

**Myth #1: There are more dogs as pets, than cats.**

Fact: According to the Humane Society of the U.S., Americans have 86 million cat pets, versus 78 million dog pets—so cats rule!<sup>1</sup>

**Myth #2: Cats who don't scratch more than usual don't have fleas.**

Fact: Even if cats don't itch or scratch more than normal, they may still have fleas. In fact, some cats tolerate fleas in their fur. What may look like a cat's normal nibbling could actually be their reaction to irritating fleas.<sup>2,3</sup> And fleas can cause more than just itching; in fact, constant scratching from flea infestations can lead to hair loss and other skin issues. Additionally, fleas can cause secondary allergic reactions and problems such as tapeworm infections, cat scratch disease and anemia.<sup>4,5</sup>

**Myth #3: Cats are cold and aloof, so they don't make good pets.**

Fact: Cats can be just as social and affectionate as dogs. For instance, if your cat's ears and tail are standing up—even if she's not slobbering all over your face like Fido—she's probably glad to see you!<sup>6</sup>

**Myth #4: A purring cat is a happy cat.**

Fact: Cats purr, not only when they are happy, but also when they feel uncomfortable, like when they are recovering from an injury.<sup>7</sup>

**Myth #5: Keeping cats indoors prevents them from getting fleas.**

Fact: Indoor cats may be at risk for fleas. In fact, fleas can be brought into the home by other pets without you even realizing it.<sup>8</sup>

And remember, the minute you let your indoor cat outside—even for only a few moments and even on a leash—your “indoor” cat becomes an “outdoor” cat, potentially exposed to fleas.<sup>8</sup>

**Myth #6: Cats only smell with their noses.**

Fact: Cats smell with their noses and also with their mouths. So when a cat appears to be smiling, she may just be opening her mouth slightly so that she can better sniff out the situation!<sup>9</sup>

**Myth #7: Cats take care of themselves, and so are low maintenance.**

Fact: Cats may seem like they groom themselves more and complain less than dogs, but they need just as much healthcare as dogs,<sup>10</sup> including application of a flea preventive once a month, 12 months a year, and at least an annual check-up by your vet. The Bayer Veterinary Care Usage Study revealed forty percent of cats have not been to the vet in the last year<sup>11</sup> which is especially harmful for older cats since they are more prone to diabetes, kidney failure and cancer.

**Myth #8: Cats only need flea prevention during the summer months.**

Fact: Since fleas in virtually any weather can pose problems to your cat<sup>5</sup> the Companion Animal Parasite Council recommends providing pets with year-round flea control.<sup>12</sup>

**Myth #9: Cats and dogs are arch-enemies.**

Fact: “Fighting like cats and dogs” is an old cat's tale! Cats and dogs can be buddies if they're introduced to each other gradually, allowing them to get familiar with each other. Spaying or neutering cat and dog pets may limit aggressive tendencies.<sup>13</sup>

**Myth #10: Milk is good for cats.**

Fact: Many cats are lactose intolerant, so even if a cat enjoys milk, it may be hard for her to digest.<sup>14</sup>

## **References**

1. American Pet Products Association (APPA). 2011-2012 APPA National Pet Owners Survey. Available Online: [http://www.americanpetproducts.org/press\\_industrytrends.asp](http://www.americanpetproducts.org/press_industrytrends.asp). Accessed May 17, 2012.
2. Doctors Foster and Smith. Does my pet have to scratch before I know he has fleas? Available Online: [http://www.drsfostersmith.com/Articles/flea\\_faq.cfm#answer\\_2](http://www.drsfostersmith.com/Articles/flea_faq.cfm#answer_2). Accessed April 26, 2012.
3. Companion Animal Parasite Council. Cat Owners: Fleas. Available Online: <http://www.petsandparasites.org/cat-owners/fleas/>. Accessed April 26, 2012.
4. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Taking the Bite out of Fleas and Ticks. Available Online: [http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/NewsEvents/FDAVeterinarianNewsletter/ucm130778.htm?utm\\_campaign=Google2&utm\\_source=fdaSearch&utm\\_medium=website&utm\\_term=flea+bite+400&utm\\_content=1](http://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/NewsEvents/FDAVeterinarianNewsletter/ucm130778.htm?utm_campaign=Google2&utm_source=fdaSearch&utm_medium=website&utm_term=flea+bite+400&utm_content=1). Accessed April 26, 2012.
5. Paul M, DVM. Parasite Control in Pets Requires Year-Round Vigilance. Available Online: <http://www.capcvet.org/expert-articles/parasite-control-in-pets-requires-year-round-vigilance/>. Accessed April 26, 2012.
6. CBS News. Decoding Your Cat's Behavior. Available Online: [http://www.cbsnews.com/2100-500199\\_162-6146880.html](http://www.cbsnews.com/2100-500199_162-6146880.html). Accessed May 17, 2012.
7. Scientific American. Why do cats purr? Available Online: <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=why-do-cats-purr>. Accessed May 17, 2012.
8. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Veterinary Medicine. Protecting Your Pet from Pesky Parasites. Available Online: [http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petcolumns/petcols\\_article\\_page.php?PETCOLID=387&URL=0](http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petcolumns/petcols_article_page.php?PETCOLID=387&URL=0). Accessed May 17, 2012.
9. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign College of Veterinary Medicine. Why Does My Cat Do That?! Available Online: [http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petcolumns/petcols\\_article\\_page.php?OLDPETCOLID=303](http://vetmed.illinois.edu/petcolumns/petcols_article_page.php?OLDPETCOLID=303). Accessed May 17, 2012.
10. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Cats require as much medical attention as dogs. Available Online: <http://www.aspca.org/News/Animal-Welfare-News/cats-require-as-much-medical-attention-as-dogs.aspx>. Accessed May 17, 2012.
11. Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association. Executive Summary of the Bayer Veterinary Care Usage Study . Available Online: <http://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/pdf/10.2460/javma.238.10.1275>. Accessed July 9, 2012
12. Companion Animal Parasite Council. Current Guidelines. Available Online: <http://www.capcvet.org/capc-recommendations/capc-general-guidelines>. Accessed April 26, 2012.
13. Cat Channel. Cats and Dogs: Cats and dogs have different views on life. Can the two species live together peacefully? Available Online: [http://www.catchannel.com/behavior/article\\_2261.aspx](http://www.catchannel.com/behavior/article_2261.aspx). Accessed May 17, 2012.
14. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Animal Poison Control FAQ. Available Online: <http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/poison-control/animal-poison-control-faq.aspx#FD2>. Accessed May 17, 2012.