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Introduction

WELCOME TO BULLDOG HEALTH

You are about to embark on an adventure in learning all about your Bulldog’s health. These magnificent creatures are an entirely man made breed. Centuries of specialized breeding has led to the current Bulldog, one that can have many health issues because of this inbreeding. The purpose of this book is to help you learn about these health issues and ways to keep your Bulldog in tip top shape.

The book is divided into chapters that cover each of the major areas of health concerns, for example “skin” or “eyes” or “orthopedic”. You can go directly to the chapter to find an medical descriptions of these issues as well as prevention, veterinarian care, and home care. It’s important to know what your vet would do and what you can do yourself.

So let’s get started learning all about Bulldog Health, but first it’s important to know the history of the Bulldog breed and how it’s genetic makeup contributes to health issues.
History

From Ferocious Fighter to Lovable Family Pet

The Bulldog breed is believed to have originated in the British Isles, where it was developed through selective breeding to participate in the popular seventeenth century sport of bull baiting, in which dogs attacked a tethered bull.

These origins help account for the English Bulldog's two most distinctive features – the short muzzle and upturned nose. The muzzle is what allowed the Bulldog to clamp onto the bull, while the upturned nose helped the animal breathe even while clinging to the thrashing bull.

Although the exact origins of the English Bulldog breed are clouded by the mists of time, it is believed that the breed started from mastiffs imported to England over 200 years ago.

These animals, which would scarcely be recognizable as a modern bulldog, were originally created by English aristocrats, reportedly on a bet, to develop
a dog so courageous and anatomically designed to bring down a bull. These "gentlemen farmers" were looking for an easier way to subdue a large bull.

Through intense inbreeding and experimentation the muzzle/palate was bred back into the dog’s head (causing all the bulldog breathing problems). The reason for this was so the dog could hold onto the bull. A normal dog cannot clamp down and hold on because it is not able to breathe at the same time. The bulldog’s nose was recessed and the teeth were angled back like fish hooks, allowing him to hang on and breathe through the nose at the same time. Quite a breeding accomplishment.

Regular Dog and Bulldog Skulls—notice how the teeth angle back, almost like fish hooks, to hang onto the bull’s lips

An 80-pound English Bulldog was said to have the ability of bringing down a bull weighing almost two tons, by clamping itself onto the sensitive flesh around the bull's nose. And refusing to let go no matter how the bull tossed him around.
If the bull would not submit because of the pain, it was said that the Bulldog would thrash itself about. This thrashing would upset the bull's balance, causing it to topple to the ground. While this early purpose of the English Bulldog was relatively useful, the next English Bulldog use was simply for sport.

English Bulldogs were used to "bait" bulls, bears, and other large animals. This practice usually involved tethering the larger animal in a pit or pen, and then releasing the dog to topple it to the ground. When bull baiting was banned in 1835, English Bulldogs became breeding stock for fighting dogs used in the pits of dogfights all over England.

Early Image of Bull Baiting - what the Bulldog was originally bred to do
Despite these violent origins, the English Bulldog has developed into a very friendly and docile animal. Throughout their history, English Bulldogs have been famed for being slow to anger, regal, and stubborn. This reputation has also been applied to the English people themselves, particularly during the darkest days of World War II.

Additionally, English Bulldogs have become popular mascots and emblems for sports teams including The University of Georgia and Yale University.

Although they were initially bred for violence, today's English Bulldog is one of the friendliest dogs you will find. English Bulldogs simply love people, and are known for getting along well with children as well as adults.

In fact, many experts regard English Bulldogs as the best breed in its dealings with children. This breed has a very playful nature and loyalty, making it an excellent companion. Additionally, the English Bulldog is virtually tireless when playing – just like your children! If you have a multi-dog household, the English Bulldog will fit right in. This breed is usually very affable when it comes to dealing with other dogs.

In addition, while English Bulldogs can be regarded as a gentle breed, they sometimes can seem to have hearing problem – however, this hearing trouble only appears when their owner is issuing commands.

Many famous people have owned English Bulldogs as pets, including a few U.S. Presidents: Calvin Coolidge had a Bulldog named Boston Beans, while
Warren Harding also had a bulldog named Old Boy. Truman Capote had a bulldog named Maggie. Brad Pitt, Hugh Jackman, and Adam Sandler all have Bulldogs and there are even famous skateboarding and performing Bulldogs named Tyson and Tillman. The US Marine Corps mascot is a Bulldog named Chesty.

English Bulldogs are somewhat more expensive than other canines, but they enjoy a loyal and enthusiastic following of owners and breed devotees. There has also been a culture developed around English Bulldogs. For example, this breed has become a universal symbol for tenacity, strength, and resilience.

One look at the history of the English Bulldog shows that they have always enjoyed a good reputation, without some of the violent or wild connotations sometimes associated with dogs originally bred for fighting. As their owners can testify, the bulldog is now the most lovable of creatures, known for their gentle demeanor.
GENERAL APPEARANCE

The “ideal” or show quality English Bulldog is medium in size, smooth coat, stout and sturdy body, a large head with a short, smushed face, broad shoulders and thick-set legs. Think of a tow-truck and you have a general idea of what these cute, stubby guys will remind you of.

Their weight should be around 50 pounds for full grown males, and 40 pounds for mature females. If yours is considerably heavier or lighter, say 10% or more either way, please consult with your veterinarian for an appropriate diet to remedy their weight problem.

English Bulldogs come in a variety of colors from solids to brindles to piebalds with the red brindle generally considered the most “prized” for the show ring.

The temperament of an English Bulldog is not at all similar to their looks. Their disposition is sweet and docile, and they are very brave and loyal to their owners. In fact, just their appearance is enough to ward off most intruders whether animal or human.

The American Kennel Club describes the breed’s general appearance:

“The perfect Bulldog must be of medium size and smooth coat; with heavy, thick-set, low-swung body, massive short-faced head, wide shoulders and sturdy limbs. The general appearance and attitude should suggest great stability, vigor and strength. The disposition should be equable and kind, resolute and courageous (not vicious or aggressive), and demeanor should
be pacific and dignified. These attributes should be countenanced by the expression and behavior.

Size--The size for mature dogs is about 50 pounds; for mature bitches about 40 pounds.”

For a more complete description of the Bulldog Breed Standard, visit the AKC website at

http://www.akc.org/breeds/bulldog/index.cfm

Now let’s get into the material, starting with the most serious problem.

First I’m going to tell you about why the Bulldog has so many breathing problems and how that leads to the number one stealth killer of Bulldogs. It’s called Brachycephalic Syndrome and can cause your Bulldog to die suddenly from heat stroke.
Head & Throat - Unique Anatomy

THE BULLDOG HEAD

As you’ve seen from the history of the Bulldog, that beautiful face that you love has its own unique anatomy. Although many Bulldogs are healthy and happy and do not suffer any health problems it is important to be aware of why they are different.

The breeding of the nose back into the head caused a lot of anatomy to be housed in that small area.

In the following chapters we will be covering several topics related to this special anatomy, including:

• Elongated soft palate and the Brachycephalic Syndrome
• Nose folds and wrinkles, prone to yeast and bacteria
• Eyes and eyelash problems

A lot of the Bulldog problems stem from abnormalities in the head and throat. This is due to the specialized breeding that pushed the nose way back into the head, elongating the palate and in many dogs causing what is known as Brachycephalic Syndrome.
BRACHYCEPHALIC SYNDROME

Brachycephalic is literally translated as “short nosed”.

It’s a fact that flat faced dogs are what’s known as Brachycephalic. As such they all have breathing difficulties. But not all of them have Brachycephalic Syndrome. It is my opinion that this syndrome is not normal for the breed but caused by genetic defects and often spurious breeding practices. Many owners think that surgery is always performed on bulldogs but a healthy bulldog will not need surgery despite being Brachycephalic.

QUICK TIP

When picking out a bulldog puppy, look for one whose nose sticks out a little. The longer the nose the easier it will be for him to breathe!

All bulldogs belong to a distinguished breeding lineage that has caused them to have their adorable “Flat Faces”. This has been accomplished by specialized breeding over decades that pushed the nose back into the skull of a bulldog. While the head remains normal size, some parts of the nose and larynx have gotten compressed which causes their distinctive snoring sounds and also restricts their ability to breathe normally.

Although this is one of the reasons we love our bulldogs, it can have serious consequence in some of our pets. Hopefully breeders will stay vigilant and not breed dogs that have negative side effects of this condition.
Some dogs with brachycephalic syndrome may also have a narrow trachea (windpipe), collapse of the larynx (the cartilages that open and close the upper airway), or paralysis of the laryngeal cartilages.

The Brachycephalic Syndrome consists of three primary elements:

1) elongated soft palate

2) stenotic nares

3) everted laryngeal saccules

First I’m going to go over the definitions of these three elements of the Brachycephalic Syndrome and then explain how they can combine to cause breathing problems for your Bulldog, what symptoms to look for, and what you can do about them.

