



# AMSCOPE

Newsletter of the American Miniature Schnauzer Club

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## How to Protect Your Pup From This Summer Hazard

Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

Head shaking, sneezing, snoring and pawing at the face are symptoms that your dog may have cheatgrass or foxtails stuck on them; if the seeds aren't removed, it could progress to an infection. Thoroughly inspecting and brushing your dog's coat when you return from a hike or romp in the woods will help you find and remove any grass awns left behind.

If a grass awn has penetrated the skin, be aware that you may not be able to remove it in its entirety, leaving small pieces behind that could quickly migrate deeper into the body; seek veterinary care immediately.

Annual grasses are a common sight along hiking trails and in parks, meadows and grassy fields across the U.S. You may not think twice about letting your dog wander near them, aside from a thorough checking for ticks afterward.

However, when you're looking over your dog's fur it's important to not only be on the lookout for insect pests but also grass awns, which can become embedded in your pet's paws, eyes, ears, nostrils and more. Cheatgrass and foxtails are two common plants that can pose a risk to dogs and cats due to grass awns, which are short bristles on the end of the seed.

"They are often there to help distribute or disperse the seeds, and in some cases, they have plumes on them to help the wind carry them along. In other cases, they have barbs, and the barbs are very effective at catching on fur," William Lauenroth, Ph.D. explained to the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation.<sup>1</sup>

Cheatgrass Infections Can Be Life-Threatening. Typically, if your dog brushes past a bunch of cheatgrass, the grass awns, sometimes referred to as "mean seeds," will attach to their fur. Often, they will naturally fall off as your dog walks, but some may become tangled in fur, allowing the sharp end of the barb to migrate into the dog's body. Lauenroth noted:<sup>2</sup>

"Once that begins, because of the barbs, the seed only moves in one direction and that's forward in

the direction of the point. When it starts into a dog's body, it just keeps traveling, and then every time the dog moves in some way, it gets the seed moving forward and this is the key problem with some of these seeds.

This is where the name 'mean seeds' came from. Once inside the dog there's nothing to really stop the seed, so it can essentially travel at will as it is motivated by the movement of the dog."

Local irritation and injury can occur when cheatgrass becomes stuck between your dog's toes, for instance but if it burrows under the skin, serious, even life-threatening, infection can result. Your dog's body isn't capable of processing cheatgrass or foxtails and can neither degrade nor decompose them. To make matters worse, they carry bacteria.

Most often, cheatgrass and foxtails attach to dog's paw pads (often between the toes), mouth, nostrils, ears, eyelids and eyes, but they can also travel to the spine, chest or abdominal cavity, brain and more.<sup>3</sup>

"If it comes into contact with a vital organ, that's often fatal for the dog," Lauenroth explained.<sup>4</sup> However, the infection may go unnoticed until symptoms become severe. Cindy Brown of Caldwell, Idaho, told KTVB News about a cheatgrass infection in her dog, Coda.<sup>5</sup>

The infection only became apparent because her dog received surgery for an unrelated leg injury, during which the veterinarian noticed the cheatgrass infection, which was estimated to have stemmed from a seed stuck in the dog's paw four months earlier. By that point, surgery was required to remove the seed from the dog's abdominal area.

"The tricky part," Lauenroth said, "is that while the seed is continually moving, the infection tends to be behind the seed. So, the infection is where the seed was and not where the seed is at the moment, making the seed very difficult to locate."<sup>6</sup>

Signs and Symptoms of Cheatgrass Infection

If you've recently been in an area with unmowed vegetation, particularly tall grasses, watch out for the following signs that your dog may have cheatgrass or foxtails stuck on them:<sup>7</sup>

- Head shaking
- Limping
- Pawing at the face
- Snorting
- Sneezing
- Bloody nose
- Excessive licking on an area of the body, especially the paws

pecially the paws

If the seeds aren't removed, it could progress to an infection, signs and symptoms of which may include:<sup>8</sup>

- Lumps
- Bumps
- Draining tracts (openings in the skin from which discharge drains)
- Areas of redness or tenderness
- Inflammation
- Lethargy
- Depression
- Decreased appetite

Often, the location of the grass awn may cause symptoms related to where it's located — sneezing if it's in your dog's nose, head shaking if it's in the ear canal or coughing if in the lungs, for instance. In a study of 754 dogs and 37 cats with foxtails stuck within their bodies, the most common location in dogs was the ear canal, cutaneous/subcutaneous space and nasal canal. In cats, they showed up most often in the eyes.<sup>9</sup>

Tips to Avoid Cheatgrass Infection

Keeping your dog away from areas with unmown grasses is one of the best ways to ensure grass awns don't end up attaching to your dog's body. If this isn't possible, thoroughly inspecting and brushing your dog's coat when you return from a hike or romp in the woods will help you find and remove any grass awns left behind.

