindlimb the

back leg. This is because the anatomy of most species is similar, with the exception that man became upright. Your dogs front leg or arm consists of the humerus, radius, and ulna while his hind leg consists primarily of the femur, tibia, and fibula. So while you are bipedal, you still have a similar structure; you just look more like a monkey. Do dogs get goose bumps? Goose bumps, otherwise known as piloerection, are a fancy way of saying that the hair is standing erect in the follicle. Hello! While its not commonly called dog bumps, goose bumps are harder to see in Fido due to all that fur. Nevertheless, Fido can still get them. Humans often get goose bumps from cold exposure or fear. Since Fido has a nice, thick warm coat of fur to keep him warm, he rarely develops goose bumps from cold exposure. Rather, dog goose bumps may be due to feeling nervous, fearful, or demonstrating aggression toward another animal or person. Fido is basically trying to make himself appear larger and fluffier (i.e., Look at how big I am stay away!) to intimidate the stranger. The development of goose bumps is actually a complicated neurotransmitter reflex, and has been associated with an affective defense behavior.<sup>3</sup> Goose bumps are just one of the many signs seen with this defensive behavior. Dogs may also show a lowered stance, a slow hunting gait toward the attacking animal, an upright (but not wagging) tail, and goose bumps over the shoulders and tail rump area. If you notice dog bumps in the form of raised hair over Fidos neck or rump, approach with caution! Do I need deodorant for my dog? Another reason to love dogs! While your hairy boyfriend may have pit stains on his T-shirt, your dog never will he doesnt sweat through his armpits. One of his only ways of sweating is through the pads of his feet. That said, I work with a lot of fit, athletic dogs (such as greyhounds or sled dogs) and have yet to see a dogs feet sweat while exercising. Your dogs paw sweat glands are a minor way of heat release, as the main way he thermoregulates and controls his body temperature is by panting. And so, to answer your question, no, your dog does not need deodorant! Instead, make sure he has plenty of cool water, shade, and time to pant and blow off all that hot air. This is particularly important to remember when hes running back and forth with a tennis ball in his mouth while you have him out for a walk. You may think its cute for him to carry his own toy back home, when really its safer for you to carry it back (along with his poop bag!). Lugging his own tennis ball in his mouth may occlude his ability to pant well and can make him overheat. Why do dogs have dewclaws? Why does your dog have that cute but annoying little claw on the side of his leg, the one that will occasionally get caught on things and start bleeding? That first finger or digit is frequently absent in some dogs; if its present, youre the proud owner of a dog with a dewclaw. This extra finger can vary from a tiny vestigial skin flap to a fully developed finger. Evolutionarily, dogs didnt have to hold pens or use utensils, so their need for a thumb was reduced to a minimum and they were left with this cute, albeit useless, appendage. Some dogs can live with them without ever having any problems, but hunting dogs, working dogs, or those who hike and run a lot may have a higher chance of having their extra finger or toe traumatized. These little dewclaws are often removed by the breeder within the first few days of birth, but if your dog happens to still have his, you can easily have the dewclaws removed when hes neutered under anesthesia. Otherwise, you might end up having to pay for it later on a more emergent (and more expensive) visit when he rips his dewclaw off while running in the dog park. If Fido cant pick or blow his nose, will his nostrils get clogged? Thankfully, Fido doesnt have to blow or pick his nose. Nor do you have to do it for him. For breeds with a smushed face, this would be physically hard to do. You may hear Fido periodically sneeze to try to get something out of his nose. Ever hear Fido reverse sneeze? Thats the loud, snorting noise that sounds like Fido is choking and dying; in reality, hes probably just trying to clean out his nose passageways. That reverse sneeze basically changes the pressure in the nasal cavity and causes Fido to suck in all that mucous-y goodness and swallow it. If Fido is constantly sneezing, something may be stuck in his nose, so bring him to a vet to get it checked out. Otherwise, he should manage just fine without any Kleenex. Do dogs snore or get sleep apnea? When you pick that first puppy, do remember that certain breeds snore more than others. Snoring is the noise caused by the vibration of tissue in the back of the throat. A word to the wise: if youre a light sleeper, a bulldog, mastiff, Lhasa apso, pug, shih tzu, Pekingese, or shar-pei may not be the breed for you! Were talking massive vibrations, people. Usually, the anatomy of Schnauzys nose and throat are what cause him to snore, so theres little that can be done, but sometimes certain factors like obesity, allergies, aging, and certain medications do play a part. Its important to distinguish snoring from difficulty breathing, a tracheal problem (tracheal collapse), or even from reverse sneezing. When in doubt, videotape the episode to show your veterinarian. Otherwise, if Schnauzy has been snoring all his life, you might want to invest in earplugs and accept the fact that your dog will provide the musical accompaniment to your dreams all of them. If I mix Fluffys kibble with food coloring, will it make her poop easier to find in the yard? Sigh. This is the type of question I cant believe I went to vet school for (thirteen years!). Nevertheless, we will forge ahead. Rumor has it that Iams/Eukanuba actually considered this a few years back. This well-known dog food company is known for their pink logo and color, and it was suggested by a client that they make their dog food pink so itd be, um, easier to find upon depletion. Thankfully, they havent heeded that advice yet. Ill continue the story by saying that one day, hours after a particularly hearty beet salad, what I saw in the bathroom made me wonder if I might be dying. I called my mother to say good-bye, then called my sister to remind her that she still owed me \$400. After a few minutes of fear, and then finally enlightenment, I sat back down and thought, Hmmm. Next year, Ill plant radishes instead of beets. For those of you who still dont get it, go out and eat a large beet salad and see what I mean. . . . If we could feed them to dogs, I think wed have the problem solved. The moral of this story is, yes, its certainly possible to dye Fluffys poop, just be

