



Dear friends,

Welcome to our November Newsletter from [www.bestdoggietips.com](http://www.bestdoggietips.com).

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We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

The dog was created especially for children. He is the god of frolic.

*-Henry Ward Beecher*

## Recipe - Healthy Chicken Gravy

If your dog is not a big fan of dry dog food, try tempting them by adding some of this healthy gravy.

### *Ingredients*

1 boneless, skinless chicken breast  
4 cups water  
1 cup flour  
2 eggs, beaten

### *To Make*

Boil chicken breast in water for half an hour. Remove the chicken breast and set aside to cool. Do NOT throw away the water.

In a separate pot, place the flour, and add the chicken water a little at a time, stirring constantly to avoid lumps. When all the water has been added, stir through the beaten eggs.

Cook over a low heat until the gravy is the consistency you would like.

Meantime, tear the chicken into tiny pieces, or blitz in a food processor, and add to the gravy. Let cool before using.

Will keep in the refrigerator for around 5 days.

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## The Dog Who Wouldn't Die



A Rottweiler that was supposed to die on the cold slab of a veterinarian office will live the rest of her life in the country.

Both the new home and medical treatment followed a deluge of support from around the world as people reacted to news accounts last month of The Dog Who Came Back to Life.

After Mia was seemingly euthanized, owner Matt Olivarez took her lifeless body home to bury but was startled the next day to discover the dog on all fours staring at him.

Responding to the story, people and animal groups from as far away as England gave donations, advice, prayers and offers, such as adopting Mia and giving her medical treatment.

"Everything is going in our direction", said Olivarez, 27. "It's amazing to see how many people care".

Among the 100 people reacting to the story was Karen Cole, 48, a paralegal from Dripping Springs, Texas.

She wanted to take off from work, fly to Detroit, pick up Mia, rent an SUV and drive all the way back to Texas. She doesn't trust the way airlines care for pets.

"It might a bit crazy, but it's for the dogs", she said. "I figured if I could give her a week of good life or two years of good life, I'd be lucky to have her". Cole had to have her cancer-ridden Rottweiler euthanised three months ago.

But Olivarez opted to give Mia to a family he already knew. The new owner, who preferred to remain anonymous, will take the dog in several weeks.

Financially pressed and losing his home to foreclosure, Olivarez is moving to a Detroit apartment that doesn't allow pets.

The 11-year-old Mia suffers myriad medical problems, some age related. She has a ruptured disk in her spine. Her right rear leg is partly paralysed. She has arthritis in her hips and spine.

"She's nowhere near normal and never will be normal," said Richard Caputo, a Dearborn Heights veterinarian who is treating her.

The ailments left Mia immobile, in pain and uninterested in eating. Lacking the money to help her, Olivarez decided to have her euthanised last month.

The botched euthanasia was performed by Westcott Veterinary Care Center in Detroit, which declined comment.

Under Caputo's care, which included steroid injections, Mia seems to be recapturing some of her youth, said Olivarez's mom, Brenda Shead.

She has regained her appetite, slurping up bowlfuls of roast chicken, rice and gravy. "She's back to her silly self", said Shead. "We have a fighter. She always has been".

The medical bills have been paid from \$900 donated by animal lovers throughout the U.S.

Denise Santoro was one of several people who used Facebook and other online sites to spread the word of Mia's plight. Santoro, 46, a machine operator at a plastic injection factory in Rosendale, N.Y., also was the person who had suggested that the lethargic Mia be fed chicken and rice.

She said she cried when she first heard about the dog's ordeal. "As far as I was concerned, Mia had to be saved", she said. "This dog got a second chance at life. It doesn't get better than this."

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## Children & Dogs

There are many benefits of pet ownership for children, but there are also risks. This month we look at both sides of the coin.

### Study Shows Young, Unsupervised Children Most at Risk for Dog Bites

As dog bites become an increasingly major public health concern, a new study shows that unsupervised children are most at risk for bites; that the culprits are usually family pets and, if they bite once, they will bite again, with the second attack often more devastating than the first.

