

# Pet Wellness

04

**Finding a gentle shampoo that suits your dog's skin can make a big difference, especially for breeds prone to irritation**

**Leslie Mosier**, Owner, Doug the Pug

08

**The best way to ensure your pet's teeth and gums remain in great shape is to start with excellent oral hygiene practices right away.**

**Emily Singler, V.M.D.**, Veterinary Content Specialist,  
American Animal Hospital Association

PARIS HILTON

**The lifelong pet lover shares the best ways to care for your furry family members**

Read more on Page 09

# The Truth About Pet Wellness: What Owners Often Miss

Our panel of experts reveals how proactive care, nutrition, and emotional wellness are revolutionizing modern pet health routines.



INTERVIEW WITH  
**Jessica Vogelsang, D.V.M.**, Chief Veterinary Officer, American Animal Hospital Association



INTERVIEW WITH  
**Preston R. Buff, Ph.D., Dipl. ACAN**, Principal Scientist, Nutrition and Animal Safety, Post Consumer Brands



INTERVIEW WITH  
**Viktoria Van Leeuwen**, Founder, BestLife4Pets

## What are the most common misconceptions pet owners have about maintaining their pets' overall wellness?

**Jessica Vogelsang:** One of the biggest misconceptions is that pets only need veterinary care when something seems wrong. In reality, many diseases progress silently, and by the time symptoms appear, the condition may already be advanced. Regular wellness exams help us detect and address issues early, before they become serious or costly. Pets are great at hiding subtle symptoms!

## How can pet owners take a more proactive approach to preventive care for their animals?

**Preston Buff:** When it comes to being proactive about pet health,

nutrition is at the forefront. I recommend pet parents feed a complete and balanced diet designed to meet the needs of their pet. One of the most important things you can do is feed a pet food designed for the species, life stage, breed size, and lifestyle of your pet. In addition to the right diet, exercise is important to help maintain a healthy pet. Taking your pet for walks and playtime is important to maintain a healthy body.

**JV:** The best thing owners can do is schedule annual or semi-annual wellness visits with their veterinarian. These checkups go beyond vaccines — they include a physical exam, early disease screening, nutrition guidance, and behavioral advice. Keeping up with dental cleanings,

parasite prevention, and weight management is also essential.

## What role does mental and emotional well-being play in a pet's health, and how can owners support this?

**Viktoria Van Leeuwen:** Mental and emotional well-being play a massive role in a pet's health. Stress, anxiety, and emotional trauma don't just affect behavior, they directly impact the immune system, digestion, and even skin health. Things like separation anxiety, loud noises, or changes in the household (even seemingly positive ones) can cause very real physical symptoms in pets.

**PB:** Dogs and cats thrive with a routine, and keeping to a daily schedule for feeding, exercise, and sleep will aid in maintaining

your pet's circadian rhythm and supporting their well-being.

## Are there any innovations in pet wellness you're excited about?

**JV:** One exciting area is the use of wearable health monitors for pets, which can track activity, sleep, and vital signs, giving both veterinarians and owners better insight into daily health patterns. We're also seeing more personalized medicine, including genetic testing and tailored nutrition.

**VVL:** We're moving beyond symptom management and embracing full-spectrum, personalized wellness. We're entering an era where we don't just treat illness — we build resilience, vitality, and joy into our pets' daily lives. That, to me, is the true definition of health.



## The Role of Vet Care in Keeping Your Pet Healthy This Summer

Many pet owners face barriers when trying to access care for their pets. Fortunately, pet owners and veterinarians can work together to keep pets healthy.

**A**s we enter the summer months, there are several things pet owners can do to keep their pets safe and healthy. Look out for symptoms of overheating, including drooling, excessive panting or difficulty breathing, mild weakness, seizures, and an elevated body temperature (over 104 degrees). Keep your pets safe from fireworks and loud noises by leaving them at home in a quiet, sheltered, and escape-proof area, rather than bringing them to gatherings. When your pets do go to gatherings with you, be sure to keep party snacks and drinks away from them.