1. ELONGATED SOFT PALATE

A dog’s palate is the roof of the mouth separating the mouth from the nasal cavity. It consists of the hard palate and the soft palate. The hard palate is located at the front of the mouth and is hard and bony. The soft palate is a movable fold located at the rear of the palate. In the English Bulldog the nose has been bred back into the head which forces the palate to the rear of the mouth and pushes the soft palate back into the throat. This is what’s known as an elongated soft palate.
This makes the Bulldog susceptible to breathing difficulties. Many bulldog owners are familiar with the snores and grumbles that emanate from this breed of dog.

Every bulldog has an elongated soft palate because of their specialized breeding. Breeding the nose back into the head has caused the palate to move back and thereby elongated it. The palate is so long that it protrudes into the bulldogs airway, causing breathing difficulty. And remember this is why the bulldog cannot tolerate the heat, because a dog primarily cools off through his nose.

Ever wondered why your bulldog likes to sleep on her back? Yep, it’s because this position causes the tongue to fall away from the roof of the mouth and she can get more air.

**QUICK TIP**

- The elongated soft palate is what causes your bulldog to overheat so easily and quickly. A dog cools off with his tongue and through his normally long nose, both of which are compromised in a bulldog.

**MEDICAL DESCRIPTION**
The soft palate is the flap of skin that hangs down at the back of your dog's throat. In many English Bulldogs this flap grows to be too long, which can block the animal's airway and make it difficult for your dog to breathe.

An elongated soft palate can be diagnosed with a visual inspection by your veterinarian, although your dog may have to be given a mild sedative to make this possible. Additionally, an elongated soft palate may block the dog's airway.

Over time, it can cause the ligaments and cartilage surrounding your dog's larynx to stretch, which provides less tension to keep the airway open. The problem is that this can lead to a partial or complete collapse of the dog's airway, as shown in the diagram below.

An elongated soft palate is a genetic abnormality and will be apparent when your English Bulldog is a young puppy. In most cases, the condition is not serious enough to warrant surgical treatment.
2. STENOTIC NARES

Part two of the Brachycephalic Syndrome is Stenotic Nares, which translates into “Narrow Nasal Openings” also are caused by specialized breeding and present to some degree in every English Bulldog. They are located at the front of the nose and look like little fleshy protrusions into the nostrils. Once again these have come from breeding the nose back into the head.

MEDICAL DESCRIPTION

Stenotic Nares are malformed nostrils. Stenotic means a narrowing and nares means nasal passages. These fleshy protrusions cause a narrowing and/or they tend to collapse into the nose as the bulldog takes a breath. This makes breathing difficult. Notice the way the nostrils curve in, narrowing the airway.

Notice the narrowed openings in this Bulldog nose.

Severely narrowed nostrils can cause significant breathing problems for your Bulldog.
3. EVERTED LARYNGEAL SACCULES

The third element in Brachycephalic Syndrome is Everted Laryngeal Saccules, a fancy term for little obstructions in the throat that partially block a Bulldog’s airway. These can inhibit a Bulldog’s ability to get air rapidly into the lungs when trying to cool off by panting.

MEDICAL DESCRIPTION

This term refers to little fleshy pouches (saccules) that protrude (evert) into the top of the windpipe (larynx). During swallowing, the larynx closes to prevent particles from entering the lungs. The laryngeal saccules are part of the mucosal lining of the laryngeal ventricles and appear as two membranous sacs that are located in recessions in front of the vocal folds.

They are near the opening of the throat where the elongated soft palate lies. When the affected Bulldog breathes in the little saccules flop into the airway and block the flow of air.
SYMPTOMS ASSOCIATED WITH BRACHYCEPHALIC SYNDROME

Some symptoms associated with this especially following over-activity, excitement, or excessive heat or humidity are the following (see also Heat Stroke)

- gagging and/or retching –often while swallowing
- Exercise intolerance
- Excessive panting often referred to as “roaring”
- Cyanosis – when the tongue and gums turn blue from lack of oxygen
- Collapse or dropping to the ground or
• Loss of consciousness
• Spitting up or regurgitating foam or food
• Inability to calm down from an excited state
• Over production of mucus or white foamy material

Some of these require immediate attention, especially collapse. If your dog collapses in the heat it is critical that you cool him down immediately by immersing him in cool water and getting him to the vet if this does not revive him.

In some cases the palate is especially long and it interferes in the bulldog’s ability to get enough oxygen. The Bulldog’s tongue and inside lips will literally turn blue. In this case an elongated soft palate can be very serious and even life threatening to your animal. If this happens to your Bulldog it is important to seek a diagnosis and receive treatment as early as possible.

If your dog repeatedly experiences these symptoms, or has a "fainting spell" or heart attack, a visit to your veterinarian is essential. Elongated soft palate is an inherited disease, so animals with this condition should not be bred.

Surgery to correct the defect is affordable and has an excellent success rate, especially since the introduction of the laser surgical procedures. Therefore, affected dogs can still live long, healthy lives.

VETERINARY CARE
If your vet makes a diagnosis of **Elongated Soft Palate**, he or she can recommend treatment. In many cases, he will want to perform surgery, which would involve the vet slicing off the lower part of the elongated soft palate to clear airway obstruction. Often the tonsils will be removed at the same time and the laryngeal ventricles should be checked to be sure they have not everted (turned inside out) thereby causing more throat obstruction.

Personally I would not recommend this surgery except in the most extreme cases. The combination of anesthesia and swelling due to surgery has resulted in many bulldogs dying from this surgery. And it is quite painful for the dog.

Depending on how advanced your animal clinic is, this surgery may be performed using a scalpel or with a laser to cauterize the wound as it cuts. While either method is effective, laser surgery is now preferred because it leads to less swelling and bleeding in the mouth. I highly recommend that you pay the price for the laser surgery. A bulldog can bleed to death with traditional scalpel surgery, though it’s generally not the case. The laser surgery ensures your dog heals quickly and has far fewer complications.

Additionally, veterinarians recommend that this surgery not be performed on an English Bulldog under 10 months of age, because the soft palate may not yet be fully-grown. However, in cases where the puppy is suffering severing symptoms, the surgery may be performed at a young age and then again, once the animal is fully-grown.

The prognosis for an English Bulldog with elongated soft palate is extremely good, especially if the condition is caught before any serious damage occurs
to the tissue and cartilage surrounding the larynx. English Bulldogs that have had elongated soft palate surgery can live long and healthy lives.

If your Bulldog has **Stenotic Nares** that inhibit his ability to get enough oxygen your vet and you may determine that surgery be performed to widen the nostrils. This surgery is not as critical as Elongated Soft Palate surgery.

Should your Bulldog have stenotic nares that block his nose sufficiently to cause him distress or fainting spells you may want to take him to a surgical veterinarian familiar with the Brachycephalic Syndrome. Your vet can easily diagnose this condition visually. The nose has a compressed look and curves inward.

There is a surgical procedure that can be performed on bulldogs suffering from this condition. It should only be performed on severe cases. It involves removing the little lobes that protrude into the airway.

Bulldogs with severe cases should not be bred.

**Everted Laryngeal Saccules** are more difficult to diagnose. Your vet will need to look into the throat of your dog to see if they are inhibiting the airway enough to require surgery. Usually your dog will have Cyanosis (a bluish tint to the tongue and gums) which indicated severe lack of oxygen.

**HOME CARE**

Unfortunately, there is no way to prevent your dog from developing these three elements of Brachycephalic Syndrome. The fact is that genetics
determine which dogs will suffer from this condition. The best preventative measure is to research your Bulldog thoroughly.

However, if your animal does suffer from lack of oxygen due to these genetic abnormalities, you can do several things before and after the surgery to make your dog more comfortable.

If your English Bulldog puppy were too young to undergo surgery, then it would be a good idea to restrict its activity, keeping it from becoming worn out or overheated. You can still play with your pooch, but it is important to give the dog plenty of breaks to catch its breath.

Elongated soft palate can also affect how well your dog eats. Some dogs need their food wet, some need it wet to the point of being mush and others do better with dry food. Kibble should be avoided before surgery, as it may cause your dog to choke. Surgical aftercare will also call for softer foods, and you may even want to wet your dog's kibble with gravy or warm water to soften it.

Recovery times from surgery should take about two to three weeks, during which time you should keep your English Bulldog from vigorous exercise. Additionally, check your dog's mouth and throat periodically to ensure that there is no redness or swelling. If you notice any bleeding or excessive swelling, or if you notice your dog coughing or choking while eating, you should return your dog to the vet immediately.
Throat and Stomach

I put these two topics together because disorders in throat that can cause vomiting are often attributed to the stomach.

**VOMITING OR REGURGITATION?**

There is a difference between vomiting and regurgitation. If your dog is simply throwing up food right after eating, food that has not been in the stomach, it is probably simple regurgitation from the esophagus (throat).

An example of this is when Bulldogs tend to gulp their food and eat so fast that the food can't get down the esophagus properly and so they throw up, in this case regurgitate.

