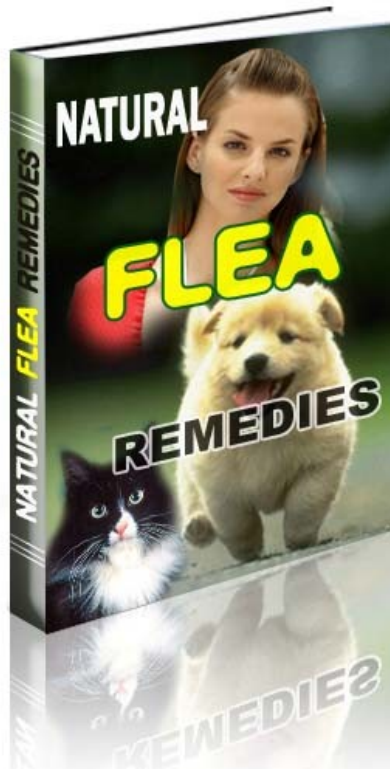


Natural Flea Remedies



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Natural Flea Remedies

Fleas can be one of the most annoying aspects of owning a pet. They aggravate both you and your pet - dog fleas and cat fleas can and will bite people as well, and flea bites are itchy and a pain. Fortunately, there are a number of ways to deal with the problem of fleas - both preventative measures you should take to avoid them in the first place and ways to get rid of them once your house is filled up with these unwelcome guests.

Many people don't want to risk endangering the environment (or themselves) by using chemical means for flea control. Some people have sensitivities to certain chemicals, others just don't want to do it. Ideally, you should compare flea control products to natural methods - sometimes the health risks to pets from having fleas are worth using a flea collar, powder bath, or other chemical methods. This page will give you some useful tips for getting rid of fleas holistically.

All Natural Method To Get Rid Of Fleas

The cause of fleas is most commonly the family pet, and if we keep pets we must be prepared to accept the inevitability of the pests that they carry. It is quite usual for fleas to jump straight from dog or cat to human, making life miserable for the whole household.

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Pets leave a lot of detritus - hair, flakes of skin, etc. - around for pests to breed in. This will mean more vacuuming, and more airing of rugs to prevent outbreaks.

VACUUMING

One safe, natural method to get rid of fleas is to vacuum frequently. Unfortunately it's usually not 100% effective, which means while it will reduce the flea population it will rarely eliminate it. Weekly hard vacuuming is a must. Do the whole house in 1 day and vacuum lounges, cushions, carpets, mats, up and down curtains, along crevices, and beds and their coverings. Take animal bedding, cushions and mats outside and air them in the sun for a day, then vacuum before bringing them back inside.

Treat carpets, mats and pet bedding with a flea repellent:

- ❖ Spray regularly with Cajeput oil solution:
1 teaspoon of oil to every 5 tablespoons of warm water.

- ❖ Scatter some dried pennyroyal, cedarwood shavings or pine needles on and under your pet's bedding. Or stuff the bedding material into a large cushion with some dried insect-repelling herbs including pennyroyal, stinking roger, wormwood, tansy or native peppermint.

- ❖ Once a week dust with the following Flea Repellent Powder or spray pet's bedding and mats with Flea Spray.

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Flea Repellent Powder

Ingredients:

3 drops pennyroyal oil
3 drops eucalyptus oil
3 drops cedarwood oil
9 drops citronella oil
500 g bicarbonate of soda

Preparation Method:

Combine the oils and mix them with the bicarbonate of soda. Sprinkle this over carpets etc., wait 1 hour and then vacuum up.

Flea Spray

Ingredients:

5 tablespoons feverfew flowers
1 tablespoon methylated spirits
4 cups (1 litre) boiling water

Preparation Method:

Place the flowers in a ceramic bowl, add the boiling water, cover, steep overnight, then strain through muslin, squeezing all liquid from the herbs. Pour into a pump-spray bottle, add the methylated spirits and shake vigorously so that it is well blended.

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GROOMING

Regular grooming can also eliminate fleas without chemicals. Use a fine comb and go through your pet's hair - you can easily get rid of fleas this way naturally, and while it won't get them all, you'll spend quality time with your pet. With some pets, it may actually be a good idea to trim their fur. You can get a grooming kit that comes with clippers designed to cut fur to various lengths. Why do this? Because if you're only going to rely on natural ways to control fleas, then if you have a long-haired pet, it is harder to get the fleas out when bathing them or grooming them. Keep in mind though that it's only helpful to trim their fur if you're going to have the discipline to personally bathe and comb them. Trimming the fur only makes it easier for you to find and kill the fleas yourself - it doesn't do anything to get rid of them other than that.

Wash animals thoroughly at least once a week, paying particular attention to the areas around the ears, neck, tail, backbone and under the legs. Then comb through a solution of equal parts pennyroyal oil and eucalyptus oil.

Derris also makes an effective, natural flea killer with little residual action, and is ideal for bad infestations.

❖ **After-wash Lotion**

Ingredients:

500 g powdered derris

1/2 cup (125 ml) eucalyptus oil

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methylated spirits

Preparation Method:

Combine the powdered derris, eucalyptus oil and enough methylated spirits to make the mixture just liquid. Steep for 3 to 4 days, shaking twice a day, then dilute 1 part lotion to 4 parts water.

Apply a sponge dipped in equal parts of methylated spirits and water to the worst affected areas before applying the derris lotion.