Scheduling regular check-ups for your pet is also an important part of keeping them healthy. Unfortunately, for many families, accessing care for their pets can be challenging. Over the past decade, veterinary medicine has seen increasing specialization and tremendous advancements in the treatment of many conditions. However, this has also led to a growing gap between the care that is possible and the care that is within reach of many families. Many factors influence the cost of care. By working together, veterinarians and families can ensure pets receive the care they need.

### Improving access to care

For many conditions, veterinarians may discuss multiple diagnostic and treatment

approaches for the family to consider. These may range from simple, less invasive, and often less expensive options to more aggressive, technologically advanced, and expensive approaches. Pet owners can and should have transparent conversations with their veterinarian about the range of treatment options available to determine which fits the unique family circumstances and aligns with their care goals for their pet.

Such conversations may especially benefit pet owners who face financial obstacles to care. For owners who struggle to access veterinary clinics, including those who face transportation issues or live in rural areas, veterinary telemedicine offers an innovative lifeline.

The ASPCA is working with state lawmakers across the country to modernize veterinary practice acts and empower veterinarians to use telemedicine as an additional tool to diagnose conditions or provide treatments, rather than being limited to the sometimes challenging veterinary clinic visit. We encourage pet owners to speak with their veterinarians about the range of care options, and use telemedicine technology whenever it is legally available and medically appropriate to do so.

Written by **Carolyn R. Brown, D.V.M.,**  
**Vice President of Medicine, Community**  
**Medicine, ASPCA**



Puff | Photo courtesy of Puff Media

## The Wellness Routine Behind Viral Sensation “That Little Puff”

Owner of YouTube-famous cat Puff, Lynch Zhang, shares the daily care routine that keeps the viral feline healthy and thriving.

### When it comes to Puff’s diet, how do you decide what’s best for him?

We pay close attention to what works best for Puff’s health and energy levels. His meals are portioned consistently around the same time each day, with a focus on high-quality, protein-rich food.

### What’s the most useful product you’ve invested in for Puff?

A smart litter box has been a game changer. Not only does it keep things clean automatically, but it also tracks Puff’s usage so we can catch any health issues early.

### Do you think supplements have made a difference in his health?

Yes, especially omega supplements. We’ve seen a noticeable shine in Puff’s coat, and as he’s gotten older, joint support has helped him stay playful and agile.

### What’s your favorite part of being Puff’s owner?

He’s more than a pet; he’s a family member, a creative partner, and a daily dose of joy. The most rewarding part is watching how much happiness he brings to people all over the world, just by being his fluffy, curious self.



## The Top Products for Keeping Your Pets **Healthy, Clean, and Happy**



### TWEEZERMAN PET COLLECTION

Tweezerman believes that our pets deserve the same quality in their grooming tools as our own. In collaboration with leading industry experts, Tweezerman developed innovative grooming solutions that prioritize your pet's safety, comfort, and care. Spanning across various categories, these easy-to-use tools deliver professional quality results at home.



### REDBARN'S GENTLY AIR DRIED POWERFOOD

Redbarn's Gently Air Dried Powerfood is as notoriously dense and digestible as a raw diet with all the familiarity, safety, and convenience of kibble. We perfected the process of gently slow roasting our powerfood at low temperatures to retain its natural nutrients. Choose from a variety of nine recipes.



### BESTLIFE4PETS NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS FOR CATS AND KITTENS

Support your cat's health naturally with BestLife4Pets! From calming anxiety to soothing itchy skin, easing congestion, and more, our gentle remedies help your kitten, adult, and senior feline thrive. Trusted by cat parents, easy to use, and 100% natural — because every kitty deserves less stress, fewer sniffles, and a shinier, healthier coat every day.



## How Doug the Pug Stays Happy, Healthy, and Camera-Ready

Doug the Pug's owner, Leslie Mosier, shares the wellness tips, diet staples, and daily routines that keep this beloved pup thriving.