Vomiting is characterized by the dog heaving for a while before the stomach contents come up. When they do, they may also come through her nose. The food appears partially digested.

There are serious things that can cause vomiting, including food allergies, metabolic disorders, ulcers, or even obstructions in the throat, or if she has something lodged in her stomach like a rawhide bone or teddy bear.

**Home care**

If you suspect she has eaten the stuffing out of a teddy bear or swallowed part of a chewed up blanket or pillow, there are some things you can do.
Withhold her food for about 7-8 hours. Be sure she gets small amounts of water frequently or sucks on an ice cube to keep her from getting dehydrated.

Then give her a couple pieces of white bread, broken up into small pieces. This will bind with the stuffing and allow it to pass through. If she throws this up as well, call your vet immediately.

As an alternative or in addition to the white bread treatment, you can give your dog a squirt of cat "hairball treatment" found in tubes at your pet store; the main ingredient in these formulas is petroleum jelly (Vaseline) so you could give a tablespoon of that instead.

To soothe an upset stomach you can feed her a little canned pumpkin with her food - be sure it is pure pumpkin and NOT pumpkin pie mix which is loaded with sugar.

**QUICK TIP**
- If your Bulldog vomits more than once BEWARE. Vomiting is very dehydrating and dehydration can lead to shock, organ failure and death very quickly in a dog. If the vomiting is accompanied by diarrhea, especially if either is bloody, and if she becomes lethargic and does not want to eat or drink water - the situation is critical. TAKE HER TO THE VET IMMEDIATELY!
VETERINARY CARE

If your dog has been vomiting blood or bile, you need to take her to the vet right away. Vomiting is dehydrating which is very dangerous and can cause death in a short time period.

Throwing up can be an indication of serious illness in the liver or kidneys or pancreas. It can also be a sign of Hemorrhagic Gastroenteritis, a serious inflammation in the intestines that presents itself as vomiting, bloody diarrhea, lethargy, and anorexia (no desire to eat). If your Bulldog has these symptoms, do not delay in getting her to your vet. Your vet should be able to do some tests to determine what’s going on.

Your vet will probably do an x-ray to see if there is a foreign object in the intestines or stomach, he’ll do blood work that will tell him whether your Bulldog has an infection or cancer or kidney or liver problems as well as if she’s dehydrated.

ESOPHAGUS DISORDERS

The esophagus is the dog’s throat. A normal esophagus is more than just a tube going into the stomach. It is actually acts like a muscle and moves food down the throat and into the stomach. When the esophagus doesn’t work properly a Bulldog often regurgitates food, especially right after eating.

There is a condition common in bulldogs called **esophageal motility disorder**, where the normal constrictions of the esophagus don't work
properly and cause the bulldog to not "swallow" properly and often regurgitate.

A similar genetic disorder of the throat is called **Megaesophagus** which is exactly what it sounds like, a big throat. Dogs with megaesophagus have an enlarged or dilated throat that lacks the muscle tone needed to push food down to the stomach.

A less common condition is called **Myasthenia Gravis** (literally "muscle weakness"), an autoimmune disorder in which the muscles fatigue and no longer function properly.

**HOME CARE**

I have found a simple feeding technique that often helps to alleviate this conditions. Elevate your bulldog's food dish. This lets gravity take over and help get the food down her throat.

Elevate your dog’s food and water bowls.

For food use a two step elevation: first step is approximately 4” above the floor; the second step on which the bowl is places is and additional 6” above the first step.
This forces your dog to have front paws on the first step with the head elevated, forming an angle for gravity to help move the food down.

This feeding position will reduce gas, vomiting, and general digestive discomfort for your bulldog.

**QUICK TIP**

Raising your bulldog’s food bowl allows him to use gravity to help move the food down his narrow esophagus (throat).

I will say that there is some controversy over elevating food bowls because some authorities think that this can lead to bloat. It is not my personal
opinion and this food elevation has worked perfectly in my bulldog Vivy who suffers from Esophageal Motility Disorder.

**TRACHEA AND LARYNX** associated with Brachycephalic Syndrome

**Hypoplastic or Collapsing Trachea (windpipe)**

The trachea or windpipe is an oblong rigid structure with bands made of cartilage surrounding it. When open it allows air to enter the lungs.

Hypoplastic means “underdeveloped” and refers to the bulldog’s narrow trachea. A narrow trachea is considered an inherited (genetic) disorder. All bulldogs have a narrow trachea and for most of them there are not health consequence.

Your vet may diagnose your bulldog puppy with a hypoplastic trachea, but this is just a normal condition of the bulldog. The problem is the degree to which it is narrowed.

If your bulldog is having severe difficulties breathing such that his gums and tongue turn blue or he cannot tolerate exercise, then the condition is worse than normal.

If your dog does not have severe difficulty breathing, but just makes some noise and can play ok, then he may be normal. Many puppies improve their breathing as they grow and mature.
A **collapsing trachea** is a serious condition in which the windpipe starts to collapse. This usually happens with age and degenerates over time. It can contribute to the bulldog heating and breathing problems and is associated with Brachycephalic breeds.

The most common symptom of collapsing trachea is a chronic, dry, hacking (honking) cough.

In severe cases there may be exercise intolerance, cyanosis, asphyxia, and death. Clinical signs are often worse in hot and humid weather and are exacerbated by obesity and concurrent airway problems.

### VETERINARY TREATMENT

Your vet may take an x-ray to see where the collapse has occurred. Further diagnosis may require the use of fluoroscopy, an x-ray technique that allows the doctor to observe the trachea while your dog breathes.

A collapsing trachea can be operated on surgically to tack the windpipe back so that it widens and more air can get through. This should only be done in life threatening cases.

### PREVENTION

If your bulldog has any signs of tracheal collapse, this condition can be aggravated by the use of a collar. When the dog pulls against the collar it can further damage the trachea.
Many bulldog owners never use anything but a harness when walking their dogs, as a precautionary measure. Personally I have found it difficult to control my Bulldogs walking with a harness. I've tried them all with little success. So I use a collar that is part chain and part flexible. Dogs tend to respond better to a collar instinctually because the mother dog controls her pups by nipping on the neck.

**STOMACH - BLOAT OR GDV**

Bloat, known scientifically as *gastric dilatation-volvulus* or GDV, is a very serious condition. It is often fatal, so immediate action is needed.

The causes of bloat, which is also often referred to as "twisted stomach" or Gastric Torsion are unknown. Typically, bloat occurs when the dog's stomach
expands suddenly and rapidly, actually twisting the stomach, causing digestive gasses to be sealed in, unable to escape.

Many theories have been discussed as to why this happens, but there is no consensus among veterinarians as to the exact reasons. The effects of this sudden expansion with air are immediate and very dangerous.

In many cases, the stomach twists or rotates out of its normal, healthy position. This rotation often closes both the entrance and the exit to the stomach, trapping the gas and air inside.

Once the stomach is twisted out of position, the surrounding organs begin to be affected. The spleen in particular becomes twisted out of position. Because of the pressure on the large veins and arteries in the animal's stomach, blood flow is decreased and the walls of the stomach may begin to die or rupture. In addition digestion stops, which means that toxins that normally are broken down will be allowed to build up, possibly to fatal levels.

While these side effects are severe, the biggest danger with bloat is shock. Once your dog goes into shock it runs the risk of loosing blood flow to the brain, which can be fatal. There are many initial signs that your dog may be experiencing bloat:

• Attempts to vomit, usually unsuccessful, every 5-10 minutes
• Painful/distended abdomen – feels tight like a drum
• Trying to hide behind or under furniture or other objects
• Curling up in a ball

• Excessive water consumption

• Crouched or "praying" posture

• Drooling

• Vomiting foamy material

• Red or white gums

• Panting

• Pacing, inability to get comfortable & lay down

The seriousness of bloat cannot be emphasized enough. If you suspect your dog is experiencing bloat, you should seek emergency veterinary care immediately. Remember that every minute could mean the difference between life and death! If treated immediately, approximately 60% to 70% dogs can survive an attack of bloat.

Because the causes of bloat are impossible to determine, it cannot be termed a hereditary disorder. However, certain breeds are more vulnerable to the condition, including the English Bulldog.
HOME CARE & PREVENTION

Because the cause of bloat is unknown, no definitive precautions can be taken to keep your dog from developing bloat. However, these are a few precautions suggested by vets and breeders:

• When your Bulldog is spayed some vets will “tack” the stomach to prevent twisting so that bloat cannot occur. This procedure is only viable for female dogs since spaying is invasive to begin with

• Feed your dog small amounts of food 2 or 3 times a day, rather than one big meal

• Do not feed your dog immediately before or after exercise

• Limit water consumption before and after meals and exercise, as your dog drinks, it gulps more air into its stomach (again, elevating the water bowl will help this)

• Feed your dogs at different times (if you have two or more animals) to prevent rapid eating

• Watch your dog while it eats, and remove the food briefly if the animal is gulping food rapidly

• While these precautions may help, they have not been proven to prevent bloat. Your best defense against bloat, then, is to know exactly what to do when your dog starts showing signs of bloat.
• Check to see if your dog's stomach is distended or taught like a balloon. The best way to do this is to lay your dog on its right side, as the bulging stomach will be most visible on the dog's left side.