forewarned your neighbors may find you to be very, very strange. Why does my dog pee turn my lawn brown? Animals and humans have a high nitrogen content in their urine, but dogs are the ones who pee outside and get caught red-handed. While nitrogen is one of the key ingredients in fertilizer, the concentration and amount in dog urine is so high that it actually burns and kills the grass. You can minimize the damage to your lawn using these tricks of the trade. First, have your dog do what my dog, JP, does: lift his leg and pee through the chain-link fence onto the neighbors lawn. My neighbor has such horrible brown spots and really should take the time to care for his lawn (luckily, he doesn't have any pets, so the likelihood he'll buy this book and discover this is minimal). Secondly, consider constructing a graveled area in the back of your yard. I have a graveled area with hostas and ferns, and when I give JP the command to go to the back, he knows what I mean. I've trained him so that it's the first place he goes to urinate, without any grass burning in the process. Third, consider watering the area down after your dog urinates. Dilution is the solution to pollution, so you can minimize the damage and severity of grass burns by just pouring water on it. Finally, there are holistic medications out there that work by changing the pH of Fido's pee, but as a veterinarian, this can be playing with fire (or nitrogen). Certain crystals or stones may form in an altered urine pH, so changing Fido's pH just to save your lawn is not safe unless it's medically advised. If I get my dog's gastrointestinal worms, will it help me lose weight? Gastrointestinal parasites can result in severe blood loss through the intestinal tract, weight loss, chronic diarrhea, or anal itching. Not an ideal way for you to lose weight (unless you are one of those self-flagellating types). There's also the issue that most gastrointestinal parasites are specific to a particular host species. In other words, if it's a cat or dog intestinal worm, this worm would typically stay in the intestinal tract of that species. However, if the parasite gets into a nontraditional species (i.e., to you), the worm doesn't know where to go; instead of just migrating through the intestines, the worm ends up migrating throughout the body, including the eyes and skin. This can result in cutaneous larva migrans (a fancy way of saying that larvae are migrating through your skin, body, and eyes), and can even result in blindness in children. For this reason, it is very important to make sure that your dog is routinely dewormed, and that children and adults wash their hands after exposure to animal feces. This is another reason why it's so important and part of your responsibility as a pet owner to pick up your dog's poop wherever you are! (See lecture on poop-scooping, page 86). Cutaneous larva migrans is a devastating but rare disease. On a side note, this disease is why you should lie on a towel on the beach in Mexico, as worms can survive in the sand and crawl into your skin. Sandworms are serious business, and this is the primary safety reason why dogs are not welcome on beaches. If the worms move from the dog to the sand, to you, it's unlikely that Kevin Bacon or Beetlejuice will come to your rescue. So don't forget that towel!

Is it my boyfriend or Skippy farting, and can I give him Beano? Chances are, your boyfriend just farted and blamed it on Skippy. Yes, Skippy farts, and just like your boyfriend's gas, Skippy's farts can be silent and deadly. How much Skippy farts depends on the quality of the diet, how fast he wolfs his food down (and inhales it with all that air), how much carbohydrate is in his food (which ferments), or how well Skippy's intestines and stomach contract. The good news is, you can give Skippy Beano to correct the problem. Beano is basically alpha-D-galactosidase, a natural enzyme that breaks down complex carbohydrates (starch). Most dogs have minimal carbohydrate nutritional requirements, so there are usually minimal carbs within the bag of food you just bought. While there is no official dog dose of Beano, I'd start with a quarter to a half the adult human dose, depending on the size of your dog and his fart. There is also a canine product called CurTail, which works by similar enzymatic action. While you can safely use Beano, you may first want to consider a diet change to see if that helps. My dog, JP, has near-fatal gas with Eukanuba (although it makes his coat nicer), and is gas-free (almost) with Science Diet.