Doug the Pug | Photo by Rob Chianelli

### Can you tell us about about Doug's daily diet?

Doug eats a specially crafted fresh food diet, and it's made a huge difference in his hydration and overall health. His coat is the softest it's ever been! For snacks, he loves blueberries, carrots, and freeze-dried minnows. One of our favorite ways to serve his food is by stuffing it in a Kong and freezing it for a nighttime treat.

### Are there any wellness tips you swear by?

Consistency is key. Doug gets daily walks, which keep him active and engaged. He also receives support for joint comfort and mobility, including a regular supplement routine and occasional red light therapy. Recently, he tried a regenerative product, and there's been an observable improvement in his energy and movement.

### What role do you think supplements play in a pet's wellness routine, and when should pet parents consider adding them to their pets' diet?

Supplements definitely play an important role! There are so many natural and organic options that are easy to incorporate and can make a huge difference, whether it's

for joints, anxiety, longevity, or allergies. Right now, we're really focused on Doug's longevity and recently added an incredible mushroom blend to his daily routine. It's already made a noticeable difference. Even simple additions like goat's milk for probiotics can go a long way.

### Are there any tech gadgets that help keep him engaged and entertained when you're not around?

Interactive cameras have been really helpful for staying connected when we're away. They provide peace of mind and allow us to check in on Doug throughout the day. Features like treat dispensing can also offer positive reinforcement and keep pets mentally engaged during alone time.

### Any tips or tricks to keep a pug's coat healthy and shiny?

Finding a gentle shampoo that suits your dog's skin can make a big difference, especially for breeds prone to irritation. Doug's grooming routine has helped reduce paw licking and itching, and his coat is noticeably softer. In addition, maintaining gut health and incorporating healthy fats can contribute to a shinier, healthier coat over time.

# How the “First Five” Philosophy Keeps Your Dog Fed Like Family

With an overwhelming amount of options on the shelves — and on social media, and on tv, and on and on — it's hard to know what food is best for your beloved fur baby. Check out these ways to cut through the noise to find safe, high-quality food from a brand you can trust.

**B**e honest, pet parents: Do you ever have pet food purchase paralysis? Choosing the best food for your best furry friend can be overwhelming. There's so much choice — and so many gimmicks, trends, and marketing tactics that distract from the bottom line: your pet's well-being.

## Employ the “First 5 Philosophy”

The first step for many savvy pet food shoppers is taking a look at the nutrition label. Like the food you put on your own dinner table, you've likely learned to check the first item listed, which represents the most abundant ingredient in the recipe. Keep reading.

Some kibble brands lead with a meat protein — but follow immediately with sub-par sources of protein, fillers like grains or by-products, and preservatives.

In response to this trend, Redbarn, a pet food and treat company founded three decades ago by a pair of animal-adoring best friends, pioneered a “First 5” philosophy: The first five ingredients in their kibble formulas are all high-quality meat proteins.

Lindsay Tracy, Redbarn's VP of product development, explained, “We maximize the amount of protein-rich ingredients upfront because it's what

dogs instinctively crave — and what supports their best health. By focusing our recipes on real meat, we're prioritizing muscle maintenance, energy, and overall well-being in every bite.”

## Look for three letters that spell food safety

Pet food in the United States is not consistently monitored for quality like human food, which may increase your unease about what's going into your pet's bowl. One way pet parents can vet products is to check that the brand is Safe Quality Food certified, a global gold-standard indicating the company's manufacturing processes meet rigorous requirements for food safety and quality management.

“Safety is at the core of everything we do at Redbarn,” Tracy shared. “Every batch of food and treats undergoes extensive testing for pathogens, nutritional accuracy, and consistency before it ever leaves our facilities. We perform in-house and third-party lab testing across multiple critical checkpoints. This ensures that when a pet parent chooses Redbarn, they're choosing a product backed by science, safety, and trust.”