❖ Flea Powder

In between washes, dust your pet's hair with a herbal flea powder. Derris can be used as a convenient substitute or you can make up the following powder:

Ingredients:

100 g fennel seeds

100 g dried pennyroyal

100 g dried pyrethrum flowers

Preparation Method:

Reduce the fennel seeds to a fine powder using a pestle and mortar, then powder the remaining ingredients by rubbing them through a fine wire sieve. Thoroughly mix all

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ingredients and store in a suitable container with holes pierced in its lid.

Dust through animal's fur, leave for 30 minutes, then brush or comb it out with a fine-toothed comb. Sweep up dead or stupefied fleas and burn them.

❖ Derris Powder Flea Control Wash

Derris powder can also be used as a flea control wash. Just add 30 g of powder to every 20 cups (5 litres) of warm soapy water.

Wash the animal thoroughly then rinse with clean water. Apply an after-wash repellent lotion. See also Dog Washing Soap.

Home Remedies for Bed Fleas

Sprinkle the bed with lavender oil and place fresh fennel under the bedding. Bugs hate the smell of fennel, so plant plenty near your kennel area. You can also stuff your pet's pillow with pennyroyal, eucalyptus, peppermint, red cedar shavings rue, or sassafras shavings.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

One way that doesn't rely on doing anything to your pet is to control the environment. There are a lot of ways to do this - first and foremost, don't let your cat or dog outside. Cat fleas and dog fleas can only come from other animals - if your pet is an indoor animal, it likely won't have a flea problem. Prevention is the best method, and for cats at least, you shouldn't be letting them outdoors anyway. For large dogs, this won't be an option - you need to walk them, and they need to get out into the yard to play. But you don't have to let other dogs into your yard - that alone will go a long way towards getting rid of fleas.

DOG WASHING SOAP

A good soap for washing the family dog that will help to control fleas.

Ingredients:

100 g Vaseline
fresh pennyroyal
80 g beeswax
300 g soap flakes
100 g methylated spirits

Preparation Method:

Infuse half a handful of pennyroyal to every 100 g of Vaseline. Finely chop the herb; put the Vaseline into a double saucepan

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and melt the Vaseline over a medium heat. Add the herb and simmer for 20 minutes.

Stir in the wax and when melted add the soap flakes, stirring until completely dissolved. Remove from heat and immediately stir in the alcohol. Pour into moulds to harden and cut into bars.

This soap can be used immediately.

SOME POPULAR HERBAL RECIPES FOR FLEAS

Flea Powder with Fennel

Mix and grind 1 cup each of rue, wormwood, rosemary, fennel, and peppermint. When the herbs have been ground to a powder, dust the animal with the herbal mixture, working it in as you go.

Flea Powder with Pennyroyal

Mix together 2 tablespoons each of powdered wormwood and rosemary. Add 4 tablespoons of powdered pennyroyal, and 2 teaspoons of cayenne pepper. Use as often as you would a commercial flea powder. Caution: Do not get this into the animal's eyes.

Flea Repellent

This is also good for treating mange. I have never used this, but those that have swear by it. Simply apply WD-40 to the spine of the animal. It runs down the sides of the animal and keeps fleas away.

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Herbal Flea Wash

Add 1 cup fresh or dried rosemary to 4 cups of boiling water. Cover and steep until cool. Strain. Wash the dog and rinse well. Pour the herbal liquid on the dog and work in well. Leave the rosemary tea on the dog and let it dry.

Eucalyptus Leaves are also great for placing around the base boards of your house. You can put them under the bed, behind my hutch, behind doors, under the couch. They have a mild scent that stays fresh for 6 months or longer. This along with the **Eucalyptus Oil** gives added protection. You can buy the leaves from a crafts store that has the flower arrangements for Flower Design, or if your near a Eucalyptus Tree just snip off some cuttings from the branches.

AROMATHERAPY ESSENTIAL OILS FOR FLEAS

This is the aromatherapy way of eliminating these unwanted fleas from your home and sleeping place of your pet. It has a natural aroma that is not harmful to Humans, Pets, or Children.

- ❖ Use $\frac{1}{4}$ **tsp. of Eucalyptus Oil** in a 8-10 ounce spray pumper bottle. Fill with water. Put the pumper on a fine mist. Spray your house with the mist. Spray the carpet, furniture, car, pet's beds everywhere. Fleas hate the aroma and run for the door.

Do this 3 times a week. It leaves a fine mist that dries almost instantly. Your home will have a very fresh scent.

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Spraying your pet is also a great idea. It doesn't hurt them and it helps keep fleas away. Do this recipe all year, but especially do this routine in the summer months when fleas are at their peak. Vacuuming is also important for picking up eggs.

- ❖ Use ¼ **tsp of Wintergreen Oil** in a 8-10 ounce spray pumper bottle. Fill with water. Put the pumper on a fine mist. Spray your house with the fine mist. Spray the carpet, furniture, etc. Basically do the same as above, but on this oil you do this recipe **ONCE every 3 months**. The easiest time to remember is the first of the month. This oil kills the eggs. Before they become hatched and become adults and lay more eggs.

OTHER PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- ❖ Include fresh garlic in your pet's daily meal, or simply pop a piece of it down its throat. This will help to build up a natural resistance to fleas.
- ❖ 1 teaspoon of powdered sulphur in their food once a week is also reputed to work. This dose is based on an adult cat, which usually weighs around 6 kg, and should be increased or decreased according to weight.
- ❖ 6 to 8 drops of pennyroyal oil on your pet's leather collar will help to control fleas. A flea collar made from a piece of

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elastic and soaked in neat pennyroyal oil will also help.
Renew the oil for both weekly.

- ❖ 30 drops of pennyroyal oil blended with 2 tablespoons of olive oil makes an excellent flea repellent lotion. Use between washes. Dab small amounts of the lotion on the animal's fur and work in with your fingers.

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