

# BFCA *Health Times*

**Health Committee chairman: Nancy McDonald**  
**Editor and committee member: Vickie Halstead**  
**Committee members: Paula Hendricks, Sheryl Kapella, Joanne Rubin**  
**Committee consultants: Larry Letsch DVM, Anne Jones**

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

**Summer 2013**

**Explanation of the Purina Parent Club Partnership Program by Nancy McDonald**  
**Update on the study for calcium oxalate bladder stones by Dr. Eva Furrow**  
**Safe Prevention of Canines Parasites by Vickie Halstead**  
**CHIC report by Paula Hendricks**

## **PPCPP**

If you do . . . . .

It is the wise policy of BFCA to refrain from recommending any product for Bichons. BFCA members have different tastes and preferences on how to breed, raise, show, maintain and love their charges. So in 2002 the board did not consider the Purina Parent Club Partnership Program as it seemed at the time that Purina was trying to entice parent clubs to endorse Purina dog food. Over the past ten years, Purina has proven that endorsement of Purina dog food is not required to participate in this program, only that club members are informed of the program. From the proceeds earned from this program, half of the funding each year is designated for canine health research and Canine Health Foundation grants. The other half goes directly to the parent club for health, education and rescue efforts. In 2013 BFCA board enrolled in Purina Parent Club Partnership Program. If you do . . . . . feed Purina dog food your purchases can benefit your breed.

Steps for participants are 1. Apply and join Purina Pro-Club ([purinaproclub.com](http://purinaproclub.com) or 877-776-2582) ;2. Declare Bichons for the Parent Club Partnership Program; 3. Save your Purina weight circles from eligible Purina dog foods; 4. Submit your weight circles to Purina "Pro Club".

Those eligible for the Purina Pro-Club must care for 5 or more dogs and/or breed one litter of puppies per year and live in the U.S. In addition to earning funds for your parent club when you send in weight circles (proof of purchase) from the dog food bags, you receive point rewards for merchandise and certificates for your personal use.

This is not a program where you collect weight circles from your neighbors as you send in only weight circles from bags of food you use. However, you may know others feeding Purina dog food, and if they meet the requirements for Purina Pro-Club, declare Bichons for the Parent Club Partnership Program, and send in their weight circles, BFCA and Canine Health Foundation will benefit as well as the participant.

To reiterate, this is not a recommendation from BFCA to feed a certain product, but to inform you of the Purina Parent Club Partnership Program. So if you do feed Purina dog food, please consider this program.

## **BLADDER STONE STUDY**

On April 28, 2013, Dr. Furrow of the University of Minnesota sent BFCA an update on "Understanding the Genetic Basis for Calcium Oxalate Stones". How fortunate BFCA is to have a personal contact

concerning this study that so involves Bichons in particular. Keep in mind that your participation may be needed in the future. Dr. Furrow's email address: [furro004@umn.edu](mailto:furro004@umn.edu)

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi Nancy! Here is the update on the study:

We currently have 52 Bichons and nearly 200 Miniature Schnauzers in the study, plus a handful of other breeds that also form calcium oxalate stones. Recruitment has slowed a little because we have been spending time analyzing the samples we have before we actively solicit more. However, when I return from maternity leave in June, we will start another round of recruiting.

We have identified a genetic variant in a solute carrier gene that is associated with risk for calcium oxalate stones. We are calling it a variant at this stage, rather than a mutation, because we need to do more work to determine if this is only a marker for disease or if it really is directly creating the risk for stone development. The solute carrier category of genes is known to influence risk for different stone types; there is a solute carrier mutation that causes urate stones in Dalmatians and another that causes cystine stones in Newfoundlands. However, very little is currently known about the function of the particular solute carrier that we have found in association with calcium oxalate stones. We're currently investigating how it could play a role in stone development.

The solute carrier variant seems to explain most of the Schnauzer calcium oxalate stone formers, particularly the males (it doesn't increase risk as much in females). But Bichons are different. The variant is only present in about 20 – 25% of stone formers. Therefore, we suspect that a second genetic risk factor is present in this breed. We're currently investigating this as well. Needless to say, the situation is complicated! But we are making progress.

Let me know if you have any questions or would like more info. As always, we are incredibly grateful to the Bichon Club for supporting this research!

Kind regards,  
Eva

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Safe Prevention of Canine Parasites Vickie Halstead, RN, CVNS, LNC**

Many products exist for dogs that help prevent parasites such as fleas, ticks, worms and heartworm. Refer to this article written by Anne Jones for more detail on parasites: <http://www.bichonhealth.org/HealthInfo/PreventiveMedications.htm>. Knowing the risks versus the benefits of these preventive medications allows you to be an advocate for your Bichon Frise. Safe alternatives are available to avoid the risk.

As you consider giving one of these medications to your Bichon, know that they are insecticides, a poison, whether given topically on the skin or taken internally as a pill. Also consider that Bichons, like most white-coated breeds, are more sensitive to medications as compared to other breeds, so the risk is higher when giving these dangerous chemicals to your Bichon. The use of preventive medications for fleas, ticks and worms can trigger the onset of any of the numerous autoimmune diseases, seizures, and death. Refer to this article for more detail on the definition of autoimmune diseases:

<http://bichonhealth.org/HealthInfo/DefAutoimmune.asp>. Keep in mind that the #1 health issue in Bichons is allergies/skin problems, an autoimmune disease.