## Don't forget flavor, freshness, and fun

Choosing safely produced, high-quality, protein-packed food doesn't mean compromising on other great aspects of mealtime (and snack time). Tracy encouraged dog parents “to explore the power of variety and freshness in

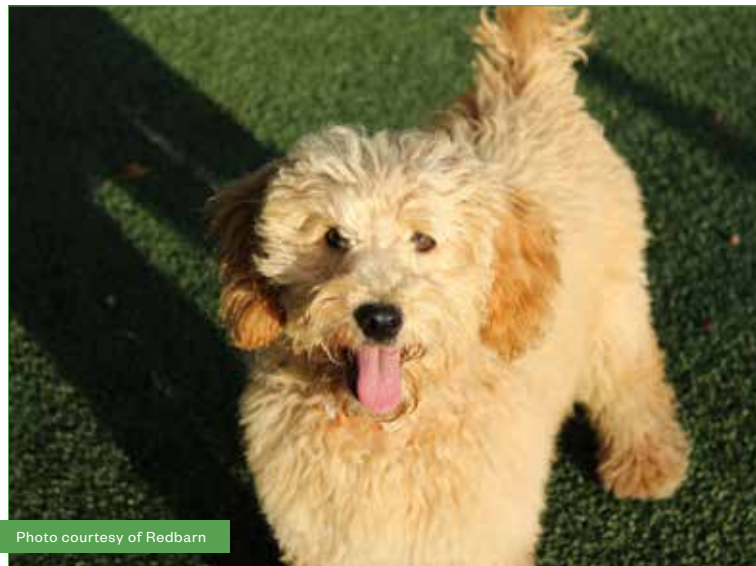


Photo courtesy of Redbarn

a dog's diet. Air-dried foods, for example, blend the convenience of dry food with the nutrition of raw, offering a clean, protein-rich solution.”

Consider bringing further balance and variety to your dog's mealtime with toppers and mix-ins. “Those extra nutrients and flavors can support better digestion, skin and coat health, and overall vitality,” Tracy said. “The more we can personalize and elevate their meals, the more we can help our pets live longer, healthier lives.”

## Save room for sustainability

In 1996, Redbarn put its rolled pet food on the market, and has been committed to balancing quality and innovation ever since, most notably with its revolutionary line of air-dried foods. In recent years, that includes an increased focus on sustainability — helping to ensure no part of an animal go

to waste with its line of upcycled treats, including bullysticks, collagen, and beef bones.

Redbarn's founders Jeff Baikie and Howard Bloxam reflected on the root of their innovations and successes: “At the end of the day, we are a hard-working team that loves dogs and cats,” they said. And as pet parents, they know that the sooner you can move away from pet food-decision fatigue, the sooner you'll have a happy, healthy, and well-fed friend — and the sooner you can both get back to play time.

Written by **Emily Rose**



To learn more and shop the full line of Redbarn's food, treats, and chews, visit **redbarn.com**



INTERVIEW WITH  
**Lindsay Tracy**  
VP of Product  
Development,  
Redbarn





## Nourishing Pets With Love: Rachael Ray's Wellness Philosophy

Celebrity chef Rachael Ray and Dr. Preston Buff, principal scientist at Post Consumer Brands, discuss simple ways to support pets' health through smart nutrition, supplements, and loving routines.

### What's your best tip for transitioning pets to a healthier diet without upsetting their stomachs?

**Preston Buff:** When you make the decision to change your pet's food, I recommend buying the new food before you run out of the current food. Make sure that you have enough of the current food so you can gradually transition. I recommend a transition over a period of 10 days to help minimize any gastrointestinal upset. Start with replacing about 25% of the old food with the new food for the first few days, then replacing 50% of the old food for a few days, and so on. If your pet has any difficulties transitioning, you should contact your veterinarian.

### What role do supplements play in maintaining the health and well-being of our pets?

**PB:** Some supplements can provide an

added benefit for pets, but consult with your veterinarian. When feeding a complete and balanced pet food, such as Nutrish, your pet should have all the nutrients they need. There are also some foods that provide targeted benefits, such as a diet with added prebiotics and probiotics, like Nutrish Everyday Digestion dry cat food, or added antioxidants for immune support, like Nutrish Whole Health Blend dog and cat foods.