The study, the largest of its kind, was done by Vikram Durairaj, MD, of the University of Colorado School of Medicine, who found that dogs usually target a child's face and eyes, and most often it's a breed considered 'good' with children, like a Labrador retriever.

"People tend to think the family dog is harmless, but it's not", said Durairaj, associate professor of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology - Head and Neck Surgery, who presented his study last month at the American Academy of Ophthalmology's annual meeting. "We have seen facial fractures around the eye, eye lids torn off, injury to the tear drainage system and the eyeball itself".

Some wounds are so severe that patients require multiple plastic and reconstructive surgeries.

Durairaj said dog bites are especially devastating to children because they are smaller and their faces are within easy reach of the animal's mouth. The likelihood of a child getting bitten in their lifetime is around 50 percent with 80 percent of those bites involving the head and neck.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 4.5 million people are bitten by dogs each year and 885,000 require medical attention. The total cost is estimated at up to \$250 million.

The study looked at 537 children treated for facial dog bites at The Children's Hospital on the Anschutz Medical Campus between 2003 and 2008. Durairaj found that 68 percent of bites occurred in children 5-years-old or younger with the highest incidence in 3-year-olds. In the majority of cases, the child knew the dog through the family, a friend or a neighbour. And more than half the time, the dog was provoked when the child petted it too aggressively, startled or stepped on it.

The dogs were not breeds usually associated with attacks. Durairaj found that mixed breeds were responsible for 23 percent of bites followed by Labrador retrievers at 13.7 percent. Rottweilers launched attacks in 4.9 percent of cases, German shepherds 4.4 percent of the time and Golden retrievers 3 percent. The study was done in the Denver area where pit bulls are banned.

"What is clear from our data is that virtually any breed of dog can bite", Durairaj said. "The tendency of a dog to bite is related to heredity, early experience, later socialization and training, health and victim behaviour."

He stressed that familiarity with a dog is no guard against attack and if a dog bites once, it will likely bite again with the second attack often more vicious than the first. The first time a dog bites, he said, it should be removed from the home.

"I was called in to see a dog bite. A girl had a puncture wound to her lip. Two days later I saw the same girl, but this time her eyelids were torn off and she had severe scalp and ear lacerations", Durairaj said. "The onus is on parents to recognize aggressive breeds as well as behaviours and never allow their young children to be left unsupervised around any dog".

## Dogs Help Allergic Children

Children who have a dog around them during their first year of life will have a milder allergic reaction to dogs if they develop dog allergies later in life, according to a new study.

Researchers at the University of Cincinnati and Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center found that children who had a dog in their home during their first year of life were four times less likely to develop eczema than children who were allergic to dogs but did not have a pet dog around.

Eczema is considered to be an early signal of the severity of a child's later allergies.

The study was based on records from 636 children in a long-term allergy and pollution study. All had parents with allergies, and were considered to be at high risk for developing allergies themselves. The findings are published in the October issue of the Journal of Pediatrics.

"We found that even among people who were allergy-skin-test positive to dog, having a dog in the home...was associated with a lower risk of eczema, so there may be some protective effect from having a dog in the home", said study researcher Dr. Tolly Epstein, an assistant professor of immunology at the university.

Cats had the opposite effect. Among children with a cat allergy, those who had one around during their first year were 13 times more likely to develop eczema than those who didn't.

"There may be differences between the allergens themselves and the effect they have on the immune system", Epstein said.

Others offer different explanation for the findings.

Dogs usually defecate and urinate outside the house, while cats do their business inside the home, said Dr. Leonard Bielory, an asthma and allergy specialist at New Jersey Medical School and a spokesman for the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, who was not involved with the study.

Bielory said he routinely advises his patients already suffering from allergies that having a cat may provoke worse allergic reactions than a dog because of their lifestyle.

"There is a difference in the quality of exposure to infectious agents, and other proteins people could be allergic to", Bielory said.

While the study gave some further hints about allergic reaction and sensitivity, Epstein said further study is needed. She's planning a future study that will follow up with the children as they get older, and see how they might develop other allergic diseases.

"This is just eczema...we don't know yet what's going to happen in terms of asthma and rhinitis", Epstein said.

