



## JEFFREY'S NATURAL PET FOODS

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# Natural Flea Control

Most people (and pets) can agree that fleas are maddening. It is important to remember that prevention, maintenance and persistence is key in treating fleas. In doing this, you can avoid infestations, which are much more difficult to take care of. While the natural approach to flea control may be more labor/time intensive, it also avoids the negative ramifications associated with commercial chemical flea treatments. However, it is also good to note that natural does not necessarily mean safe. There are toxic flea products derived from natural sources. Be wary of products containing pyrethrins and permethrins, as they are naturally based but cause damage to the brain and central nervous system.

### **Diet**

Proper diet goes a long way in preventing flea infestation. A raw or fresh diet leaves intact a number of nutrients that are key in preventing fleas, including B Vitamins and Omega 3 Fatty Acids. Adding additional B Vitamins and small amounts of garlic to the diet is also advisable in helping to keep your pet's body an undesirable host for fleas.

### **Omega 3 Fatty Acids**

Additional supplementation of omega 3 fatty acids works to improve the health of the skin and immune system. Healthy skin preserves more of its own natural oils. This makes the skin harder to penetrate, creating a less hospitable environment for fleas.

### **Desiccants**

Desiccants like diatomaceous earth are non-toxic ways to treat active flea populations. Diatomaceous earth is derived from ground, fossilized remains of algae. They cut into the exoskeleton of fleas and cause them to dehydrate. Diatomaceous earth can be used topically on your pet, or sprinkled throughout problem areas in your home or yard.

### **Repellants**

A number of essential oils act as repellants for fleas and ticks. Look for external sprays that incorporate cedar, neem, bergamot or citronella or other pungent herbs. Many of these herbs will also aid in healing insect bites. These can be applied as needed. It is important to note that essential oils are not appropriate for use on cats. Hydrosols (distilled essential oils) are a safe alternative.

### **Indoor Environments**

Maintaining a clean environment for your pet is important in keeping fleas at bay. During flea season or an infestation, it would be advisable to vacuum at least weekly, as well as cleaning your pet's bedding on a similar schedule. Products like diatomaceous earth and boric acid can be used throughout the home to kill fleas not living on your pet's body. In addition, flea combing your pet regularly will keep the number of mature fleas on your pet's body low. Although not ideal, you may need to bathe your pet on a weekly to bi-weekly schedule to cleanse the body of fleas and their remnants.

### **Outdoor Environments**

If you have a yard or patio, nematodes can be applied to keep flea populations at bay. These microscopic worms feed off of flea larva and are available at many hardware stores.