

## **My Pet has been Skunked**

One of the worst (and smelliest) problems you can run into with your pet is having them encounter a skunk! And as for the "cure", well, everyone seems to have a different idea of what works to "de-smell" them. There are home-remedies galore! So just what do you do when this happens to your pet?

First, a reminder that skunks are a potential carrier of rabies. So before you do anything, check your pet over for signs of a bite, or contact with the skunk's blood or saliva. (You should wear impermeable, i.e. latex, gloves to protect yourself while you do this.) If you suspect this type of contact, you should consult your veterinarian right away. And if you have contact with the blood or saliva, contact your physician. Most animals never get close enough to the skunk for this, but you never know.

Your next step, of course, is to try to get rid of that smell! The quicker you take action, the more completely you can remove the odor. The following protocol seems to be one of the most widely recommended:

1. Bathe your pet several times using a pet shampoo or mild human shampoo.
2. Then bathe with this remedy mixture:
  - 1 quart 3% peroxide
  - 1/4 c baking soda
  - 1 tbs. liquid hand soap or Dawn dish soap

Mix all three ingredients together. Be sure animal is completely wet, and shampoo thoroughly, keeping out of eyes, nose and mouth. Soak for 5 minutes, then rinse well.

3. Repeat above steps if pet still smells. Always finish with a final shampoo with pet or mild human shampoo.

There are many alternative remedies out there, too. Some suggest mixing equal parts of the peroxide and baking soda to make a paste, which is spread on the affected areas, then shampooed off.

Other remedies include tomato juice, diluted vinegar, or Massengil douche (non-medicated). Skunk Off and similar preparations containing neutroleum alpha, available at some pet stores, may also be effective.

Whatever remedy you try, be aware that the smell seems to be quickly absorbed by mucous membranes, so often the smell is retained by the mouth and nose. This means that often there is some residual smell no matter how hard you try.