### Nutrish has been in business for more than 15 years. What can you attribute to its success today?

**Rachael Ray:** Nutrish's success has always been rooted in love for animals and a belief that they deserve the same care, quality, and respect we would give to any family member. Every product we created was first tested by my own dogs or my mother's cats. Their health and happiness guided every decision

from the very beginning. What started as a small, deeply personal project grew into something much bigger — a community of pet parents who trust us because they've seen how much better their animals feel on our recipes.

### In what ways is the Rachael Ray Foundation helping animals in need?

**RR:** The Rachael Ray Foundation helps animals in need by supporting a wide range of rescues and organizations, big and small. Our largest partner is Animal League America. They've been family to us for years and continue to save countless lives. Through the Foundation, we also provide grants that support shelters and rescue groups in increasing lifesaving efforts, such as adoption drives, spay and neuter programs, and shelter intake prevention initiatives.



# New Pet Food Branding **Focuses on Clarity for the Consumer**

The modern American pet parent is more engaged than ever in their animal's health — and that includes being judicious in deciding on what they give them to eat. In the United States, the “most important product attributes appear to be price, perceived ingredient safety, and perceived quality and nutritional value,” according to a study published in the journal *Animals*.

**G**iven the plethora of choices now available in the saturated pet food aisle, Nutrish™ — the longstanding dog- and cat-food brand founded by celebrity chef and pet advocate Rachael Ray — recently revamped its product packaging to help consumers zone in on these sought-after attributes, with crystal-clear messaging that emphasizes key aspects of animal nutrition, health, and wellness. The new design is being rolled out now through the summer.

“The Nutrish redesign is intended to help consumers find the right product to fit the needs of their pet more easily,” said Dr. Preston Buff, principal scientist of nutrition and animal safety at Post

Consumer Brands (which owns Nutrish). “We put the key benefits on the front of packages and improved the names of many products, including changes like Peak Protein to High Protein, Zero Grain to Grain Free, and Inner Health to Everyday Digestion – to make them more intuitive to shop.”

Additionally, Dr. Buff points to the Nutrish Whole Health Blend product line-up, available in dog and cat varieties, which supports key benefits of active mind, healthy body, and balanced energy. He also mentions to look for a checkmark confirming the product's formula has gone through an independent veterinarian review. And, importantly, he advises consumers to opt for nutrition

well-suited for their pet's life-stage and lifestyle.

“If you have a puppy or kitten, make sure the food is formulated for growth,” Dr. Buff said. “This will be in the nutritional adequacy statement, located near the guaranteed analysis, and will state ‘formulated for growth or for all life-stages.’ If you have an adult dog or cat, then you would seek out a food that is formulated for adult maintenance or all life-stages.” Nutrish has a wide variety of offerings for puppies, small breed dogs, large breed dogs, adult dogs, as well as Indoor Cats and Senior Cats, as examples.

Written by **Omar Sommereyns**



INTERVIEW WITH  
**Dr. Preston Buff**  
Principal Scientist,  
Nutrition and  
Animal Safety,  
Post Consumer  
Brands

**i** To learn more, visit **Nutrish.com**



# NEW LOOK





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Knight the Pit and Rina Vargas

## How Knight the Pit Stays Strong, **Healthy,** and **Full of Love**

Knight the Pit's owner, Rina Vargas, shares Knight's tailored wellness routine and dismantles pit bull stereotypes.

### **How do you ensure Knight's getting the right nutrition for his breed and lifestyle?**

Knight is on a fresh food diet designed to match his age, weight, and activity level. As a pit bull with a muscular build and high energy, having a protein-rich, balanced diet is important to support his lifestyle. We've seen positive changes in his energy and coat since making the switch, which reinforces how much nutrition can impact a dog's overall well-being.

### **Do you use any supplements as part of Knight's wellness routine?**

Yes, Knight takes a daily multivitamin that supports a range of areas, including digestion, immunity, and joint function. He also gets a supplement for oral health that's easy to mix with food. Over time, we've noticed improvements in his breath and tartar buildup, so it's become a consistent part of his routine.

### **What's been the most surprising thing about being a pet parent to a pit bull?**

The biggest surprise has been how gentle and affectionate they are. There's so much stigma around pit bulls, but Knight is the ultimate cuddlebug. It's been eye-opening to see how misunderstood this breed really is.



