

# Caring for your Pet

## Grass Seeds



Grass seeds can be a real frustration for you and a real pain for your pet, especially in spring and summer.

### How are they dangerous to your pet?

“Foftails” are the most dangerous grass seed. The term foftail is commonly used to describe the structures once the grasses and seeds have dried out and begin to break apart. This is when the seed becomes dangerous, as they have a sharp point at one end which enables them to travel forward and never backwards. As they work their way into skin, ears, noses, paws etc, and become lodged, foftails can cause infection. If not treated promptly, these seeds can migrate to other parts of the body including vital organs. This leads to serious medical problems and/or death may result.

### Possible warning signs of an embedded grass seed:

- **Skin** – Small sores between toes or under arms, sores on skin accompanied by swelling or small lumps. Your pet may also be frequently licking the area.
- **Ears** – Tilting/shaking of the head, pawing at the ear, crying, erratic movement.
- **Nose** – Extreme severe sneezing, pawing at nose, bleeding from nose. Symptoms may diminish after several hours, but become intermittent for several days following.
- **Eyes** – Squinting eye suddenly, eye swelling, tearing, mucous discharge.
- **Throat** – Gagging, retching cough, compulsive grass eating, stretching neck and swallowing.

### Can foftails be prevented?

Protecting your pet against these nasty seeds will help avoid the devastating effects that come with them. Here a few tips.

- Remove all foftails from your yard before they mature. Before they mature pouring vinegar will help kill them. Once they have matured it is best to dig under them and bury them upside down.
- Keep your pet clipped especially the paws.
- Brush your pet after being outdoors and check their coat, face, ears, paw pads, under arms and groin and around the mouth.

If you find a foftail sticking out of the skin, pull it straight out, taking care not to break the tip off. If it is already deeply embedded in the skin or you find a painful lump anywhere on your pet, contact us immediately so that the problem can be treated early.



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