Are there doggy dentists out there? Veterinary medicine has become more specialized, and now there are veterinarians specializing in oral surgery and dentistry. These are veterinarians who have finished veterinary school and completed a residency in dentistry as well. Most general practitioners do routine teeth cleaning, extractions, or minor dental surgery, but options exist for referral to a veterinary dentist if your dog requires a root canal, major jaw surgery, or a silver cap (makes a rottie or pit bull look even more badass!). The American Veterinary Dental College provides a list of veterinary dentists, organized by state (see Resources). Contact one near you and make sure those canine canines come correct. Do I really have to brush my dog's teeth? Ah, the big question. If I didn't have that doggy dentist question right before this one, I'd have a different answer for you. Veterinarians and dentists recommend that you brush your dog's teeth as often as possible—some say once a day, some say two to three times a week. I'm honestly lucky if I brush JP's teeth more than once a month after he gets a bath. Granted, he has terrible breath, but I'm just so used to it now. As for how you tolerate his breath in your face, well . . . let's just say, I wouldn't ask you to do it if it wasn't really important. That said, I'm going to ask that you do what I say and not what I do and brush your dog's teeth! Brushing as frequently as possible is the most effective way of preventing tooth decay and helping to preserve oral health. For dogs, the most important factor in brushing is the abrasiveness of the toothbrush—you don't want a brush so rigid that it'll hurt your dog's gums. Choose bristles that are soft and will fit in your dog's mouth appropriately. This mechanical scrubbing helps remove the plaque that builds up constantly. What you are trying to prevent by brushing is to remove the plaque before it mineralizes and hardens into tartar (or calculus). Tartar can only be removed with dental cleanings under general anesthesia, so ideally, you want to prevent tartar buildup instead of putting your dog under. Another option is to use an old pair of panty hose or a four-inch-by-four-inch gauze wrapped around your finger to gently scrub away at the

