

the **TwoByFour** NY Monthly Online NEWS LETTER



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OKAY, WHO DID IT?

Flatulence. Passing wind. A toot. Or a fart. No matter what you call it. It's a fact of life. Just about every living thing with a digestive track passes gas. As the bacteria in the digestive track breaks down food to be absorbed gases are created. These gasses create pressure and they escape the digestive track. And the broken down foods and digestive juices don't smell very well. Hence the odor. That's flatulence 101.

Why am I writing about flatulence? Well, we received an email in response to our request to answer your pet questions. Recently one of our clients asked us to talk about "Dog Farts". So, here we go.

In the first paragraph we established that just about every mammal does it. Horses, cats, dogs, gerbils, snakes, and birds – they all do it. But it's interesting that the degree of odor they emit doesn't always depend on the size of the animal. Diet plays an important role in the amount of gas expended, the frequency of flatulence, and the degree of offensiveness of the smell omitted.

So here were talking dogs:

First things first - it is rare that a flatulence is a sign of anything being **wrong with the health*** of a dog; so if there is a problem it is usually dealing with the offensive smell.

Secondly, there are a few breeds of dogs whose digestive tracts are a little more conducive to producing gas. These breeds are: Bulldogs, German Shepherds, Mastiffs, Boxers, and Labrador Retrievers.

Thirdly, because dogs don't have lips, they gulp their foods with large amounts of air which adds to the levels of air introduced into their stomachs. Much of this air does come out in burps, but some does make its way

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(Cont. from previous)

YOUR space. The dog begins to consider **YOUR** bed **THEIR BED** and that they are letting YOU sleep with them. This is a common issue with many small dogs whose owner allows them to jump on beds, sofas, and other furniture. No matter what the breed of dog; you must always establish a pecking order to the social makeup of your house. Dogs have to know that they are in your house and must follow your rules. If you do let your dog on the furniture or sleep in your bed...it is always wise to establish rules. Train your dog to wait to be invited to sit next to you or lie in bed next to you. Some dog owners think that's cruel, but the dog is soooooo much happier and feels extra special when he or

down the digestive track.

Then there is the fourth issue, which is probably the primary cause of dog flatulence, especially foul smelling flatulence, BUT it also reveals the solutions to reducing the frequency and offensiveness of the odors emitted. The dog's **FOOD!**

Stop feeding your dog table scraps. Usually those foods contain high fats and carbohydrates which are difficult for a dog to properly digest and absorb – and anytime you introduce a dog's digestive system to a new food your dog's digestive track **WILL** react.

Avoid giving your dog any dog foods with soybeans. Many dog foods use soybeans. Soybeans are highly fermentable and therefore produce gas that the dog will expel. So avoid dog foods that contain soy.

Like people, there are a few dogs that may have food allergies and may be allergic to wheat. This can be a gluten sensitivity. You will have to look for a dog food that is wheat free, but ask your Vet to test your dog before going through this effort.

Dog biscuits can also create bouts of flatulence especially if a dog eats too many. The fiber of the biscuits can disrupt and stir up the digestive track releasing more gas than usual.

Then there are other solutions to dog flatulence – Exercise, Charcoal, Digestive Enzymes, and Prescribed Medication. Exercising your dogs helps move the gas out. And walking your dog outside allows your dog to pass the gas while you're OUTSIDE, leaving less gas for your dog to pass INSIDE. Walking a dog more vigorously stimulates a dog's intestines and prompt bowel movements. Less poop inside the dog, the less the digestive process, and less gas being produced.

Activated charcoal tablets or charcoal biscuits sold over the counter in pet shops can help reduce the offensive smells of some of a dog's more "noxious" emissions. The charcoal absorbs odor while it's still in your dog's digestive track. It works pretty well. But be careful NOT to give your dog too much. Charcoal also absorbs some nutrients. Too much charcoal can reduce the levels of vitamins and minerals your dog needs. I can never stress this enough... always ask your vet about what you feed your dog, especially if it is given as a "treatment".

Then there are digestive enzymes you can also buy in your local pet store. There are many out there, again ask your vet about these products.

Finally there are medications that your veterinarian can prescribe. These medications are usually prescribed to treat conditions more serious than simply the symptomatic flatulence – like bacterial overgrowth. A vet may prescribe antibiotics or simply suggest a diet that includes GOOD bacteria, like products with Pro-Biotics and Cultured Yogurt. Your dog may never smell as sweet as a rose... but your dog will be much better to be around.