• Take your dog to the vet IMMEDIATELY

• Check for signs of shock such as a drop in body temperature, shivering, weakness, and a faint pulse

Many breeders and very experienced owners attempt home decompression, using tubes and even large needles. However, unless you have a lot of experience with dogs, this action is not recommended. The best course of action is to seek veterinary care, preferably within the first half hour following initial symptoms.

**VETERINARIAN CARE**

Your veterinarian will take several steps to deal with bloat. The first step is to stabilize your English Bulldog from any shock symptoms, which is generally done with an infusion of intravenous fluids. The next step is to relieve the pressure so that the stomach can return to its normal position.

To accomplish this, the following are the three primary methods:

1. Inserting a tube through the mouth and into the stomach
2. If the stomach is blocked, inserting a large bore needle through the skin and into the stomach

3. If a. and b. prove impossible, the vet may make an incision through the dog's skin and into the stomach. The opened stomach will then be temporarily attached to the abdominal wall to keep it in position. This last method is only done if the animal's life is in grave danger.

Once the pressure has been relieved, your veterinarian will immediately prepare the dog for surgery to restore the stomach and repair any damage to the stomach lining or internal organs. This can be a tricky proposition, especially if your dog is suffering from severe shock, but your vet will only proceed if it is safe to do so. Once your dog enters surgery, the vet may do a number of things to rectify the situation, including:

• Returning the stomach to its proper position

• Inspecting the stomach walls for signs of necrosis (dead tissue) caused by starvation of oxygen

• Attach the stomach to the abdominal wall to reduce the risk of recurrences of bloat

• Inspecting the spleen for signs of damage

The dog's survival will depend greatly on the extent of the damage to the stomach wall and spleen. If the veterinarian is able to remove any damaged tissue, the dog should have a good prognosis.
**AFTERCARE**

Once your dog has experienced an attack of bloat, it is vital to monitor him or her very closely. If surgery has been performed, you must keep a close eye on the stitches to ensure proper healing.

Additionally, you should monitor your dog's heartbeat to ensure it returns to a normal rhythm. Pain management is also an important part of surgical aftercare. Your vet can prescribe effective painkillers to increase your dog's comfort level.

If your dog is comfortable its sense of well being will also be improved, which has been shown to speed healing. Regular veterinary visits will also be required to ensure your English Bulldog is recovering on schedule and well.

Once an animal has had a bout of Bloat, it will be susceptible to future bouts with this deadly condition.
Digestive Tract & Intestines

As food travels through the stomach to the intestines, digestive enzymes break it down so it can be absorbed into your Bulldog’s body. Dogs digest food in the same way we do but with one significant difference. Their intestinal tract is much shorter than ours so food goes through faster.

Now imagine all these organs stuffed into the compact body of an English Bulldog! It’s a tight fit.

Anyway the digestive tract usually works well but at times there are difficulties, especially related to food and other items your Bulldog may ingest.
Many people think that flatulence as a trait of the English Bulldog breed but this is a myth. Gas is generally caused by diet, but also results from the fact the English Bulldogs have a more compact digestive system than many other breeds.

**HOME CARE & PREVENTION**

Because gas is usually caused by diet, experimenting with different diets can help. Be sure to read my book on food and pick one of my recommended brands.

Elevating the food, as described in the elongated soft palate section, is an excellent way to reduce or eliminate gas. Since the dog eats rapidly, with the head down, he will often “gulp” in air with the food. Elevating the food remedies this.

Bulldogs are known for gulping their food. There are a few techniques people use to slow down the eating. Use the scatter technique where you spread the food around. This can slow them down but it can also be messy! There are also some feeding balls that can be put in the bowl that will slow him down.

One great idea is to try giving your English Bulldog a probiotic supplement or
some plain yogurt (if she can tolerate dairy) with each meal. Probiotics in capsules are more effective than yogurt because there are so many more - look for brands with “multiple strains”. The active cultures in probiotics and yogurt add “friendly bacteria” to your dog’s intestinal tract and can help to break down food more efficiently.

**DIARRHEA - SIMPLE**

There can be many reasons your Bulldog gets diarrhea but if you suspect he just ate the wrong thing and has simple diarrhea, there are some home remedies you can try.

A dog explores his world through his nose. Smell is his primary sensory receptor. So when he finds something particularly smelly and attractive he may decide to indulge. Things like dead critters or cat poop or rotten food can be quite compelling to your Bulldog even if you can’t figure out what would be so attractive about them.

When he eats something he shouldn’t and gets diarrhea there are some things you can do to get him back to normal.

- Give him a bland diet of rice and ground lamb, beef or cottage cheese for a few days.

- Add L-Glutamine with water to his food. L-Glutamine is an amino acid that works wonders on upset intestines. Buy the powdered form available for humans at a natural foods store & remember the dose on
the package is for a 150 pound human so adjust accordingly. Be sure to give it mixed with water.

- Add canned pumpkin (pure pumpkin, not pumpkin pie filling as it’s loaded with sugar) to his food.

FOREIGN BODY IN STOMACH OR INTESTINES

Sometimes your Bully will eat something non-digestible. This can be a cause for alarm because, if it’s small enough and gets past the stomach and into the intestines, surgery may be required.

Dogs have a built in reflex at the base of the stomach. If they eat something that won’t go through they automatically vomit it back up. You may have seen this on occasion. Other times however the object gets stuck in the stomach despite the dog’s attempts to throw it up.
Even worse than a bottle cap, ball, rocks or even a rubber duckie in the stomach is thread-like foreign bodies such as the stuffing from a toy or the covering on a tennis ball. These can go right through the stomach and lodge in the intestines. Once in the intestines strings can cause the intestines to bunch up like a ribbon and actually cut through the lining of the intestines and cause severe peritonitis which may be potentially fatal.

If you suspect your Bulldog, especially a puppy, ate part of his bed or the stuffing from a toy, there are some steps you can take:

- Give him a squirt of cat “hair ball” treatment - it comes in a tube at the pet store. This can bind to the stuffing and cover it so it can work on through harmlessly. The main ingredient in these formulas is petroleum jelly (Vaseline) so you could give a tablespoon of that instead.
• Withhold his food for about 7-8 hours. Then give him some generic white bread (think WonderBread) with the crust cut off. It's really gooey and can catch what's clogging him and pass it through.

If your Bully is vomiting continually and refusing to eat or drink and/or has diarrhea (especially if bloody) and abdominal pain you should call your vet. These are all signs of a serious problem. Remember dehydration can kill a dog in a matter of hours.
HEAT STROKE

It is my opinion that this is the most common cause of death in English Bulldogs. Many owners do not realize that the bulldog is not able to tolerate heat, especially during any exercise. Many owners who think their bulldog died from a “defective heart” when they were playing in the heat, may really have died from heat stroke.

A Bulldog Can Overheat Quickly in the Summer

I have heard so many sad stories from bulldog owners who lost their dogs due to this stealthy, sudden killer. I cannot emphasize enough how
important it is to recognize the symptoms and take action immediately. Better yet, don’t put your bulldog in a position where they could overheat.

As you will see in this chapter, English Bulldogs do have common health problems but again, with the right education, the problems can be avoided or rectified quickly.

Unfortunately, English Bulldogs are extremely susceptible to heat stroke. The reason is that this breed has a shorter airway than other breeds, even that of smaller dogs. Unlike humans, dogs do not perspire. In fact, the only way dogs can dissipate heat is to draw cool air into their bodies through their noses. Since the bulldog does not have much of a nose, their ability to cool down is extremely limited.

In fact, dogs of any breed do not handle heat nearly as well as humans do. However, add in the short airway of an English Bulldog and now you have an added problem of the respiratory system not having an opportunity to cool off before entering the dog's lungs.

I believe that unrecognized heat stroke is the most common cause of death in a young bulldog. Bulldogs have lots of “heart” and will run and play and explore without regard to their body temperature. They literally play until they drop. And if your bulldog drops, it’s a pretty sure sign if heatstroke.
Heat stroke occurs when your English Bulldog's temperature rises past normal. While this can happen to any dog left in a vehicle or overworked in the hot sun, English Bulldogs can develop heat stroke just lying around in temperatures more than 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

Something as innocuous as a trip to the doggie spa can be potentially deadly. A grooming facility is a place where temperatures can rise because of all the hair dryers, and your Bulldog can become anxious because of unfamiliar surroundings, activity, and noise.

The symptoms of heat stroke may include some or all of the following:

- Severe panting with the tongue extending way out of the mouth

**QUICK TIP**

Signs of Dangerous Heatstroke:

- If your bulldog starts to pant at a very rapid pace so that his tongue sticks way out of his mouth - it will have a bluish appearance.