Be sure to check their ears, mouth, nose and between the toes a few times each day to remove any that you find before they have an opportunity to invade their body. During the summer months, when grass awns are most problematic,<sup>10</sup> you may also want to consider trimming any long fur on your dog, including between the toes and pads.

If you have a working dog that spends a lot of time in overgrown grasses, vests are available to cover the chest and abdomen to reduce the risk of exposure to cheatgrass and foxtails. If you find a grass awn on your dog, remove it from the fur using tweezers. If it has penetrated the skin, be aware that you may not be able to remove it in its entirety, leaving small pieces behind that could quickly migrate deeper into the body.<sup>11</sup>

For this reason, seek veterinary care right away if you suspect your dog has been exposed — and if your dog is displaying signs of infection, it's a veterinary emergency that should be checked out immediately.

**The deadline  
for the September issue  
is August 8**

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# LOOK

Please let me know if you make a change

\* **DECALS & PINS.** You can get **AMSC decals (\$1.00)** and **replacement pins (\$7.50)** from

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13445 Phal Road  
Grass Lake, MI 49240  
Phone: 517-522-4173  
sercatep@yahoo.com

**Report all changes to the Roster to**  
**treasurer@AMSC.us**

**Bonnie Keyes**  
**511 River Terrace**  
**Endicott, NY 13760**  
**(607)742-3828**

**The log in information**  
**for the Members**  
**section is as follows:**

Password is: **2020Schnauzer**

Here's the link to the Members  
Section:

<http://amsc.us/members-log-in>

Please write down or save the  
User Name and Password as  
there is quite a bit of pertinent  
information in our Members  
Section.

**If you use Voltarin pain cream, you should know that diclofenac, the medicine in Voltarin, is EXTREMELY toxic to dogs & cats. If they lick your skin or you pet them after using it they can get very sick. As with any human medications, please be careful around your pets.**

## [UPDATED] Which Vaccines Does Your Dog Need?

Do you know the difference between so-called "Core" and "Non-Core" vaccines for your dog, and what those terms mean?

Do you sometimes wonder, "How often do I need to vaccinate my dog?" Or which vaccines are absolutely necessary and which are not? And what's required by law?

It can get confusing. A lot of veterinarians give out misleading information to get you to keep vaccinating your dog regularly.

So we want to fill in the blanks and give you the information you need to make the best decision for your dog.

Then, when you get that card in the mail from your vet reminding you that your dog's due for his annual physical exam and vaccinations, you'll be prepared, knowing what your dog does and doesn't need to remain protected from disease – and stay out of trouble with the law!

### Core Vs Non-Core

All of the vaccines given to dogs fit into 2 categories: core and non-core vaccines.

Core vaccines are the ones most vets recommend your dog should have as a puppy. These vaccines all protect against dangerous viral diseases. They are:

- Rabies
- Distemper
- Parvovirus
- Adenovirus (Canine

Hepatitis)

The Non-Core vaccines include:

- Bordetella
- Lyme Disease
- Leptospirosis 4-way (this is sometimes included in combination vaccines with core vaccines, but it is a non-core vaccine and should be considered separately)
- Canine Influenza
- Parainfluenza
- Adenovirus Intranasal

Several of the non-core vaccines (Bordetella, Lyme and Leptospirosis) are bacterial vaccines. Bacterial vaccines have low efficacy rates coupled with high incidence of adverse reactions. This means they should rarely be used, and then, only after careful consideration of all the risks of vaccinating vs not vaccinating against these diseases.

But if you do plan to give your dog any of these vaccines (or you already have), you'll need to know how long they last and how to protect him after.

This is great, but it still doesn't answer the question of which ones your dog needs. Don't worry, I'm getting to that.

### How Long Vaccines Last

First, for core vaccines ... you'll see the Minimum Duration of Immunity of the Core Vaccines. Protection against disease from these vaccines has been proven by clinical studies to last from 7 to 15 years (depending on the vaccine). The core vaccine information in the chart is based on clinical studies by Ronald D Schultz PhD and you can read more about his work in [this article](#).

If your dog has had any of the core vaccines at 16 weeks of age or older, he's most likely protected for life and doesn't need to be vaccinated again.

Your veterinarian may not agree with this. Unless your veterinarian is truly holistic, she will probably at least follow the AAHA guidelines.

