

Protect Your Pets This Spring

By Amy Mulvihill

... For people looking to go the non-chemical route, homeopathic veterinarian Anne C. Hermans recommends reducing the amount of processed food in the animal's diet and spending more time combing your pet after they come inside.

"There's no quick fix, but the better the health, the more resistance they'll have to fleas and ticks and parasites in general," she commented.

For older pets or pets with already weakened immune systems, Dr. Hermans recommended herbal sprays as an alternative to heavy duty chemical sprays.

"The problem [with chemical sprays and ointments] is that products that are designed to kill fleas and ticks can have short and long term toxic effect for the pet and sometimes you won't know until after it's applied," she explained, adding that more information on alternative preventative treatments can be found on her Web site www.vethomeopath.com.

Regardless of what course of treatment pet owners choose, Dr. Hermans stressed that it should be the result of much consideration and be tailored to the animal's lifestyle.

"It's a risk benefit analysis. If your pet is old or fragile you may want to be more conservative with what you're asking them to deal with. If they're healthy and running through the fields and they have 100 ticks a day and they're crawling all over your baby then maybe you want to use [something stronger]," she explained.

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