- If he suddenly drops to the ground he is in serious trouble and needs cooling immediately.
• Sudden dropping to the ground as if to say “I’ve had enough”
• High body temperature
• Rapid heart rate
• Dark purplish or blue gums
• Slobbering foamy mucus from the mouth
• Vomiting
• Diarrhea
• Sluggish behavior
• Disorientation
• Redness of the conjunctiva (delicate mucous membrane that lines the eyelids and covers the surface of the eye)
• Excessive salivation
• Epileptic-like seizures
• Coma or unconsciousness

You can self-diagnose heat stroke by first checking your dog's temperature rectally. A normal English Bulldog will have a temperature between 101 and 102.5 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 to 39.2 degrees Celsius). Therefore, if your dog's temperature exceeds this range, he is in danger of developing heat stroke.

If your bulldog is panting and does not stop within ten minutes, he could be suffering from heat stroke and needs to be cooled down immediately.

If the animal's temperature exceeds 106 degrees Fahrenheit, then it is in immediate danger of complications resulting from severe heat stroke. In this situation, you need to seek immediately medical attention.
HOME TREATMENT

If you suspect your English Bulldog has mild heat stroke (with a high temperature, but still below 106 degrees) you can do several things to make him or her feel more comfortable.

The first step is to help your dog cool down. This can be accomplished by placing your English Bulldog in a cold-water bath or by draping towels over your dog and then hosing it off with cold water. Keep in mind that you never want to apply ice directly to your English Bulldog's skin, as this can cause severe discomfort or skin injury.

Other ways to cool your dog off include feeding it ice chips or cubes, and making sure there is a good supply of cold water. In addition, take your dog for a drive in an air-conditioned car or turn up the air conditioning in your house. Another option, although a little more radical, is to administer a cool-water enema.

If your dog's panting continues for a long time, there is a distinct risk of the airway swelling. When this happens, a white foamy phlegm can be produced in the throat making it harder to breathe, airways can become more inflamed and swollen leading to further difficulties breathing and distress.

Some people like to squirt a little lemon juice in their Bulldog’s throat to cut the white foamy phlegm that develops when she’s overheated. You can use the lemon shaped squirt bottle found at the grocery store.

To help reduce swelling, you might consider keeping a children's antihistamine on hand, such as Children's Benadryl (in the pink box, dye
However, if you administer this type of medication and the swelling does not reduce or your dog is in severe distress, it is essential to consult a veterinarian immediately.

If your dog's symptoms improve with these cooling techniques, allow him to rest at home. Improvement will be marked by reduced panting, gums that have turned to a normal pink color, and a normal body temperature. At this time, you want to restrict activity for a few days, making sure your English Bulldog gets plenty of rest in cool, shady areas or in your air-conditioned house.

You should also make sure your dog gets plenty of cool water. If your dog has experienced diarrhea or vomiting, you may want to mix some Pedialyte or another electrolyte solution for children or dogs in with your dog's water to help absorb necessary electrolytes. To ensure this does more good than harm, use a formula of 50% Pedialyte and 50% water.

Remember, you should restrict your English Bulldog's activities for a while even if the symptoms disappear completely. The reason is that problems associated with heat stroke may take days or even weeks to appear. A precautionary visit to your veterinarian may be a good idea if you suspect your English Bulldog has had even a mild case of heat stroke.

**VETERINARIAN CARE**

In cases of heat stroke in English Bulldogs, you can never be too careful. Therefore, a visit to the vet is probably a good idea in every case.
However, a few symptoms exist that should prompt an immediate visit to the vet, even if it means calling on a Sunday or holiday. The following are some of those instances:

- Your English Bulldog has a temperature higher than 106 Fahrenheit
- Your English Bulldog collapses or loses consciousness
- The animal experiences a seizure
- You have administered an antihistamine to help with panting and/or breathing difficulties and it’s not working

Your vet will perform a physical exam to diagnose heat stroke. Then, the vet will check your pet's airway to ensure that it has not swelled. Veterinary care will include all of the cooling techniques described in the home care section, as well as more advanced techniques such as:

- Treatment for shock
- Room temperature IV solutions to help reduce body temperature and counteract shock
- Intravenous cortisone to reduce airway swelling
- Administration of oxygen

Once the veterinarian has stabilized your English Bulldog's condition, the dog’s blood count will be checked to determine the extent of dehydration.
Additionally, the vet will perform serum biochemistry tests, to help determine if any vital organs have been damaged.

It cannot be emphasized enough that heat stroke can threaten the very life of your English Bulldog. Heat stroke can lead to several very serious medical conditions in your dog, including:

- Increased risk of serious blood clots
- Low blood pressure, which can cause organ failure
- Kidney failure
- Continuing seizures
- Weakened immune system, which can result in infections such as pneumonia and skin problems
- Liver failure
- Intestinal and/or stomach bleeding, resulting in sepsis (systemic infection) from absorbed toxins or bacteria
- Low blood sugar

Keep in mind that with so many risks of continuing health problems, it is essential that you consult your veterinarian if your English Bulldog has experienced heat stroke.

**PREVENTION**

Because English Bulldogs are at an increased risk of developing heat stroke, there are a few guidelines you should follow to prevent this often life-threatening condition. These preventative measures include:
• Your English Bulldog should be an inside pet – Never leave your Bulldog outside for long amounts of time, especially when the temperature exceeds 80 degrees.

• If you live in a warm climate, purchase an air conditioner to keep at least one room of your home cool at all times where your dog can stay while at work. If you breed English Bulldogs, considering how much the puppies cost, the added cost of an air conditioner is a sensible way to protect your investment!

• Ensure your English Bulldog always has access to a supply of fresh water. Drinking cool water is one of the only ways dogs can regulate body temperature.

• Restrict your English Bulldog's exercise during hot weather. Walk him only in the early morning or late at night, and when you do so, wet him down or put on a wet t-shirt and let him sit in front of a fan when you get back. Just wetting down the head and stomach and bottom can do wonders for cooling.

• Have your English Bulldog checked for breathing problems and if he or she has a preexisting condition such as a narrow airway, then remember that your dog could be at increased risk of heat stroke.

• NEVER leave your English Bulldog (or any other pet) in a parked car! Even vehicles left with the windows completely open will quickly turn into ovens, reaching temperatures of up to 160 degrees within a matter
of minutes. Therefore, if you have to stop and park, take your bulldog with you, or better yet, leave the animal home in the air conditioning.

- Keep your English Bulldog's weight under control since obese animals are at higher risk of developing heat stroke

- Avoid subjecting your animal to new stimuli or situations during hot weather. The excitement can easily cause your English Bulldog's breathing, heart rate, and metabolism to speed up, which will increase the animal's temperature.

This is not to say you should have your bulldog be a couch potato. Just like a human, your bulldog needs exercise for optimum health. Of course in the winter, you can walk a bulldog a mile or more, but in summer, be cautious and vigilant in terms of keeping the dog cool. There are many dog cooling products available now including cooling vests, collars, and cooling beds.
Wrinkles & Tear Stains

Maintaining your English Bulldog's wrinkles is very important. A variety of problems can develop because of poorly maintained wrinkles.

For instance, your English Bulldog may develop noticeable tear stains around the eyes, or may even have sores within the wrinkles caused by excessive moisture. Proper cleaning and care is the best way to prevent and care for these problems if, and when they arise.

Tear stains occur when tears are left on the dog's skin. The minerals such as copper and iron in these liquids cause the red staining so frequently seen around the eyes of English Bulldogs.

Tear stains are a normal staining of the fur and it is my opinion that eye lash problem such as entropion or ectropion are the normal cause. Take your Bulldog to an ophthalmologist specialist to remove the errant eyelashes and the eyes stop tearing and the stains disappear. See the chapter on Eyes for more information.

Home Care

Wrinkles

It's critical that you keep your bulldog's wrinkles clean and free from micro-organisms. Besides, it's much easier to cuddle a sweet smelling dog than one with a horrid smell.

If your dog has a sour odor around her face, you can be pretty sure it’s a proliferation of yeast that’s gotten into her wrinkles.
The nasty little culprit who is the cause of this smell is a fungus and it is easily controlled with regular cleaning.

Yeast loves a warm dark place and those cute folds on your bulldog’s face are a great place for them to multiply.

To clean your dog's wrinkles, implement my preferred technique, which you can see in my special bonus video on Wrinkle Cleaning. Use a sterile eye wash or Witch Hazel (don’t get this in the eyes) in the folds. See the accompanying pdf file on wrinkle cleaning.

Cleaning options:

• Cleaning with Witch Hazel is my preference because it is mildly antiseptic, doesn’t hurt when applied, and has a drying effect on the skin that you want to be sure there is no moisture that yeast likes to breed in.

• Some people prefer to use mild soap and water (some experimentation may be required if the soap begins to irritate your dog's skin).

• Many people have success with fragrance-free aloe baby wipes. As you are cleaning, be on the lookout for dry flaky skin or areas of excessive redness.