## What Pet Parents Should Know **About Periodontal Disease**

While some folks might joke about their pet's stinky breath, the truth is that poor dental health is no laughing matter.

**B**ad breath, sore gums, and less-than-pearly-white teeth aren't the only things to worry about for your pet's oral health.

Periodontal disease, the condition caused by the accumulation of plaque and tartar on the teeth that allows bacteria to invade and damage the surrounding tissue, can also lead to oral pain, trouble eating, and teeth that become so loose that they fall out of your pet's mouth. If left untreated, bacteria can even enter the bloodstream, which can cause serious problems for the heart, lungs, and kidneys.

### **Preventing periodontal disease**

The best way to ensure your pet's teeth and gums remain in great shape is to start with excellent oral hygiene practices right away. While the early stages of periodontal disease can be reversed with veterinary care, the later stages can't be.

Brushing your pet's teeth daily might sound daunting, but as with other types of grooming, it can be a productive and enjoyable bonding experience if your pet is introduced to it early using reward-based training. Dog- and cat-specific toothpastes, toothbrushes, and anti-plaque wipes can be safe and effective options for your pets. Other products, including water additives and sprays,

prescription dental diets, and chew treats, are also great options.

### **No better time to start than now**

The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) recommends a complete anesthetic dental cleaning by the age of 1 for cats and small- to medium-sized dog breeds; this recommendation is pushed out to 2 years of age for larger-breed dogs.

It can be scary and stressful to think about putting your pet under anesthesia, but the good news is that the risks to your pet are very low, and the benefits are immeasurable. Veterinary teams are very skilled at keeping your pet safe under anesthesia, and the sooner and more often you bring your pet for their veterinary dental care, the higher the chance that their procedure will be shorter with less need for extractions and other invasive treatments.

Remember, dental care isn't just about clean teeth and fresh breath, and a lack of attention to dental health in our pets can lead to serious health issues and discomfort. Thankfully, your veterinary team can guide you to prevent and treat your dog's periodontal disease and help keep them happy and healthy for longer.

Written by **Emily Singler, V.M.D., Veterinary Content Specialist, American Animal Hospital Association**





# Paris Hilton Shares Her Secrets to Pampering Pets With Love

Paris Hilton opens up about her daily pet care routines, emotional intuitiveness, and the inspiration behind her new pet wellness brand.

Paris Hilton and her dog, Baby Luv | Photo courtesy of 11:11 Media

**You're known for being very involved in the care of your pets. Could you walk us through a typical day when it comes to caring for them?**

Each of my pets has their own little routine and personality — some love the camera, others are more lowkey — but they all love being around people. What they want most is connection. Being held, being noticed, being part of the energy. Honestly, they're living their best lives, and they know it.

**What's your top tip for ensuring pets are living their healthiest lives?**

Just like with people, wellness is everything. I make sure they eat food that's made with love and real ingredients. That's actually what inspired me to help create something better with Pamper Like Paris. It's more than food — it's mental stimulation, affection, rest, and play. Pets are just like us: They need balance, comfort, and joy.

**You've had many pets over the years, including your iconic dogs. How do you**

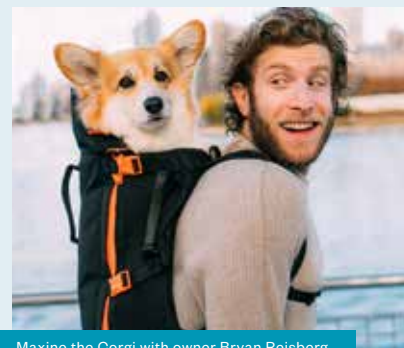
**ensure their health and happiness, both physically and mentally?**

I'm always paying attention to their emotional cues. Whether it's choosing the right food, prepping for a travel day, or planning downtime, it's all about creating a life they love. Even when I'm on the go, I make sure their comfort comes first. It's the little things that make a big difference.