Epstein added that while a number of factors - such as allergic reactions in parents - had been taken into account to avoid confounding the results, there could always be another factor leading to some children not having dogs around.

Until then, she said, patients shouldn't be too hasty in acquiring or getting rid of a pet.

"To make strong recommendations, we'd want to know what happens with the other allergic diseases as well", Epstein said.

But as the results stand now, Bielory said, "the concept here is that dog is a man's best friend."

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## Book of the Month - The Dog Who Couldn't Stop Loving

[The Dog Who Couldn't Stop Loving, How Dogs Have Captured Our Hearts for Thousands of Years](#) (by Jeffrey Masson) is a groundbreaking and inspiring exploration of the unique relationship between dogs and humans.

Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson has long been interested in the relationships between humans and animals, and he's always been aware that there was something very special in our bond with dogs. No other animals love us in quite the same way as dogs love us. And it is mutual. Is it possible that we developed our capacity for love, sympathy, empathy, and compassion because of our long association with dogs?

In **The Dog Who Couldn't Stop Loving**, Masson considers the far-reaching consequences of the co-evolution of dogs and humans, drawing upon recent scientific research. Over the past forty thousand years a collective domestication has occurred that brings us to where we are today - humans have formed intense bonds with dogs, and the adoration is almost always reciprocal. Masson himself has experienced a profound bond with his new dog, Benjy, a failed guide dog for the blind, who possesses an abundance of uninhibited love. Masson knows that the love he feels for Benjy - the same feeling Benjy has for all the people and animals around him - is not unique, but exemplifies a love affair unmatched in the animal world.

With wisdom, insight, and a brilliant analysis of recent scientific findings, bestselling author Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson delivers a provocative and compelling book that will change the way we think about love and our canine companions.

### *What Others Have Said*

"I greatly enjoyed this remarkable book, not only for its captivating narrative but also for the fascinating information that will surprise even those who love animals and are attuned to the natural world. Jeffrey Masson writes amazing books, and this one is true to form. It's excellent."

– Elizabeth Marshall Thomas, author of *The Hidden Life of Dogs*

"In his story of Benjy, the dog who couldn't stop loving, Masson does a thought-provoking job of levelling the playing field between us and other species while also posing fascinating questions about the emotional makeup of our closest companion in the animal kingdom, our dogs."

– Ted Kerasote, author of *Merle's Door*

Jeffrey Masson also co-wrote the international best-seller [When Elephants Weep](#).

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## Is Your Anxious Pet a Pessimist?

Doggie separation anxiety – the whining, scratching, and general misbehaving that happens when some dogs are left home alone – is somehow linked to the dog's general outlook on life, new research says. Co-author Emily Blackwell explains that she wondered whether the behaviour she'd observed during high school in her own anxiety-prone dog was normal.

"So many people think separation-related behaviour is just something dogs do ... They think the dog is angry the owner is leaving, say, and exacting its revenge on the owner's slippers".

For the study, published in *Current Biology*, the team investigated the link between this separation anxiety trait and a pessimistic attitude. To test pessimism, 24 dogs were trained to associate a full food bowl with one side of a room and an empty bowl with the opposite side.

The dogs learn quickly "if it's on one side, to race over and nearly knock over the screen to get it", says Blackwell. "If it's on the other side, they look around and quite often give us a big sigh". Some dogs amble over to check out the empty bowl; others just lie down.

When these trained dogs encountered an ambiguously placed bowl – positioned in the middle of the room – some of them approached it enthusiastically, while others didn't get their hopes up. The test is apparently similar to those used to test optimism vs. pessimism in other species, including humans.

The researchers labelled enthusiastic pups as having optimistic personalities, because they might be thinking something like, "Hey, maybe there's food, woo-hoo!" Those that took little interest in the ambiguous bowls were said to have a more pessimistic attitude: "Meh, there probably isn't food (Eeyore-style sigh)".

Next, the researchers correlated the dogs' enthusiasm with how likely they were to show signs of separation anxiety when left alone in a room. The dogs that showed more signs of anxiety, like chewing, howling, or scratching, were also the pessimistic ones.

