

ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

1849 Highway 11 Lanesville, IN 47136 (812) 952-3643

De-skunking Dogs, Cats, and Other Pets

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

Usually when dogs get sprayed by a skunk, they'll take a hit in the neck area. Typically they are sprayed while provoking the skunk and turn their head, while being sprayed, in order to avoid it. Tomato juice or vinegar usually does not work because it only masks the odor--it doesn't remove the smell.

First Aid

First check to see if your dog was injured by the skunk. If your dog is bleeding or appears to have been bitten, **consult a veterinarian immediately**. Skunks may carry **rabies**. If vaccinated, your dog should be safe from the rabies virus (but you are not!).

What you need:

Next go to a drug store and get the following, if needed:

- 1 quart (or liter) of 3% Hydrogen Peroxide, H₂O₂.
Use **fresh (unopened)** hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂). Hydrogen peroxide eventually turns into water (H₂O).
- 1/4 cup (50 ml.) of Baking Soda
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml.) of Liquid Soap
- 1 pair of plastic or latex gloves

To Use

- Bathe the dog outside or, if it's too dark or cold, in the bathroom with the door closed and window opened.
- Combine the ingredients in an open container (do **not** store in a sealed bottle--it will explode).
- Using gloves, wash your dog with lukewarm water and the mixture while the mixture is bubbling. Work the mixture well into the fur.
- Be sure to concentrate on the area that was sprayed.
- **Keep mixture away** from your dog's face and eyes (it's a harsh solution). (If your dog has been sprayed in the face, try Tricotine Liquid Douche Concentrate or any over-the-counter douche.)
- Let the mixture stand for 10 minutes or so before rinsing off.
- Rinse the dog with lukewarm tap water. Don't wash the mixture into your dog's eyes (use a washcloth to cover the eyes if you're rinsing the head).

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- After bathing, check your dog's eyes. If they are red and watering, your dog may have taken a direct hit in the face. Skunk spray won't blind the dog, but it's very painful. Contact a veterinarian.

Hydrogen peroxide and baking soda, when combined, become a "chemical engine" for churning out oxygen. That's why it has to be used immediately after mixing. The soap breaks up the oils in the skunk spray, allowing the other ingredients to do their work.

If you have any questions please give us a call at the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643. 🐾