Your veterinarian may imply that the core vaccines are required by law. But, except for rabies, they're not.

Next, for non-core vaccines, you'll see we've focused on the three main non-core vaccines that your vet's likely to recommend: Bordetella (kennel cough), Lyme Disease and Leptospirosis. Since we don't advocate any of these vaccines, the chart lists some issues with these vaccines that you should consider before vaccinating your dog.

### Why You Shouldn't Over-Vaccinate Your Dog

Vaccinating your dog more often than necessary can be very dangerous for him. All vaccines have potential adverse reactions. These can range from fairly mild reactions like lethargy or soreness, to really severe ones like anaphylactic shock, autoimmune diseases and even death. The vaccine can also cause the disease it's intended to prevent!

When your dog is protected by the vaccines he's already had, vaccinating him again does not make him "more immune."

Vaccines also contain other ingredients that are potentially harmful for your dog.

### Ingredients in Vaccines

Most vaccines include toxic ingredients that add to the risks of vaccinating your dog.

Two of these are:

#### · Thimerosal

This is a mercury based additive used as a preservative. Mercury toxicity is well known and repeatedly proven in studies. Yet it's still contained in most veterinary vaccines today. Even some vaccines that claim to be thimerosal-free may still contain small amounts of thimerosal. That's because it can be used in processing but not added as an ingredient, so the manufacturers don't

**VACCINES...cont'd on p 3**

## VACCINES...from p. 2

have to disclose it.

### Gentamicin

This is an antibiotic. According to the FDA (US Food and Drug Administration), antibiotics are in vaccines to prevent bacterial infection during manufacturing. So when your dog gets a vaccine, he's getting antibiotics whether you like it or not.

### What To Do At The Vet's Office

For Core Vaccines

If your veterinarian presses you to over-vaccinate your dog with core vaccines, you can draw her attention to Dr Schultz's research. Dr Schultz's studies show the minimum duration of immunity that likely protects your dog for life once he's had his core vaccines as a puppy or adult.

If your vet needs more convincing, you can ask for titers to confirm your dog's protected. Some vets charge an exorbitant amount for titers (perhaps because they really don't want to do them) and some may even refuse.

If that's the case, you can ask your vet to draw the blood for you (usually about a \$15 to \$20 charge) and then send it yourself to Hemopet for testing. You can submit your titer request on Hemopet's website. A distemper and parvo titer costs only \$52 and you can ship the vial of blood for about \$6 via a US Postal Service Small Flat Rate Box.

For Non-Core Vaccines

Your vet is likely to recommend Bordetella and Leptospirosis vaccines, as well as Lyme if you live in a high tick area. All of these vaccines carry a high risk for your dog and don't work very well. Check the vaccine issues listed on the chart, and also consider these points before vaccinating your dog.

**Bordetella:** If you board your dog, try to find a kennel that doesn't require Bordetella. If your kennel does, ask to sign a waiver accepting the risk of your dog getting kennel cough on their premises ... that's what worries them. Or better yet, have a pet-sitter come to your home and then you don't need to worry about vaccination requirements.

**Leptospirosis:** If you think your dog is at risk for leptospirosis, make sure you find out from your local health authority what strains of leptospirosis are in your area. The vaccine covers the L. canicola, L. icterohaemorrhagiae, L. grippityphosa and L. pomona serovars. If these strains aren't prevalent where you live, there is no point in taking the risk of vaccinating your dog.

Also note that some vets give the Leptospirosis vaccine in conjunction with core vaccines. You may see a vaccine called something like DHLPP. That "L" is leptospirosis ... make sure you know what vaccines your vet is using. Your dog could still get the leptospirosis shot.

Lyme:

if your dog's not out in the woods picking up ticks, he's probably not at risk for Lyme disease. If you do take your dog into tick-infested areas, use natural protection methods to keep the ticks away. Check him thoroughly for ticks when you get home. Removing the ticks promptly will help prevent the tick from infecting him.

So which dog vaccines are necessary? That's a question only you can answer!

About the Author Julia Henriques

Julia Henriques is Managing Editor of Dogs Naturally Magazine. She's on the Board of Playing Again Sams (Wisconsin Samoyed Rescue) where she enjoys helping adopters and group members choose more natural health care options for their dogs. She lives in Chicago with her partner Marc and two rescue Samoyeds.

## New Applicants

**John Schauer**

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734-344-1203  
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John was an AMSC member for several years, but let his membership lapse by missing the deadline. He is retired and shared the following about himself and his dogs: "I have had Schnauzers for 40 years. I trained and trialed in Agility after I was 65 years old. My young bitch motivated this old geezer. She earned her MACH". John has been a member of The Miniature Schnauzer Club of Michigan for many years and Treasurer for several years.

