

Vaccinations vital to keeping pets healthy

People do the strangest things...and sometimes they work. Sometimes what works starts a whole new sphere of discovery. Take vaccinations for example.



PROTECTING YOUR PETS

DR. JERELD RICE

It is said that as early as the year 1000, the Chinese were experimenting with a form of smallpox inoculation by blowing smallpox scabs directly into the nostrils of a healthy individual and scratching matter from a smallpox sore into the skin. In the years that followed, vaccinations changed a great deal and have become high-tech, dependable and predictable ways to prevent disease and increase quality of life. People and pets alike benefit from the immunity provided by vaccinations.

When pet owners come to Enterprise Animal Hospital, they often have questions about vaccinations. Some of the most common questions...and their answers:

• Question: How do vaccines work?
• Answer: Vaccines contain inactivated or weakened forms of viruses or bacteria. When they are given (either by injection, oral or nasal administration) they stimulate the animal's body to produce protective antibodies and cells in healthy animals that can neutralize the virus or bacteria if the animal is exposed. Many vaccines contain a combination of viruses or bacteria that help provide protection against several different diseases, minimizing stress for pets and inconvenience to owners.

• Question: Why do puppies and kittens require more frequent vaccinations than older dogs or cats?
• Answer: Puppies and kittens receive protective antibodies from their mothers. These maternal antibodies provide protection against infections during the early days to weeks of life. Unfortunately, as important as they are, maternal

antibodies can cause vaccinations to be inactivated. Maternal antibodies naturally decline during the first three to four months of life, and as time passes disappear entirely.

For this reason, puppies and kittens receive a series of vaccines beginning at 6 to 8 weeks of age. By repeating (or boosting) the vaccination, the likelihood of developing a good immune response to the vaccination increases significantly.

• Question: How often should my dog or cat be vaccinated in order to provide the best immunity?
• Answer: Vaccine-induced immunity gradually decreases over time. Veterinarians follow vaccination guidelines based on the science of immunology and a pet's lifestyle. Some vaccines stimulate longer duration of immunity than others though most dogs and cats require a yearly veterinary visit for vaccinations.

• Question: What are the risks associated with vaccinations?
• Answer: As with most medical procedures there are risks associated with vaccination; however, the benefits far outweigh the risks. Serious adverse reactions to vaccinations are relatively rare, though dogs and cats may be sleepy or have a mild fever after receiving vaccinations — which is an appropriate immune response.

Thanks to vaccinations and ever-improving vaccine technology, veterinarians rarely encounter many of the contagious, deadly diseases that dogs and cats so easily exposed to. Talk to your veterinarian about a vaccine strategy that will keep your pets happy and healthy throughout their lives.

Fond: Find out what it is (tasty)

By Susan Selasky
 Detroit Free Press

Q: What is fond?
A: Fond is one of the important parts of making a tasty pan sauce. In March, the word "fond" was added to merriam-webster.com.

The basic thing to understand about fond is that it builds flavor. By definition, a fond refers to those little browned bits of food that are often stuck to the bottom of the pan, skillet or baking dish, especially after searing meat or poultry.

These browned bits are packages of flavor. You can make use of them by deglazing a pan with a liquid, which will help release the browned bits. As you heat the liquid, you can begin scraping up the bits. The liquid will begin to develop flavor courtesy of the concentrated pan juices and the food bits.

It's best to use a wooden spoon to scrape up the bits from the bottom of the pan. The liquid in the pan will thicken slightly as it becomes a sauce. It should at least coat the back of spoon like a glaze. If not, continue cooking.

Once the sauce is done, you can strain it if you like or whisk in a few pieces of cold butter for added richness. The butter will help thicken the sauce.

Today's recipe is a favorite for flavor and because it's quick to make. The pan sauce gets added sweetness from apricot preserves.

2 tablespoons sliced chives
¼ cup plain breadcrumbs or panko breadcrumbs

APRICOT GLAZE

2 cups pears, diced small
¼ cup white wine or chicken broth
1 cup apricot preserves
1 tablespoon Dijon

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit.

Sprinkle the pork chops on both sides with the pepper and the seasoning blend.

In a large skillet heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the pork chops and cook 3 minutes on each side or until they are brown. Transfer the pork to a rimmed baking sheet.

In a small bowl, mix together the blue cheese, chives and bread crumbs. Break any large pieces of cheese into fine crumbs.

Top the pork slices evenly with the cheese mixture. Bake about 12 minutes or until the internal temperature is 155 degrees.

Meanwhile, to make the glaze, in the same skillet used to saute the pork, add the pears. There should be enough oil still in the skillet; if not add a teaspoon or so. Saute the diced pears until they are nicely browned, about 5 minutes. Stir in white wine, deglazing the bottom of the skillet. Stir in the preserves and mustard. Cook until the preserves melt. Add more wine or broth to thin the glaze.

To serve, arrange pork on plates and spoon glaze with pears on top.

½ cup dry vermouth or white wine
2 sprigs fresh thyme
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 3 pieces and chilled
Salt and pepper

For the chicken: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. Pat chicken dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper.

Heat oil in 12-inch oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Cook breasts, skin side down, until well browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Flip breasts and brown lightly on second side, about 3 minutes. Flip breasts skin side down, transfer skillet to oven, and roast until chicken registers 160 degrees Fahrenheit, 15 to 18 minutes.

