

Dog and Cat Feces Health Risks

There are environmental issues as well as health issues regarding not picking up and properly disposing of animal feces:

Environmental Issues:

- Pet waste is carried by heavy rains or spring run-off via storm sewers and eventually ends up in rivers, lakes and other bodies of water. When this occurs, bacteria counts rise and promotes weed and algae growth which then limits the sunlight available to aquatic plants, which in turn reduces the oxygen in the water needed by fish and other organisms.
- Pet waste is an environmental pollutant. In 1991, it was labelled a non-point source pollutant, placing it in the same category as herbicides, insecticides, oil, grease and toxic chemicals.

If you are not worried about the state of your local waterways, you may be more concerned about the impact of pet waste closer to home.

Health Risk Issues:

- It has been estimated that a single gram of dog waste can contain 23 million fecal coli form bacteria, which are know to cause cramps, diarrhea, intestinal illness and serious kidney disorders in humans.
- Dog feces are one of the most common carriers of the following diseases:
 - Whipworms
 - Hookworms
 - Roundworms
 - Tapeworms
 - Parvovirus
 - Corona
 - Giardiasis
 - Salmonellosis
 - Cryptosporidiosis
 - Campylobacteriosis
- The disposing of stools improperly (or not at all) kicks off a harmful cycle that can affect your family-including your pet.
- Pet droppings can contribute to diseases animals pass to humans, called zoonoses. When infected dog feces are deposited on a lawn, the eggs of certain roundworms and other parasites can linger in the soil for years and any adult, child or pet coming in contact with that soil runs the risk of coming into contact with those eggs and contracting the diseases listed above.

Please note that cat feces are usually less obvious but cause the same problems as dog feces.