

doggy daycare and spa

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December 2010 Newsletter

News from the Spa...

We have a *very* limited number of Spa appointments left before the Christmas holiday so if you would like your dog to visit the Spa in December, we recommend scheduling your pet's appointment as soon as possible.

The Winter Itch... Many dog parents complain that their furry kid is especially itchy during the cold weather months. The drier air created by running home heating systems is many times the culprit. Regular visits to the Spa during the winter season can help alleviate this problem. All of our shampoos and conditioning treatments are soap free and contain natural emollients that help to moisturize your dog's skin and coat. Our oatmeal shampoo and conditioner is full of essential oils and when used with a hot oil treatment can leave your dog coat and skin unbelievably moisturized and shiny. In addition, regular grooming will help keep the fur between your dog's toes from getting long and thick making the removal of snow and salt much easier on them and you. If your pet is especially itchy, we also recommend putting a humidifier near their sleeping area at home.

Did you know that you are our best advertising? The best compliment you can give us is the referral of a friend, family member, or colleague (plus you will earn free Daycare for every new client you refer!) You are also welcome to take part in our Testimonial Page on our website. We are always looking to add new faces to this page! During the months of December and January, everyone who submits a testimonial will have their dog's name entered in a drawing to win a 5 visit package! It is just our way of saying "Thanks!"

Gift Ideas for the Special Dog on your List

- Quality treats are always available at Soldan's (and what dog can turn down a really good treat?)
- A New Collar and Leash Set (Joey's Pet Outfitters in Williamston has some really unique and cool ones!)
- A memory foam bed to relieve aching joints
- Group Classes with Good Dog! Training!
- Huggle Hounds tough dog toys (Available at Soldan's and Joey's)
- Dog Treat Wreaths (available in our Reception Area!)

Friendly Reminders:

Have you moved, changed jobs, or gotten a new phone number? Please make sure to see a team member to verify that we have updated contact information for you. We want to be able to get in touch with you if the need arises!

Don't forget! Doggy Daycare and Spa requires YEAR ROUND flea and heartworm preventative for Daycare attendees!

Don't be left out! Join us on Facebook! You will have access to the latest photos and videos of the Daycare Dogs, plus you will receive updates on important events and news!

Bring in a framed 4x6 photo of your dog and we will proudly display it in our Reception Area!

Dog Food 101

One of the most important subjects we cover in our newsletter has to do with diet and nutrition. At Doggy Daycare and Spa, we believe that we are what we eat. We also believe in the importance of researching dog food and providing high quality diets for our beloved pets. Many foods on the market today contain a large amount of fillers, sugars, by-products and other things we thought you would prefer we not mention. Many of the most popular, highly advertised brands are the worst when it comes to the quality of their kibble. Just because the advertising and packaging is pretty, the ingredients and process in making the food many times are not. In today's convenience-oriented society, we understand how important it is to rely on kibble and canned food to provide the proper nutritional balance for our dogs. And with so many choices out there, it can become a daunting task to determine which food is the best fit for your dog.

The following is what we think every dog owner should know when buying dog food:

- 1. Read the label.** We believe that if you think to yourself "I would NEVER eat that" then you shouldn't feed it to your dog.
 - A. A popular dog food has beef by-products, pork by-products and poultry by-products on their list of ingredients, PLUS the food also includes "meat by-products." What is the meat? We'll be honest... you do NOT want to know.
 - B. What actually are by-products? Animal by-products may contain intestines, lungs, spleen, livers, kidneys, brains, blood, bone, stomachs, beaks, feathers, and feet. They can come from "4D" animals... Deformed, Dying, Disabled, or Diseased.
- 2. Be aware of the amount of artificial coloring added to food.** We believe the more color it contains, the lesser the quality. Just because it is round and green, don't be fooled, it is not a pea.
- 3. Know that corn has no nutritional value and is used only as a filler.** Many dogs have allergies to corn, wheat & wheat by-products, soy, and other common ingredients in commercial food. If your dog is excessively licking their feet, prone to chronic ear infections and/or having skin issues, look at their diet. Some brands carry Allergy formulas with unique proteins and minimal ingredients to help control food allergies.
- 4. The first ingredient on the label is the most dominate ingredient in the recipe.** However, if a food lists several different kinds of rice, wheat, or potato in the top 5 ingredients, please know that the food is mostly carbs, even when the protein is the first listed ingredient. Food with an excessive amount of sugar (corn, beet pulp) can also lead to excessive hyperactivity in some dogs.
- 5. Don't forget treats!** If you wouldn't eat Twinkies for a snack, then why would you want to feed the equivalent to your dog? Once again, read the ingredients. Just because it looks like bacon doesn't mean it is really bacon. At Doggy Daycare and Spa, we only use high quality biscuits for our going-home time treats.
- 6. Look at the expiration date on the Bag.** Many pet stores do not rotate stock as often as they should, so many times we will go home with a bag of food and/or treats that is close to their expiration date. Pet foods are particularly prone to stored product pests such as Indian meal worms. If you notice a cobwebby type substance, excessive breakings, or insects of any kind in your dog's food or treats, discard it right away.
- 7. At home, do not store dry food directly in plastic bins or containers unless you will be washing them out thoroughly with hot soapy water between re-fills.** Most foods contain animal fats which are absorbed into the plastic and will go rancid, spoiling fresh food that is put into the container. Food should be stored in its original bag inside whatever container you wish.
- 8. Talk to your Veterinarian about the correct amount to feed your dog.** The labels on most foods provide pet owners with a "Recommended Portion Guide" based on a dog's weight to refer to when determining the amount to feed. Please remember, most companies will want you to go through the product and

overestimate portions. The lowest portion is usually the best amount, and just as it is with us, portion control is the best means of controlling weight and obesity.

Still confused? Do research online. Talk to other pet owners. Discuss food with the team at Soldan's or Joey's Pet Outfitters. And of course, consult your dog's Veterinarian.