**Many pet owners struggle with finding the right food for their pets. How do you choose the best diet for yours?**

Start with quality and transparency. I don't give my pets anything I wouldn't eat myself. Okay, maybe not literally, but close! I want to know exactly what's in their food, and it needs to be clean, balanced, and made for their specific needs.

That's part of why I collaborated on Pamper Like Paris — because I wanted something I could feel 100% confident feeding them. Beyond the brand, it's about paying attention to how your pet responds. Do they have more energy? A shinier coat? Fewer tummy issues? That's how you know it's working.



Maxine the Corgi with owner Bryan Reisberg

## How Maxine the Fluffy Corgi Is Inspiring Smarter, Science-Backed Pet Wellness

Maxine's daily routine is fueling a mission to redefine modern pet care. Her owner, Bryan Reisberg, explains.

**What does a typical day in Maxine's life look like?**

We wake up, have breakfast, and head to the office where Maxine, her mom, and I all work together at Little Chonk, developing pet products that the world needs. The rest of the day is filled with naps, food, and walks for Maxine, while we grind away.

**What does pet wellness mean to you as a dog owner?**

To me, wellness isn't just about preventing illness — it's about giving her the best possible life and making sure she feels good in her body and brain. That's the lens we use to build everything at our company.

**What's something you've learned about wellness through being Maxine's parent?**

Wellness isn't a one-size-fits-all checklist; it's a constantly evolving process of paying attention, learning, and adjusting. What worked for her at age 3 doesn't work at age 9. That's made us realize how behind the pet industry is in supporting that kind of care. We feel like right now is the moment to do something about that. That's what we're building at Little Chonk.

## Helping Your Pet Look and Feel Their Best

You probably know Tweezerman for its high-quality and precision beauty and grooming tools, with award-winning tweezers, eyelash curlers, nail care tools, and skincare items.

**M**aybe they're even part of your self-care routine, enabling you to look and feel your best.

Now, the go-to brand is helping you help your pet enjoy the same benefits with its new line of cat and dog grooming tools.

"While we pamper ourselves with the best, do our furry friends also not deserve the same?" said a spokesperson for Tweezerman.

Tweezerman's Pet Collection features grooming tools for cats and dogs alike: slicker brushes, nail clippers, shears, scissors, tick removal tweezers, and a shampoo and conditioner brush.

To ensure ease of use and safety for at-home use, veterinarians and groomers tested the products on a variety of pets during development. Everything is made with high-quality stainless steel and premium performing materials that are long-lasting. These considerations are at the core of each product in Tweezerman's Pet Collection, emphasizing its commitment to pet comfort and safety.

"As a brand, and as pet parents would agree, we always want the best for our pets," the spokesperson said. "Their self-care and wellness is just as important as our own."

Written by **Melinda Carter**



To learn more, visit  
[tweezermanpet.com](https://tweezermanpet.com)

**TWEEZERMAN.**  
PET COLLECTION

## Avoid These Common Mistakes When Grooming Your Dog

Regular grooming appointments are essential to your dog's health. Regardless of breed, brushing, nail trimming, ear cleaning, and teeth brushing are universal. The American Kennel Club offers some grooming tips to keep your dog healthy:



### DO:

- 1. Obtain the right tools specific to your breed of dog.** Brushing is required daily to clean debris, prevent matting, and create a shiny coat. Use a damp towel to remove dirt, mud, and other outdoor debris.
- 2. Check your dog's coat daily for ticks** — a few times a day during tick season.
- 3. Check your dog's paw pads for cleanliness, cracks, and dryness.** Overgrown hair between the pads must be trimmed.
- 4. Keep your dog's nails trimmed.** Make sure you have access to a cauterizing product to stop bleeding. Nails should be trimmed regularly to prevent overgrowth of the nail and the quick.
- 5. Wipe the inside of your dog's ears with a moist cotton ball or wash-cloth.** Check the ear canal for swelling, redness, or brown/yellow discharge.

A foul "yeasty" smell could mean an infection.

- 6. Daily teeth brushing is essential,** as plaque can build up after 48 hours. If needed, wrap your finger in gauze to wipe the teeth and gums.