• Malaseb wipes from your vet are another option. Be careful because they are very drying and antiseptic and can actually irritate the skin.
• Wrinkles should be dried thoroughly following washing. Dry them with a soft cloth. In addition, you can use cornstarch (stay away from baby powder as it has aluminum in it) to ensure their dog's wrinkles stay dry. Be careful not to get the cornstarch in the eyes. I use a Q-tip to dab it into the skin folds or a small spoon to put it in a deep nose fold.

In the case of severe infection due to improper wrinkle maintenance you may need to take your Bulldog to your vet for treatment. Untreated superficial infections can lead to systemic infections.

The deep wrinkle around the nose may be particularly susceptible to irritation and cracking. Apply Snout Soother or shea butter to your dog's nose to keep the nose lubricated.

If you notice some raw skin that’s irritated, apply a little Bacitracin to repress the bacteria. If you notice brownness or if the redness doesn’t clear in a day or two, apply some Monistat or other anti-fungal cream to the affected areas.

**Tear Stains**

For tear stains, my first recommendation is a visit to an opthamologist vet who will look for eyelashes that are irritating the eye’s cornea. Removal of the eyelashes stops the tearing and therefore the tear staining as well.

Another cause of tears can be seasonal allergies. Dogs don’t get runny eyes like we humans do but they can get pollens in the eyes. In this case the irritation is short lived. An eye wash can clear them out.
Just like you, your bulldog can be allergic to allergens that are lurking in your home environment. Dust mites are harmless little creatures that live in mattresses, pillows, carpets and upholstered furniture. They especially thrive in humid environments such as the dog bed. Although harmless, they produce a lot of ‘waste’ that gets into the air. And they reproduce like crazy, a new generation every three weeks. Be sure to regularly wash your dog’s bed, and use a room air filter to help reduce dust.

They can also be allergic to carpet shampoo, pollens in the spring, grasses, and many other allergens.

You can order a RAST testing or IGe allergy testing if you want to find out specific allergens, but these tests can be expensive.

Alternative treatments for tear stains.

Some people like to treat tear stains by washing regularly with a commercial tear stain removal product available at your local pet store or your veterinarian.

Another option breeders often use is a homemade paste made by mixing hydrogen peroxide with cornstarch. Some like to use Boric acid. I am not in favor of these as they do not treat the underlying problem which is often eyelashes.

Tear stains are not harmful, just aesthetically unpleasant. If the source of the staining is removed i.e. eyelash removal, allergen removal, then the stains will disappear on their own.
For a more in depth discussion on yeast in face folds and wrinkles, read the chapter on Yeast infections and how to treat them.

*keep your Bulldog's wrinkles clean and fresh*
Eyes

English Bulldogs have beautiful dark eyes, which often seem to be hidden behind the distinctive flat and wrinkled snout. Unfortunately, English Bulldogs are often prone to eye problems, so bulldog owners need to keep a careful eye (no pun intended) on their dog’s peepers.

These eye problems are most certainly a result of the unique breeding of the Bulldog. In flattening the nose, the rest of the face suffered, by pushing it all back. Hence, the skin around the eyes is tight, and the skull does not have enough room for all the glands and such.

While these eye problems are rarely a fatal condition, they can cause your English Bulldog a great deal of pain and discomfort. If left untreated, eye problems may require complicated surgery to correct. However, by carefully monitoring your English Bulldog's eyes over the course of its life, you may be able to detect and begin treatment of problems before becoming serious.

There are several eye conditions.

**CHERRY EYE (THIRD EYELID INVERSION)**

Dogs actually have three eyelids. Cherry Eye is a condition that occurs when the "third lid" (the nictitating membrane) becomes prolapsed, or slips out of place. It looks like a little cherry but it’s really a gland that’s popped out.
Medical Description

Cherry eye, or nictitans gland prolapse, is the term used to refer to a common congenital eye defect in various dog breeds including the Bulldog. Home care is not effective and the only viable option is to surgically tack it back into place.

Unlike humans, dogs have a third eyelid that contains a tear gland in the inside corner of the eye. In Cherry Eye this gland prolapses, which means it falls out of place, and becomes visible.

Cherry eye is considered genetic and may be caused by a hereditary weakness in the connective tissue surrounding the gland. It usually appears in puppies. Bulldogs developing Cherry Eye in one eye typically develop the condition in the other eye within a couple months.

In my opinion it is common in Bulldogs because so much has to be crammed into the head because the nose was pushed back. There just isn’t enough room for all those organs!

Cherry Eye appears as a red mass in the inner corner of the eye, and is sometimes mistaken for a tumor. After gland prolapses, the eye becomes chronically inflamed and there is often a discharge. A dog may scratch or bump the gland causing damage or infection.

Because this gland is responsible for over a third of the eye's tear production, it is not a good idea to have it removed as used to be the general form of treatment. Without tear production the eye can eventually
suffer from dryness. Dry eye is a very serious condition that needs daily treatment with eye drops or it will lead to loss of the eye.

Additionally, the nictitating membrane serves as a protective layer by distributing tears over the surface of the eye. Once the nictitating membrane has been prolapsed or pushed out of position, it generally becomes enlarged, as in the photograph below.

*Cherry Eye is pretty gruesome looking*

**SYMPTOMS**

If your Bulldog has Cherry Eye, it will be fairly obvious as shown in this photograph:

- An enlarged third eyelid (the pink swollen part)
• Crusty material in the corner of the dog’s eye(s) is not always present and it can mean infection

• If one gland pops out and there is not sign of infection you can just leave it for a month or so and wait for the other eye to do the same thing.

HOME CARE

If your Bulldog has cherry eye in one eye odds are she will develop it in the other eye as well within a couple months.

Some people report that they can successfully massage the gland back into the eye socket using opthalmic triple anti-biotic ointment. This should only be attempted by someone who knows what they’re doing. It may need to be performed several times a day for several weeks.

1. Medicate - Apply an antibiotic ointment to the nictating membrane to help eliminate the infection. Just be sure the ointment is prescribed by a veterinarian.

2. Warm Compresses - Gently and carefully, apply warm, damp wash-cloths to your dog's eye. The warmth of these cloths will help to un-block the gland.

3. Massage - Massage the gland very lightly with your index finger in a circular fashion
Once you have applied these three treatments, you will be ready to "replace" the nictating membrane. This is done by gently pulling out the tissue and then allowing it to "snap" back into place. Keep in mind that if your English Bulldog is nervous or high-strung, it might be best to have a professional vet do this for you.

Because Cherry Eye is so common in English Bulldogs, do not be surprised if this operation is done several times during your dog's life. However, while it can be easy one time, you may find it to be a bit challenging other times.

A simple miscalculation can result in injuries to your dog’s eye, a very serious problem. Therefore, it is a good idea to get advice or a demonstration from your veterinarian, breeder, or another English Bulldog owner before you attempt home correction of Cherry Eye.

The cherry eye gland rubbing against the eye can cause irritation to the cornea. If your dog scratches the gland it can also lead to ulceration and infection.

If there is evidence of infection in the form of a yellowish or greenish crusty discharge, you can treat it with opthalmic antibiotic ointment but you must see a vet to get the ointment. If it does not heal in a few days you should see your vet.

Because of so many possible side effects, the recommended solution is a surgical procedure where the third eyelid and gland are tucked back in.
Cherry Eye is best treated by a surgical procedure that tacks the gland back into place. The vet will cut a half moon snip in the tissue to make room. It can be performed under local anesthesia. This should be done by an ophthalmologist veterinarian. It is not a long procedure and the risk of complications is small.

Some vets like to remove the gland but this can lead to dry eye and I do not recommend it. Dry eye occurs when the glands of the eyes don't produce enough tears. Dogs have two glands for each eye that supply different components of tears, which are necessary to keep the eye lubricated and healthy.

If your English Bulldog has experienced symptoms of Cherry Eye more than three or four times in a year, or if the home treatment described above fails to correct the problem, you should see a veterinarian. Veterinary treatment consists of surgical procedures to either replace the gland in its proper position or remove it entirely.

Note that not all vets will have the necessary skill to complete these procedures. Therefore, you may need to take your dog to a veterinary ophthalmologist, specializing in such treatment. Some of the treatments performed by an ophthalmologist veterinarian would include:

- **The Conjunctival Mucosa Pocket Procedure** - In this procedure, the surgeon makes a small cut in the lower eyelid, creating a pocket into which the nictating membrane is inserted. The pocket is then closed with fine
stitches, which dissolve after a few days. The membrane is thus enclosed in a pocket, keeping it from becoming prolapsed once again but allowing tear production to continue as before.

• Stitching - A simpler procedure involves suturing (stitching) the prolapsed membrane back to the connective tissue, again with fine stitches that dissolve. This method also allows tear production to continue, but may not prevent the nictating membrane from slipping out of place in the future.

• Removal – With this procedure, which is not often performed, the nictating membrane(s) is completely removed. This procedure can result in your bulldog's eyes becoming overly dry, which may then require constant aftercare. However, if you have an older English Bulldog, this can be a more economical alternative.