Sponsors: Debbra Herrell, Beth Santure

**John Sheldon**

228 20<sup>th</sup> St. NE  
Oneonta, AL 35121-2712  
251-533-6031

John is an Echocardiographer. He would like to become a member of AMSC to better the Miniature Schnauzer breed and extend awareness into Alabama. He has read the Code of Ethics and the Breed Standard and agrees to comply with to support both. He is a breeder of Minis from the Repetition line and has raised two litters in the past five years and has been active in Obedience and Conformation for approximately three years. He attends about eight events per year. John is in the process of joining Birmingham KC.

Sponsors: Kurt Garmaker Beverly Barrone

**Peggy J. Crawford**

235 Carolina Ave.  
Clovis, CA 93611  
559-284-0849  
[peggycrawford@gmail.com](mailto:peggycrawford@gmail.com)

Peggy would like to join AMSC in order to support the preservation of our breed. She wishes to be connected to breeders and enthusiasts of quality. She has read the AMSC Code of Ethics and Breed

Standard and agrees to support both. She has one Miniature Schnauzer bred by Carol Hafner with which she competes in Obedience, Tracking, Scent work, Barn Hunt and FCAT. Peggy attends approximately fourteen events per year, and is a retired U.S. Court Reporter, interested in helping with Social Media, Membership and Barn Hunt. Sponsors: Carol Hafner, Kathleen Soares

Susie Thomas Sexson  
141 Grisham Road  
Royal, AR 71968  
501-701-7291

Susie would like to become a member of AMSC to make a difference. She has read the Code of Ethics and the Breed Standard and agrees to abide by both. She is a breeder and has had six litters in the past five years. She attends five to ten dog events per year, exhibiting in conformation. Susie belongs to the Hot Springs KC where her involvement is helping with judges' transportation and working the day of their show. She owns three Grand Champions and has co-bred four other Champions. Her special skills are in computer science.

Sponsors: Paula Steele  
Heather Dangelmaier

**Glendora Norwood**

2651 Skillman Lane  
Petaluma, CA 94952-6443  
707-762-5898  
Glwood4@aol.com

Glendora was a member for almost 30 years. Her membership lapsed and she is required to reapply. She says her dogs get a lot of attention as well as being shown, often by herself. She is a Breeder of Merit and has read the Code of Ethics as well as the Breed Standard. Glendora is a breeder of Miniature Schnauzers and has been for over 50 years. She has exhibited Giant Schnauzers in Obedience. She attends more than a dozen events per year and is a member of the Miniature Schnauzer Club of Northern California Sir Francis Drake KC. Her skill is helping other people.

Sponsors are Cheryl Dugan and Stephanie Davis-Rae

**Dr. Damien L Cuffie, DDS, MPH**

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New Orleans, LA 70116  
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Dr. Damien is applying for regular membership so he can be a contributing member of breed club which his dogs belong. He would also like to increase his network and knowledge within the breed. He has read both the Code of Ethics and Breed Standard and agrees to comply with both. He has bred four litters in the past five years and is involved in Conformation, attending five to seven shows per year. Dr. Damien has also applied to Lone Star Miniature Schnauzer Club of Dallas. He started in the breed in 2011, mentored by Dr. Karl Barth. He will use his science and health background to provide assistance in the health aspect of the Miniature Schnauzer. Sponsors: Carol Benson, Nita Ainsworth



# AMSCOPE

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## *In Memorium*



### SANDY WAGNER

It is with great sadness that I let fellow club members know that on Monday, June 27th, Sandy passed at Hershey Medical Center (HMC) near Harrisburg, PA. A memorial service is being planned for Wednesday, July 6th, 10:00 am - Noon; additional details will be in her obituary, which I'll post when available.

Sandy loved her Schnauzers and was still actively breeding as well as grooming her clients Miniature Schnauzer's. All of Sandy's dogs, including a litter of 4 week old puppies, are being cared for and placed in new homes. Nothing made Sandy happier than being around and speaking with anyone that loved our breed. On a personal level, she was always kind and generous.

Not to be insensitive, but I want to mention to please share with your family and/or friends details about caring for your dogs should something happen to you. Sandy had told me her children had my contact information and were instructed to reach out to me. I'm so glad they did!

Her family has requested donations be made to the AMSC Trophy Fund.

**FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE:** The following information is given to help conduct AMSC business more efficiently. Please remember that the Secretary and the AMSCOPE editor should **BOTH** be notified of address changes, club officers and specialty results.

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