Prevention of heartworm from mosquitoes, a serious canine illness, is important for the health of your Bichon. However, some breeders use alternatives to prevent mosquito bites. Read this article written by Nancy McDonald for more detail about heartworm prevention: <http://www.bichonhealth.org/HealthInfo/HeartwormPreventives.htm>

If you chose to give heartworm preventive medication, the safest choice is to avoid giving combination medications, those that contain a flea/tick preventive along with a heartworm preventive. Reports from Bichon owners demonstrate a higher incidence of adverse reactions to these combination medications. Combining heartworm medication with worm prevention is less risky. The BFCA Health Committee has received numerous reports of reactions to combination preventives for heartworm and fleas/ticks, and some deaths. Consider that some preventives for fleas/ticks that are applied to the skin direct the owner to wear gloves before applying it to your dog! Read this 2010 warning from the EPA: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/bd4379a92ceceecac8525735900400c27/76d2b52162bcedaa852576e9005c0d97!OpenDocument>

Below is a list of the current preventives for heartworm/worms and fleas/ticks to help you make your decision. The ingredients are in parentheses and are listed in order of quantity, followed the target pests.

These products fight only worms, including heartworm, so are safer for Bichons:

1. Interceptor (Milbemycin Oxime) (is not currently available in the US): Heartworm, hookworm, roundworm, whipworm
2. Milbemax (Milbemycin Oxime, praziquantel) (is not currently available in the US): Heartworm, hookworm, roundworm, whipworm, flatworm
3. Heartguard Plus or Tri-Heart Plus or Iverheart Plus (Ivermectin, pyrantel pamoate): Heartworm, roundworm, hookworm

These products combine prevention of heartworm with prevention of fleas and ticks, so are risky for Bichons:

1. K9 Advantix II (others not specified, Permethrin, Imidacioprid, Pyriproxyfen): Heartworm, fleas, lice, biting flies
2. Sentinel (Lifenuon, Milbemycin Oxime): Heartworm, fleas, hookworm, roundworm, whipworm
3. Revolution (Selamectin): Heartworm, fleas
4. Trifexis (Spinosad, Milbemycin Oxime): Heartworm, roundworm, hookworm, whipworm, fleas, lice
5. Capstar (Nitenpyram): Heartworm and fleas

Instead of giving your Bichon the risky chemicals/insecticides, there are other options to safely prevent bites from fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes:

1. Brewers yeast with garlic tablets 2-3 per day, can be purchased from most pet stores or catalogues
2. Purification essential oil: Add 25-30 drops to a 10-15 oz. glass spray bottle filled with water. It must be glass because the oils dissolve plastic. Shake bottle before using. Spray the dog before going for walks and work into the coat, concentrating on legs, belly, and ears. The purification oil will not hurt the dog—this is a therapeutic grade A oil that can be taken internally by both animals and humans. <http://humanimal.com/essentialoils.html>
3. Rub 2 drops of lavender oil in your hands and rub into skin starting with tail, can be purchased at whole food stores and health stores

4. If you see fleas, use Dr. Bonner's lavender castile shampoo, leaving on at least 7 minutes  
<http://www.drbronner.com/DBMS/LAV.htm>
5. RediCare healing spray and insect repellent <http://www.bichonbash.com/hvests2006.htm>
6. Espana Silk All Natural Bug Spray  
<http://www.espanaproducts.com/itemdetail.php?sku=ESP2200DC&=>
7. If you see fleas, shampoo with Espana Silk All Natural Protein Antiseptic/Healing Shampoo  
<http://www.espanaproducts.com/itemdetail.php?sku=ESP0110DC&=>
8. Herbal flea powders
9. Cedar oil spray

Why risk serious adverse reactions to pest control medications when Bichons are primarily **housedogs**?  
A good question to ask yourself and your veterinarian as you advocate for your Bichon Frise.....

## **DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR 2014 CALENDARS!!!**



**The BFCA Health Committee is proud to feature Bichons with big wins and healthy credentials in the beautifully photographed monthly calendar covering January-December, 2014.  
Proceeds to BFCA, Health Committee, and Rescue**

Order here: <http://www.bichonhealth.org/DonateShop.htm>

## **CHIC Report 1st and 2nd Quarter 2013**

### **SUMMARY OF TOTAL CHIC NUMBERS AND UPDATES FOR BFCA TO DATE**

ORIGINAL QUALIFIERS	382	July 2007
TOTAL NEW QUALIFIERS	785	July 2013
UPDATES	52	July 2007
TOTAL UPDATES	331	July 2013

## CHIC 5 STAR AWARDS

A CHIC 5 Star Award is issued to any Bichon owned by a BFCA member with a CHIC number, has passed the CHIC tests, and additionally has obtained any two of the following (see <http://www.bichonhealth.org/CHIC.htm> for more information and applications):

1. Cardiac OFA certification by cardiologist or practitioner
2. Legg-Calve-Perthes OFA Certification
3. DNA registered with AKC
4. Urinalysis that tests for diabetes, bladder infection, crystals
5. Bile acid blood test to rule out liver shunt
6. Standard veterinary blood panel including:
  - CBC (complete blood count): WBC, RBC, hemoglobin
  - Electrolytes, BUN, Creatinine (to assess kidney function)
  - Blood glucose level (to rule out diabetes)
  - Liver enzymes (to rule out liver disease)
  - Pancreas enzymes (to rule out pancreas disease)

All new CHIC 5 Star Awards will be posted in each issue of The Health Times.