• Partial Removal – in this procedure, the surgeon does a “half moon snip” that removes some of the membrane but leaves the gland intact. Some breeders swear that no dry eye ever develops. One advantage to this is that the ophthalmologist can use a local anesthetic.

The aftercare for all of these surgeries is much the same. You must restrict your dog's activity for at least two weeks to maintain the stitches. Your bulldog may also cough due to throat irritation caused by the inhaled general anesthetic, so you should carefully monitor your dog's breathing.

Keep the eye clear of mucous-like discharge with a saline solution, and apply any antibiotic drops or topical creams prescribed by your vet. Finally, you must distract your English Bulldog from scratching at the affected eyes.
Many times, this can be done with the use of treats, attention, or a "spaceman" or "Elizabethan" collar.

**ENTROPION**

(the inward rolling of the eyelid, most commonly the lower lid)

Entropion is a condition that occurs when an English Bulldog's eyelids curl or turn inwards. The result is that the eyelashes rub against the corneal surface, which can result in scratches on the cornea and infection which can lead to loss of the eye, from the eyelashes or the dog's efforts to scratch at the eyes with its paws.

Entropion usually affects the lower eyelid, although it can occur in the upper eyelid as well. In some cases, symptoms of Entropion develop within a few months of birth whereas in other Bulldogs, Entropion will develop later on in life.

In either case, Entropion is considered an inherited condition, and as such, it is recommended that if breeding the English Bulldog, it not be bred. To determine if your pet has Entropion, several symptoms should be watched for, which include:

- Rubbing or scratching at the eyes
- Excessive tearing
- Visible, inwardly-directed rolled eyelid
• Thick discharge of mucous that’s yellowish or greenish coating the eye, or crusty "eye gunk" in the corners of the eyes

• Wetness of the fur surrounding the eyes

• Squinting, or an apparent loss of vision (for example if your dog starts bumping into furniture)

**HOME TREATMENT**

Unfortunately, not much can be done for Entropion without surgery. However, for mild cases or if there is a delay before you can get your animal the surgery you can administer saline drops or try to "unroll" the eyelid manually, as best you can.

**VETERINARIAN CARE**

Because surgery is the only viable treatment for Entropion, you should visit your veterinarian as soon as you suspect this problem. Your vet will use several tests during a thorough examination of the eyes to diagnose Entropion, including checking to see if the problem is actually being caused by ingrown eyelashes (a remote possibility at best).

The vet will also check for corneal ulcers or scratches caused by the Entropion, which will provide an opportunity for these to be treated as well to prevent a buildup of scar tissue. As mentioned, one of two basic surgical procedures is required to correct Entropion.
Your vet will work with you to find the best procedure to suit the age of your English Bulldog and the seriousness of the Entropion. The standard surgical procedures considered include the following:

- **Young Dogs** - For young dogs, usually under six months, the eyelid may be stapled or sutured to keep it away from the cornea. This procedure allows any corneal abrasions to heal, and may encourage the dog's eyelids to grow straight. The staples or stitches are removed in seven to ten days, after which the animal is assessed to see if the Entropion has reoccurred.

- **Older Dogs** - For older dogs, several procedures are available for the removal of skin from the eyelid. The amount of skin removed will determine the extent of the surgery, which will be based on how much the eyelid has curled inward.

Surgical aftercare for both of these procedures involves keeping your dog from scratching at the eyes, administering any necessary medications, and restricting your English Bulldog's activities for at least two weeks.

Unfortunately, not much can be done for Entropion without surgery. However, for mild cases or if there is a delay before you can get your animal the surgery, you can administer saline drops or try to "unroll" the eyelid manually, as best you can.
ECTROPION (AN OUTWARD TURNING OR SAGGING OF THE EYELID)

Ectropion is the curling or rolling of the eyelid in the opposite direction, in other words, rolling outward from the surface of the eye. This exposes the membrane that lines the eyelid (the palpebral conjunctiva), which can lead to allergies or conjunctivitis. Ectropion can be an inherited condition or can be caused by external factors.

Inherited Ectropion in English Bulldogs is generally considered the result of selective breeding to enhance facial rolls and squashed noses. While animals with inherited Ectropion may be bred, it is recommended that they be bred with animals that have less prominent rolls to help eliminate Ectropion in future generations.

Ironically, Ectropion may develop in English Bulldogs from surgery to correct Entropion. Additionally, it can be caused by scarring from injuries to the eyelid, sudden weight loss (it does not matter whether or not this occurs from another condition such as cancer), or chronic inflammation of the eyelid. Milder cases may develop from fatigue.

Symptoms of Ectropion include the following:

- Mucous-like discharge in and around the eyes
- An eyelid that visibly does not come into contact with the dog's cornea
- Persistent redness around the eyes and inside the eyelids

**HOME CARE**

Ectropion also offers few home care alternatives to surgical procedures. These are limited to administering saline or other lubricating drops or ointment to prevent dry eyes. You should also carefully monitor your dog's eyes, visiting a veterinarian if chronic redness or mucous-like discharge occurs and lasting for more than a few days.

**VETERINARIAN CARE**

You should take your English Bulldog to an ophthalmologist vet if it experiences the symptoms of Ectropion for more than a few days. The veterinarian will usually diagnose the problem by simply inspecting your dog's eyes. However, on some occasions the vet may find it necessary to perform a tear test, a urinalysis, and/or a blood count to see if the Ectropion is caused by another health problem.

Treatment options vary based on the severity of the Ectropion and the age of the animal. Less severe cases may be treated by simply maintaining good eye health (i.e. cleaning your dog's eyes frequently to prevent mucous buildup or infection). Treatment may also include lubricating eye drops or ointments.

If surgery is required, the veterinarian will remove a thin wedge of tissue from just inside the eyelid. The goal is that by removing this tissue, the eyelid will "flop" back onto the eye. While English Bulldogs that have had a
surgical correction for Ectropion can go on to lead a full and active life, they will be ineligible for dog show competition following the surgery.

**DISTICHIASIS (THE ABNORMAL GROWTH OF AN EYELASH FROM THE MEIBOMIAN GLANDS ALONG THE EYELID MARGIN)**

Distichiasis is the growth of extra eyelashes that grow in a second inside row of the eyelid. They grow out of the glands inside the eyelids or on the inside edge of the skin of the eyelids. These errant eyelashes turn in towards the eyeball and cause irritation to the cornea.

They are not visible to the naked eye but if you have magnifiers you may be able to see them. Even though they are very tiny they can rub against your Bulldog’s cornea and cause scratches, tearing, and infection that can lead to loss of the eye.

*Tiny little hairs can cause severe damage to the eye*
These eyelashes can rub against the cornea, causing pain, discomfort, corneal abrasions, and eventually corneal ulcers. Distichiasis is an inherited disorder commonly found in English Bulldogs with symptoms that include:

- Excessive tearing that go down your dog’s face and into the folds causing a brownish tinge
- Ulcers (sores) on the surface of the cornea, not visible without magnification but evidenced by discharge
- Excessive squinting, blinking, or pawing at the eyes
- Dark colorations on the surface of the eye
- Redness around the eyelids
- An accumulation of blood vessels inside the cornea
- White patches on the cornea, which indicate scarring (advanced condition due to non-treatment)
HOME CARE

Unless you have a VERY patient English Bulldog, there is very little you can do for Distichiasis at home. Leaving the plucking of eyelashes to your vet will make for a much more harmonious relationship between yourself and your dog! Much better to seek out an ophthalmologist specialist.

VETERINARIAN CARE

If you notice symptoms of Distichiasis in your English Bulldog's eyes, you should visit an opthamologist vet. Treatments for Distichiasis will vary based on how many stray hairs have grown and how persistently these hairs reappear. The danger of Distichiasis is corneal scratching and possible infection.

QUICK TIP

The most common cause of tearing and tear stains and subsequent irritated wrinkles is Distichiasis because the errant eyelashes rub against the eye and can cause infection.

Having the errant eyelashes removed (usually by freezing) by an ophthalmologist vet will usually remedy common bulldog tear stain problems.
In less severe cases (usually when the only symptom is mild tearing), a lubricating ointment may be administered regularly. This ointment will adhere to the wayward lashes and prevent them from damaging the cornea. In more severe cases, a variety of surgeries may be used to remove the hairs and kill the hair follicles.

The ophthalmologist will use a procedure called cryoepilation. With this procedure, the abnormal hair follicles are frozen using a liquid nitrogen probe, and the hairs then removed. Surgical aftercare involves administering prescribed medications as the eyelids will be swollen. Additionally, you will need to bring your English Bulldog back to the vet to check for new hair growth.

Taking care of your Bulldog’s eyes is important
SKIN PROBLEMS

Skin problems are common in Bulldogs and are by far the topic on which I receive the most questions. The Bulldog is a man-made breed and has been inbred so much over the past two centuries. This can lead to some genetic weaknesses and depressed immunity. It is very important to keep your Bulldog’s immunity in the best shape possible through good diet, exercise, and life in a low stress environment.