Remove skillet from oven (skillet handle will be hot). Transfer chicken to serving dish and let rest while making sauce.

For the sauce: Being careful of hot skillet handle, pour off all but 1 teaspoon fat left in skillet. Add shallot and cook over medium heat until softened, about 2 minutes. Stir in broth, vermouth, and thyme sprigs, scraping up any browned bits, and simmer until thickened and measures 2/3 cup, about 6 minutes.

Discard thyme sprigs and stir in any accumulated chicken juices. Reduce heat to low and whisk in butter, 1 piece at a time. Off heat, season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon sauce over chicken and serve.

— From and tested by Susan M. Selasky for the Free Press Test Kitchen.

PORK WITH BLUE CHEESE CRUST AND APRICOT GLAZE

Serves: 4 / Preparation time: 15 minutes / Total time: 25 minutes

PORK

4 boneless center-cut pork loin chops, about 5 ounces each, trimmed of excess fat
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste
½ teaspoon Morton's Nature's Seasons Seasoning Blend
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 ounces crumbled blue cheese

PAN-ROASTED CHICKEN BREASTS WITH SHALLOT-THYME SAUCE

Serves: 4 / Preparation time: 1 hour

Chicken

4 (12-ounce) bone-in split chicken breasts, trimmed, brined if desired
Salt and pepper
1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Sauce

1 large shallot, minced
¾ cup chicken broth

GRAVY

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Stir in some crushed garlic and a large pinch of thyme, if you like, and saute for 30 more seconds. Sprinkle a couple of tablespoons of flour over; and stir to combine. Stir in a cup of beef broth, and bring to a boil. Remove from heat, and stir in a tablespoon of butter. Taste for salt and pepper. Blammo.

HAM WITH RED-EYE GRAVY

Prep: 5 minutes

Cook: 15 minutes
 Makes: 4 servings

Down South, they'd use country ham, a variety difficult to obtain in northerly climes. Or course, any good ham on the bone will taste great.

1 pound fatty ham on the bone, cut into roughly 1/8- to ¼-inch slices
½ cup brewed coffee
½ cup chicken or beef broth (or ½ cup water plus 1 bouillon cube)
Salt and pepper as needed
Slurry of 1 heaping tablespoon flour dissolved in 2 tablespoons cold water or stock

2 tablespoons cold butter, optional
Sugar as needed, optional
Dash of hot sauce, optional

- Heat a cast iron or other heavy bottom skillet over medium high heat.
- While pan is heating, trim fat from ham, and melt in hot pan. (Note: If melted fat is not enough to coat bottom of pan, add a tablespoon or two of butter.)
- Sear ham slices to golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes per side; transfer to a warm plate or oven.
- Turn heat to high and add liquids. Whisk to dissolve any brown bits in pan, and reduce to 3 to 4 ounces.

5. Optional: The gravy will be thin. To thicken slightly, whisk in slurry over high heat to desired consistency. For additional body and richness, remove pan from heat, and whisk in butter to emulsify. Taste for salt, pepper and sugar (if the coffee is very bitter), and add a dash of hot sauce if you really need waking up. Put on some Willie Nelson, and serve immediately over ham with eggs, biscuits and grits.

Nutrition information per serving: 175 calories, 8 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 53 mg cholesterol, 2 g carbohydrates, 0 g sugar, 23 g protein, 1,241 mg sodium, 0 g fiber

SUNSHINE

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1. Vigorously whisk the egg yolks and lemon juice together in a stainless steel bowl until the mixture is thickened and doubled in volume. Place the bowl over a saucepan containing barely simmering water (or use a double boiler). The water should not touch the bottom of the bowl. Continue to whisk rapidly. Be careful not to let the eggs get too hot or they will scramble.

2. Slowly drizzle in the melted butter and continue to whisk until the sauce is thickened and doubled in volume. If necessary to keep the eggs from overheating while doing

this step, take the bowl off the top of the pot while still whisking to allow it to cool down a bit. Then return to the heat. When done, remove from heat and whisk in cayenne and salt.

3. Cover and place in a warm spot until ready to use. If the sauce gets too thick, whisk in a few drops of warm water before serving.

Per serving: 260 calories; 25 g fat; 16 g saturated fat; 245 mg cholesterol; 3 g protein; 1 g carbohydrate; no sugar; no fiber; 593 mg sodium; 30 mg calcium

— Recipe by Tyler Florence, via the Food Network

FAST AND FOOLPROOF HOLLANDAISE SAUCE

Yield: 3 servings (¾ cup)
3 egg yolks
¼ teaspoon salt
Pinch of pepper
1 to 2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 stick (½ cup) butter

1. Place egg yolks, salt, pepper and 1 tablespoon lemon juice in a blender jar. You can add more lemon juice when sauce is done and will know what proportions you like for the next time.

2. Cut the butter into pieces and heat it to foaming hot in a

small saucepan.

3. Cover the jar and blend the yolk mixture at top speed for 2 seconds. Uncover, and still blending on top speed, immediately start pouring in the hot butter in a thin stream of droplets. (You may need to protect yourself with a towel during this operation.) By the time two-thirds of the butter has gone in, the sauce will be a thick cream. Omit the milky residue at the bottom of the butter pan. Taste the sauce, and blend in more salt and pepper if necessary.

4. If not used immediately, set the jar in tepid, not warm, water.

Per serving: 328 calories; 35

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