

**ACCES for Pet Health**

<http://blog.seattlepi.nwsourc.com/accesforpethealth/archives/159370.asp>

**What Veterinary Information Can you Trust?**

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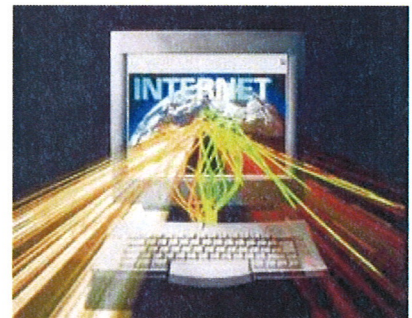
The internet is a wonderful source of information. Most of us have gotten used to "Google-ing" answers to just about every question. We do this for everything from directions to trivia answers to new recipes. My sister recently said to me, you no longer have to wonder what the answer might be to a question because you can always just look up the answer on the internet.

Health information is tempting to also obtain from the web. Whatever information you are trying to obtain, it is important to remember that **ANYONE** can post

**ANYTHING** on the internet, so it is important to know who is posting and whether you can believe them. The other thing to remember is that sites will come up that may not have been updated in many years, so the information could be very out of date. The best source

of veterinary and animal health information on the web is that provided by veterinarians.

One example that I "googled" is immune-mediated hemolytic anemia. The first site listed is well-written but has not been kept up-to-date. It discusses a drug called Cytoxan as a recommended treatment. However, this drug has been proven in more recent studies to not improve the health outcome of pets with this condition.



The internet is an amazing source of information on any topic. It's important, however, to know where the information is coming from.

There are some great sources of veterinary medical information for pet owners on the web. The website of the ASPCA National Animal Poison Center has lots of important information and is especially good for listing toxic and non-toxic plants. [Veterinary Partner](#) is another site with fantastic accurate information, put together by veterinarians. It has a very nice first [aid manual](#), which is in the process of being updated.

Some of the websites for the veterinary colleges have great information. Cornell University has a section of their website called [Partners in Animal Health](#) that contains videos on how to give medications to your pets.

Occasionally, I will stumble upon something useful on a non-veterinary site. I recently discovered that Hershey's chocolates lists the [theobromide](#) content of all of its products. Theobromide is the ingredient in chocolate that is toxic to dogs, so this



is very helpful information as some chocolate products contain more theobromide than others.

If you find information that is different from what your veterinarian tells you, it is important to discuss these things. We as veterinarians want to answer your questions and have you feel as comfortable as possible with the information we provide. If you find something that makes you doubt what we say or want to try something different, we want a chance to either explain why we think differently or to discuss this different perspective. Open dialog is the best chance of providing you with the information you need and to provide the best care for your pet.

It's important to maintain open communication with your veterinarian. Always ask questions when you're unsure of any information you receive on the internet or otherwise.