

Isaac's Helpful Hints to Caregivers



Hi, I'm Isaac Warren Vincenti, I am a Bassett Hound and live in State College, Pennsylvania better known as "Happy Valley." Recently, my most favorite Veterinarian, Dr. Mark F. Michelotti at Centre Animal Hospital asked me to write something about caregiver techniques for dogs with big floppy ears and skin/hair issues.

Well, after careful consideration and discussions with my Mom, Cyndi and Dad, John, we have come up with some pointers.

I am over 8 years old. My background includes information from my older brother, Newton, who has since passed away. This amounts to nearly 20 years of caregiver experiences.

First of all, I want you to know that since I was pup, I have never had a bath. Wow, you say, never, "Yep!" My adopted parents found that my older brother, Newton was "over bathed" and his fur and skin were lacking the natural oils that we naturally have. Now, here's the deal. I am not an outdoor pooch. That gives me that edge of staying clean and not smelling more just because I'm a hound. I also don't get a chance to roll in most dogs' favorite things that stink or are just nasty, like my brother did who ran in the fields. Mom and Dad brush me regularly and use wet wipes to keep my coat clean. Dead hair causes most of the smell.

Like other short-legged dogs with many folds of skin, there is a great opportunity for skin irritation and rashes. I have had my share of both. One of the best things I have found is the use of a moisturizing lotion with natural colloidal oatmeal. It dries quickly and really relieves dry or my irritated coat/skin.

I have used topical ointments, some with a triple antibiotic containing Bacitracin Zinc, Neomycin, Sulfate and Polymyxin B Sulfate. It works, but I have found Sulfadene as a great first aid skin medication. It is very helpful with hot spots including various forms of dermatitis as well as scrapes or abrasions. In fact, if your caregiver is careful to not spill the liquid all over the place, I suggest that one pour it on the affected area. It is also an anti-licking deterrent.

When it comes to the eyes, my brother Newton's were blood-shot and droopy. My Mom and Dad have learned that I usually have an eye discharge in the morning and sometimes later in the day. That discharge irritates the eye and causes the redness and may even cause the droopiness. But, you can see by my picture, no such look. Remember when some part of me is irritated, I want to scratch and if there is some bacteria on my nails, paw, or wherever I roll, it may cause further problems. Eye

cleaners in stores can be expensive. I recommend sterile saline solution for soft contact lenses. That bottle will go a long way to keeping your dog's eyes and ears clean. Inexpensive or generic doesn't mean that it won't work.

Once I experienced contraction in my double eye lids. This scared the daylights out of Mom and Dad. They called Dr. Michelotti on a Sunday evening and he return the call and said, "Get Bausch & Lomb, Opcon-A and place the drops in the eye." It worked. From time-to-time Mom and Dad use those same drops if my eyes if they tend to look irritated or blood shot. It works!

Speaking of ears. I get them cleaned at least once, but usually twice a day. I have had ear infections. Important, do not use the soft cleaning tissue more than once for any application.

Other future topics could include: dog food, snacks, teeth brushing, dog whispering, drooping tail, joint and lameness, massages including Qi Gong, pill taking matters, and other special issues, but that's another day.

Hope you like my techniques and find them useful.

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Isaac's Caregiver Tools From Nose to Tail

Eyes

- > **Sterile Saline**
Solution—daily with a soft tissue, use tissue once only
- > For eye irritation, I recommend **Bausch & Lomb Opcon-A**

Ears

- > **Sterile Saline**
Solution—daily with a soft tissue, use tissue once only
- > **100% Pure Petroleum Jelly** for ear irritation

Coat-Skin

- > **Alcohol free baby-wipes**—I like the lavender scented ones
- > **Man's comb** to help remove dead hair
- > For coat/skin hot spots, **Sulfadene** works for me
- > **Under leg and other spots** can be soothed with a natural colloidal oatmeal moisturizing lotion

Licking Issues

- > **An aromatherapy mist of lavender** calms and relaxes me and prevents me from licking. Tell you caregiver to spray it on their hand and administer it. Spraying is not welcome

Bottom Line

- > **Find a friendly, trusting and knowledgeable Veterinarian; do NOT miss or ignore Vet care, or check ups; take all of your medicine and correctly; and make sure your caregivers clean up your poops**

Written in association with Mark E. Michelotti, V.M.D.
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