### DON'T:

- 1. Do not use human beauty products on your dog,** including shampoo, conditioner, and toothpaste. Human toothpaste contains xylitol, which is toxic to dogs.
- 2. Do not clip or groom without being taught the proper techniques.**
- 3. Don't try to treat lacerations or wounds by yourself.**
- 4. Do not spray your dog with perfume,** as it has harmful ingredients and can cause respiratory problems.

Written by **Dr. Jerry Klein, Chief Veterinarian, American Kennel Club**



Maya the Cat

## Caring for Animals With Special Needs: Tips From the Owner of Maya the Cat

Lauren Beader, owner of Maya the Cat, shares thoughtful habits that help every pet in their household feel loved and cared for.

### How do you manage Maya's health through her diet?

Maya has no "off button" when it comes to eating. We have her eating gut health food and using an elevated slow-feeder bowl. Then, we have a decoy bowl on the way to where she'd go to steal her sister's food. It's ridiculous, but it works for us.

### Is there anything else you give your pets to care for their health and well-being?

Dragon takes FortiFlora to help keep her digestive tract moving and is on Prozac for extreme anxiety. Mordecai is a double merle Australian cattle dog mix. They tend to have joint and gut health issues, so he takes a hip and joint medication to keep him spry, and it definitely helps.

### What are the key things you focus on to make sure Maya is healthy and happy?

We make sure Maya and all of our pets get plenty of enrichment, along with exercise, a balanced diet, grooming, and, of course, love. We rescued Maya not knowing much about her condition or what health concerns may crop up. Luckily, apart from leaky eyes and lots of sneezing, she's been pretty healthy. Part of adopting a special needs animal — or any animal, for that matter — is knowing that you're responsible for their care. Whether it's an unexpected medical need, a special diet, extra playtime, or extra grooming, our pets depend on us to keep them happy, safe, and healthy.

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## A Natural Solution to Common Illnesses in Cats

BestLife4Pets sells all-natural homeopathic remedies to help cat owners take better care of their feline friends.

**W**hen Viktoria Van Leeuwen's dog, Tango, got sick, she turned to homeopathic remedies to help him recover. Having used them successfully for her human family she thought they could help animals too. The treatments worked like a charm, sparking an idea.

Van Leeuwen quit her corporate job and launched BestLife4Pets, a line of all-natural products for cats and dogs.

"Utilizing plants and substances found in nature to treat people has been a prevalent form of healing in Eastern cultures for centuries, and we are happy to bring these proven treatments to pets," Van Leeuwen said.

She now focuses on creating products that help cat parents keep their four-legged pals healthy longer.

### A specific set of health issues

Cats face many of the same issues we do

like joint stiffness, arthritis, kidney disease, hyperthyroidism, and dental disease.

But it doesn't end there. Many cats suffer from UTIs, gingivitis, and skin allergies. Kittens and feral cats are particularly susceptible to upper respiratory infections and parasites. Meanwhile, older cats and those with weaker immune systems — and especially FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus) positive cats — face even more dental, skin problems, and recurring infections.

Since cats are more difficult to take to the vet than dogs, Van Leeuwen said her products can help cat owners easily treat these issues at home.

### Perfect products for cats

Van Leeuwen said BestLife4Pets' Cat UTI & Kidney Support Remedy can help cats with bladder issues flush out toxins. Likewise, the Breathe Easy for Cats formula helps cats with upper and

lower respiratory infections.

Van Leeuwen also developed the Cat Dental Care & Bad Breath Remedy after speaking to a customer who found a feral cat with red and inflamed welts in its mouth. The remedy helped reduce the inflammation.

The products are easy to give to both household and feral cats.

"Unlike many cat supplements on the market that are disguised as treats or chews, our remedies contain no artificial additives, preservatives, colors, or flavors," Van Leeuwen said. "Our remedies, made solely from plants and minerals, are safe and effective. Try them for your cat and see the difference."

**i** Scan the QR code for a special gift from BestLife4Pets, and be sure to sign up for the BestLife4Pets newsletter for weekly cat care tips.



INTERVIEW WITH  
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