plaque surprisingly, your dog will tolerate this quite well. This may be a good starter method before you try to jam a six-inch piece of plastic into his mouth. Just make sure he doesn't bite your finger. Oh, the things we do for love. Do dogs get cavities? Luckily, dogs don't develop cavities very frequently, probably because they don't eat sugar and candy. Nevertheless, dogs can develop other dental problems. Periodontal disease is common but can be minimized by brushing your dog's teeth frequently. While brushing doesn't remove the big chunks of tartar, it does prevent plaque from building up and exacerbating the problem. Certain breeds, such as greyhounds and miniature poodles, need more frequent dental cleaning due to a predisposition toward bad teeth and bad breath. They're the Austin Powerses of the dog world! Can dogs see color? Veterinarians used to believe that dogs saw only black and white, but recently studies suggest that they actually do have some color vision, just not as bright as a human's color spectrum. Cone photoreceptor cells are what control the perception of color, and while cones make up 100 percent of the photoreceptors in the central part of the human retina, they make up only 20 percent in the same part of a dog's retina. While we can't ask dogs to read an eye chart or pick out colors, behavioral tests suggest that dogs may be colorblind, meaning they don't see green and red hues well. A dog's ability to see (acuity) is much less than a human's; some believe that dogs only have 20 to 40 percent of the visual acuity of a human, which means dogs may be 20-90 compared to our 20-20. This means that what you as a human see at 75 or 90 feet, a dog may see only at 20 feet. Veterinary ophthalmologists believe that dogs' vision has evolved to help them hunt. With the combination of a dog's ability to see color, their ability to focus their large field of view, and their depth perception, dogs actually do pretty well in comparison with the rest of the animal kingdom. Even blind dogs seem to acclimate well to familiar surroundings, and this may be due to their ability to compensate and utilize other senses such as their strong sense of smell and hearing. Are there dog wheelchairs? If your dog was born with a congenital handicap, or if he becomes acutely paralyzed from spinal cord cancer or a slipped disc, you can get him a cart. Carts are designed to support your dog's back legs, provided that his front legs are normal and able to pull the cart around. This is most common in dachshunds, who have a long back and are more predisposed to a slipped disc and acute paralysis. We generally do not recommend riding in the cart with these dogs or having them carry groceries, however fun it may seem. I didn't ethically believe in dog carts when I first started my vet career, as I felt they reduced a dog's quality of life. However, after putting my first patient in one (a young shih tzu that was hit by a car and had a broken back), I realized that with some environmental changes to the house (no stairs, only ramps), this dog did great! He tore around the hospital on recheck examinations and even the nurses were converted to believers. Since then, I do believe that some dogs do well in carts. Hunting dogs no; lazy couch potatoes yes. How efficient is my dog's tongue at lapping up water? Not very. Have you ever watched your dog drink water? It looks quite inefficient versus our traditional old gulp out of a cup. If you notice a dog's tongue, it curls up and pulls a small pocket of water underneath the tongue, allowing small amounts of water into the mouth. Albeit slow, this method allows them to keep their eyes up and to look around while they are at the watering hole. If they slurped up water, their head would need to be angled, making them potentially more likely to miss prey or a predator around them. So while it's not the most efficient way of drinking, at least it keeps them from being eaten by an alligator (or surprised by the neighborhood cat). My dog's tongue is five times bigger when she's exercising. How does it all fit in her mouth? With humans as well as dogs, the tongue is one of the strongest muscles in the body. Makes making out with strangers sound just a little less appealing, doesn't it? Well, at least he or she is panting because of you, and not the temperature. For dogs, this muscular organ is the primary source of heat exchange. In other words, dogs inhale cool air and exhale warm air from their lungs, resulting in a cooling and also evaporative effect throughout their body. When you take Frenchie for a run, you may notice that her tongue seems to grow in length in an attempt to increase the amount of surface area for heat exchange. You're not imagining this, and yes, it all fits in her mouth. And don't worry although it appears to be very long, Frenchie's tongue won't get swallowed, bitten, or knotted up. She'll be tongue-tied by name only, and if you're lucky, she'll stay that way while you try to sleep off the day's run (or that marathon tonsil hockey session). Why does Fido's back leg scratch when I rub his belly? While there's no abdominal wall femoral nerve connection that I know of, Fido will often scratch his back leg in the air while you rub his belly. While I'd hate to anthropomorphize, as a vet I'd guess that he's trying to redirect your hand to rub a bit lower down. Oh, if only I were joking . . . Why does my dog drag her butt on the ground? If you've ever caught your dog dragging her butt across your nice white carpet and leaving a little brown streak for you, this is a sign that she either has a stuck dingleberry (you know, that dried piece of crap on her fur that makes you wish you had a short-haired dog?) or an anal sac problem. Now, it's important to read that again. I said anal sac. I've had the unfortunate experience of shocking an older, quiet Minnesotan Lutheran grandmother type when she misheard sac for sex. Oops. I've learned my lesson and now call them anal glands. These nasty little sacs are actually scent glands that produce a foul, malodorous brown juice that makes Fluffy's feces stink even more. Dogs use these glands as an identification marker for each new dog on the block. Unfortunately, these glands can cause chronic problems in some dogs (usually small, white dogs with pink bows in their hair who are named Fluffy and have chi-chi owners who can't believe they are even having this discussion). Inflammation, infection, impaction, or rarely cancer can cause this classic butt-rub. When you see this, it's time for a trip to the groomer or veterinarian for a little TLC (which is done via gloved finger and rectal exam, I'm afraid). Is my dog's pacemaker from a deceased human? Why, yes, it is. Your dog may be the lucky

recipient of Dick Cheney's old pacemaker, but unfortunately, we'll never know we don't have the clearance level. The cost of pacemakers is very expensive (\$5,000 to \$15,000) and becomes cost prohibitive to many pet owners. We're fortunate enough to have them donated from companies such as Medtronic and it's true that these are often retrieved from deceased humans. While this sounds gross, these pacemakers are recycled to help save a life of someone hairier and happier! Furthermore, since a pacemaker will still be functioning in a deceased animal, we have to remove them when your dog outlives its use. We can still recycle those to use in another animal, as pacemakers are a hot commodity and sometimes hard for us to get. Don't worry the pacemakers are well sterilized before we even think about putting them into another dog!

Can secondhand smoke affect Fido? While this is still currently under investigation,<sup>4</sup> we don't see why secondhand smoke wouldn't affect Fido. On one hand, Fido is lower to the ground, so may have less smoke toxicity from the air, but on the other hand the carcinogens in cigarettes may accumulate in the carpet where he's sleeping. I've seen some cases of lung cancer in both dogs and cats, and always ask owners if they smoke; while it may make the owners feel guilt-ridden, Fido and Fluffy don't have a choice about what air they get to breathe. Smoking definitely worsens asthma, and I've had some clients quit smoking due to the severity of their cats' asthma. If you have pets, we'd recommend that you either (a) quit, (b) smoke outside, or (c) consider getting a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air filter) in your house. One research study showed that pets exposed to paint thinners and certain other chemicals had a statistically significant increase in the incidence of cancer.<sup>5</sup> While smoking wasn't evaluated in this study, current studies are being performed and hopefully will give us the evidence we need to make you quit for your dog's sake, in case your spouse, children, wardrobe, coworkers, lungs, and wallet aren't enough of a reason.