"Many dogs are left on their own and they are fine with it. But a large proportion of dogs get very anxious about it and this helps to explain why", lead author Rachel Casey said. "However, as yet we don't know whether it is cause and effect. We don't know whether being left alone is more likely to make a dog pessimistic, or whether being pessimistic is more likely to make a dog anxious when left alone".

The UK's Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals funded the study. The group hopes to learn why some dogs suffer from separation anxiety, which would make it easier to put them in homes that are well suited for their personalities.

Not all researchers are buying Blackwell's correlation. Marc Bekoff, an evolutionary biologist, isn't sure the food bowl test is the best way to understand optimistic and pessimistic tendencies in dogs. Other researchers worry about assuming dogs have human-like thought processes, saying that words like "inquisitive" or "exploratory" might better describe an animal's behavioural traits.

Another researcher, Samuel Gosling, thinks that the gloomy attitude and separation-related behaviours can both be chalked up to a dog's level of neuroticism, which can include high levels of worrying:

"Dogs high on this anxiety-and-neuroticism dimension are more likely to get upset when the owner leaves", he suggests, and would be less likely to show interest in the food bowls, too.

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## Fun Stuff

### Why Dogs Can't Use Computers

- 🐕 They're distracted by cats chasing their mouse.
- 🐕 SIT and STAY were hard enough; CUT and PASTE are out of the question.
- 🐕 Saliva-coated floppy disks refuse to work.
- 🐕 Three words: carpal paw syndrome.
- 🐕 Involuntary tail wagging is a dead give-away that he's browsing [www.purina.com](http://www.purina.com) instead of working.
- 🐕 The fire hydrant icon is simply too frustrating.
- 🐕 He can't help attacking the screen when he hears "You've Got Mail".
- 🐕 It's too messy to "mark" every Web site he visits.
- 🐕 The FETCH command isn't available on all platforms.
- 🐕 He can't stick his head out of Windows Vista

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## The Weird & the Wonderful

### Dog disco opens for tail shakin'

They're getting waggy with it!

Blinged-out beagles and footloose Fidors can shake their tails now that Manhattan's first doggie disco has opened its doors.

After months of bureaucratic delays, the Fetch Club, on South Street in the Financial District, has finally unrolled its stain-resistant red carpet for high-end hounds.

Dogs check in for a night of dancing under the rotating disco ball - usually while their owner takes in a movie or goes to dinner.

Dancing doggies can refuel on poochi sushi or barbecue squirrel snacks, or take a break from the action entirely by retreating to a private Zen room.

Beside those amenities, pooches who get pooped easily can curl up on the luxurious daybeds strewn about the floor - or can head for the sheepskin rug in the back to indicate they're ready for a mutt massage.

"They love to stretch out on this rug and get a gentle rubdown", said Fetch Club co-founder Jenna Lee.

### Scientists Reveal How Fast Dogs Must Shake To Dry Their Fur

If you've ever seen a dog trying to shake itself dry after taking a plunge into water - or perhaps while standing next to the person who just gave it a bath - you've probably noticed that the technique can throw off a shocking amount of water.

That's all part of nature's design, says Andrew Dickerson, a graduate student at Georgia Tech. Dickerson has undertaken a recent study of how fast different animals "oscillate their bodies to shed water droplets".

For his study called "The Wet-Dog Shake", which he submitted to the Gallery of Fluid Motion, Dickerson and his colleagues slowed down images of animals - dogs, a bear, even a mouse - shaking themselves dry. The footage was shot with a high-speed video camera.

The researchers found that both bears and dogs shake at a similar speed - around 4 Hz and 4-5 Hz, respectively. In this case, hertz refers to the frequency of skin oscillations per second. And it turns out that the smaller the animal, the faster it has to shake to dry. Thus, a cat can get by with shaking around 6 Hz. But its nemesis, the mouse, requires 27 Hz to dry off.

Dickerson says that his work focuses on discovering mechanisms found in nature. The research on how animals shake off water, he says, may have real-world applications in improving the design of washing machines.

But he does not recommend that any human try to duplicate what is, by many rights, a dog's trick.

"If you were to get down on all fours and try to shake off water after a shower", Dickerson says, "your efforts would be most unfruitful".

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