I hope you ALL found this interesting. Please feel free to suggest MORE topics to include in this Newsletter

she is invited to share YOUR space.

Then there is the size issue. Some dogs are much too big and can hamper the sleep of people. A dog owner lacking sleep is a cranky dog owner. Your dog would much rather sleep by itself than have a grumpy tired owner to deal with the entire day.

And lastly, is the issue of an allergy. Some dog owners have some level of allergy to dogs. This allergy can be more acute when being in extremely close proximity to their dog...where otherwise the symptoms are much less noticeable.

Okay, I said that I'm no expert...so I checked on what the experts say. The majority say..."generally a dog should have its own place to sleep and call their own...it makes dog more secure...and less likely to challenge the owner's authority...and dander and shedding issues creating allergic reactions in their owners is greatly reduced." I guess they read my Newsletter.



The Pack Mentality – and Taking Charge

I often talk about the Dog Pack and about Alpha and Omega dogs. I thought I'd take a few moments and talk about the social makeup of our BEST FRIENDS.

Dogs are domesticated wolves that cave people started to train and breed some 17 thousand years ago, maybe even earlier. The breeds of dogs we have today are actually the result of only a small period of that time...say 1,000 years and even much more recent. But with all of the variations of color, patterns, and height, they ALL have the basic social makeup of their ancestors – the wolf.

Now amazingly, when wolves were first bred for tameness their offspring became much more dog like than wolf like. Floppy ears, colors of brown and red, and spots. The tamer they got the more dog like they became. Those dogs were continually interbred for a variety of

*Please note: there are times that excessive flatulence can be an indication of a malabsorption syndrome – exocrine pancreatic insufficiency or inflammatory bowel syndrome. These conditions are usually accompanied by other symptoms like loss of appetite, diarrhea, weight loss, and abdominal discomfort. If you ever suspect that something isn't right with your dog – ALWAYS seek veterinary advice.



Let Sleeping Dogs Lie.

BUT WHERE? They say “lay down with dogs... wake up with fleas”. Yeah, I guess that can be true, but what if you take good care of your dog and Fido doesn't have fleas, or ticks, or bed bugs... what about then? Well I'm no expert, although I play one in this Newsletter, so I've thought it over. Here is what I came up with:

Basically, I don't see anything overtly wrong with it. If your dog knows it's boundaries, is healthy, and parasite free; and you and your significant other doesn't mind there shouldn't be anything wrong with it...however, there may be a few issues you should be made aware of.

If your dog suffers from separation anxiety, sleeping in bed with you may be contributing to your dog's difficulty to being apart from you. Dogs need to know that they have a place of their own that they can feel safe and secure. If your dog has aggression issues, snaps, or growls when someone gets close to YOU... well maybe your dog sleeping with you has given your dog the “wrong” message of who is in charge. Dogs who make your bed their own bed establish an Alpha role in ...

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traits into the hundreds of lovable breeds we know today.

Today's dogs have still retained in their social makeup the DNA of wolves but with tamer behavioral patterns that account for their trainability, playfulness, and their ability to fit into human society. Some dog experts say that today's dogs are wolves bred to remain playful puppies their entire lives. This has earned dogs a unique position with people. A dog's basic natural wolf pack ruling Alpha instincts and submissive Omega roles have turned into kinder gentler attributes that WE see as loyalty, devotion, love, and friendship. No other animal has fit into the human social family as much as the dog has, but they are still dogs. And as dogs, they see HUMANS simply as a member of the pack. Dog experts say that socially dogs don't make any distinction between human beings from fellow canines.

It is this reason why dog owners should understand and follow the structure of the pack. Understanding that owners playing the role of an Alpha dog takes the stress of having to lead away from a dog; allowing the dog to be an Omega dog...letting someone else bare the responsibly for the well being of the pack/family.

What a load off Fido's mind, not having to make a den for winter, figuring out where to get the next meal, and how to make this month's mortgage payment.

Now...wouldn't you like to be somebody's Omega Dog? When you let your dog know that you are the Alpha dog...your dog will be extremely grateful and happier.



[Information supplied here is only to keep you aware about the needs of your pet - nothing can replace the examination and care from your veterinarian.]