The skin is the largest organ of the dog’s body. It protects against external assaults and it also acts to release internal toxins.

As such, dermatitis may have many different symptoms. Remember, even the smallest flea can cause dermatitis. The danger from dermatitis lies mostly in the risk of secondary infections and other conditions caused by open sores from repeated scratching or chronic skin problems, and so each condition described here should be treated as aggressively as possible.

There are different kinds of skin conditions so they will be grouped into loose categories of invaders and opportunists. The invaders come from the environment and include parasites, airborne allergens, and other pathogens. The opportunists take advantage of a skin situation to proliferate and include yeast, bacteria, food allergies, systemic infection, autoimmune disorders, and hormonal imbalances.

Be sure to read Chapters 4 and 5 of my bonus book "The Miracle of Healing Your Dog With Food" included in the Bulldog Health System for more
information on skin conditions and their relationship to diet. It also contains home care herbal and homeopathic treatments.

**Dermatitis** is a term that describes an inflammation of your English Bulldog's skin. Dermatitis is a general term and may include one of the many different conditions described in this chapter.

As such, dermatitis may have many different symptoms. Remember, even the smallest flea can cause dermatitis. The danger from dermatitis lies mostly in the risk of secondary infections and other conditions caused by open sores from repeated scratching or chronic skin problems, and so each condition described here should be treated as aggressively as possible.

In this chapter we will look at various skin conditions, their medical definitions, what you can do to treat them, and what your vet would do for treatment if necessary.

**INVADERS - PARASITES & ALLERGENS**

These are the nasty little creatures like fleas, mites, ticks, fungi, and the like. They come at your Bulldog from the environment and can become quite bothersome at times.

**Mange (mite infestation)**

Mites are little parasites that live at the base of hair follicles. They lay eggs under your dog’s skin. They normally don’t cause any problems for a
healthy dog, but sometimes they proliferate out of control in a dog with a compromised or weakened immune system. This infestation of mites is what is known as mange.

Mites are not visible to the naked eye and can only be seen under a microscope.

There are two main types of mange. **Demodectic or Red Mange** is usually found in dogs with compromised immune systems and can be classified as either localized (just a few spots) or general (spreading to the entire body). This is the type of mange that most commonly effects Bulldogs. **Sarcoptic Mange or Scabies** is an aggressive burrowing mite causing severe infestation that is contagious and can spread to other pets and you!

**Demodex or Demodectic Mange**

Demodectic mange, also known as Demodicosis or Demodex, is caused by a mite known as demodex canis. It occurs most commonly in the bulldog puppy.

The demodex canis mite is believed to be present in every dog's hair follicles. Mites are usually passed from the mother to the puppy during nursing. From there, they live in the dog's coat for its entire life.

In most dogs, the demodex canis mites are not a problem but for some dogs, an immune defect makes can lead to demodectic mange. English
Bulldogs are one of the many breeds that seem to be much more susceptible to this immune defect.

These mites may remain dormant the entire life of your dog or they can flare up after times of stress or illness or compromised immunity. Usually harmless, when they start to proliferate they can wreak havoc on your Bulldog’s skin.

Dwelling harmlessly at the root of the hair follicle, when they start to multiply they feed on the yeast in the hair follicles, damaging the hair roots causing the hairs to fall out and leaving small scabs on your dog’s skin.

Demodectic mange strikes dogs of any age although it is generally classified as an adult or juvenile problem depending on the age of the dog. Cases of juvenile mange occur in puppies under about 15 months old, while adult onset mange can strike dogs of any age.

Some dogs may get demodex after they have been vaccinated or if they have an underlying hormonal disorder or if they have a poor diet or if their immunity is compromised by infection.

There are two types of Demodectic Mange: Local and Generalized. And they appear just as one would expect from their names.

**MEDICAL DESCRIPTIONS**

**Localized** Demodicosis is characterized by a few patches – often circular – of hair loss that is pink or red and/or scaling. It occurs usually on the front
legs and face. Cases of localized mange usually resolve themselves in about eight weeks with topical treatments.

If the localized mange does not disappear, the dog may develop generalized mange.

**Generalized** Demodectic Mange is characterized by the following symptoms:

- More than 10 areas of hair loss
- Itching
• Bacterial infection with small papules

• Hair loss in tiny portions all over the body

• Redness

Localized and generalized demodectic mange are both considered to be hereditary disorders. They are passed from the mother dog to the pup during suckling. Therefore, English Bulldog puppies, which develop demodectic mange should not be bred.
VETERINARY CARE

The only way to be sure your dog has mites is to have your vet do a skin scraping and look under a microscope.

Demodectic mange is usually diagnosed by visual inspection, along with skin scrapings to test for the presence of demodex canis mites. Treatment of localized mange can include regular bathing with antibacterial shampoos to help clear the hair follicles of demodex canis mites. Oral antibiotics may also be prescribed but only if there is an infection present, as well as insecticidal ointments.

If mites are detected your vet may want to treat with Ivermectin, a broad-spectrum antiparasitic. She may also suggest a full body dip or rinse containing amitraz.

These can be toxic and are not recommended unless the case is very severe you may want to consider these.

Otherwise there are some home treatments you can try.

HOME CARE

Demodex often resolves on it’s own within a month or two. As long as your Bulldog does not have a bacterial infection you may decide to wait and see if he gets better.
Localized mange can be treated successfully at home with shampoos and topical creams. It can resolve on its own but some treatments will help:

- Apply benzoyl peroxide ointment to the affected areas
- Bathe in benzoyl peroxide (oxydex or pyoben shampoo)
- Apply Goodwinol ointment to affected areas - use caution as this is an insecticide
- Nu-Stock. Pierce's All Purpose Nu-Stock has been tested and used for over thirty years. It has proven to be effective for fast relief of Demodectic mange. It has a strong sulfur odor but is very effective. Do an internet search for Pierce’s All Purpose Nu Stock.
- Tea tree oil is effectively used topically on affected spots

**Sarcoptic Mange or Scabies**

Sarcoptic Mange is a different mite and a different kind of infestation. It is caused by a different mite Sarcopties Scabiei and it is highly contagious. Not only your other pets (including cats) can contract it, but you can also. If you develop small bumps around your waist or your other animals are also itching, you could all have this form of mange!
Scabies like places on your dog with little or no hair. When your dog scratches the mites he can spread them. If you scrape them you can become infected.

It is not as common in Bulldogs as Demodex but only a vet can tell you for sure which mite your dog has been infested with.

The symptoms of Sarcptic Mange are the following:

- Affected areas on legs, chest, abdomen
- Ankles, ears, and elbow may also be affected
- Intense itching
- Inflammation and possible bacterial infection from scratching
- Small red bumps that become crusty
- Tiny patches of hair loss in circular patterns as hair follicle is destroyed by the mites and falls out
- The infection of other animals and humans in your household

Since this is a more intense and highly contagious form of mites it should be treated by your veterinarian, possibly with Ivermectin which has shown to be very effective and less toxic than the dips some vets recommend.
VETERINARY CARE

Your vet will do skin scrapings to determine if your bulldog has mange and what type. Then he will look under a microscope to see the mites. Unfortunately not all mites are visible and a misdiagnosis can result.

Your vet can prescribe different treatments including:

- Amitraz (Mitaban) Dips are sulphur dips – these are very strong and toxic and should not be used unless necessary for severe cases of generalized mange

- Revolution – a new drug on the market has shown promise

- Ivermectin – a broad spectrum anti-parasite medication which is the safest of them in my opinion

Because generalized demodectic mange is such a serious condition, treatment is much more aggressive. The dog's fur may be shaved off completely to expose the skin, followed by regular baths with strong antibacterial shampoo. Oral antibiotics are usually prescribed in cases of generalized demodectic mange to help prevent secondary infections.
FLEAS - this applies generally to Ticks as well

These little critters seem like just a nuisance, but on an allergic dog they can cause terrible skin conditions from just one bite!

The house hold flea reproduces at a rapid rate, a mating couple can produce up to 600 eggs in a month. And if that isn’t enough, they love to dwell in your carpet, on vegetation inside and outside, in your dog’s bed, as well as on your bulldog!

When your bulldog has a flea allergy, also known as flea bite hypersensitivity or flea allergy dermatitis, it will only take ONE FLEA BITE to cause a skin reaction. And a lone flea can bite up to 400 times in one day! Particularly greedy, it can consume more than it’s own body weight in your dog’s blood in one day.

If that’s not enough, a female can lay hundreds of eggs before she’s done with your pooch. And there’s a likelihood that fleas carry other parasites such as tapeworms so if your dog eats the flea he can get a tapeworm. Yuk.

The reason for this is an allergic dog’s immune system will respond to the protein in the flea’s saliva, causing an over reaction. The symptoms as we well know are intense scratching and can last for about a week. Intense scratching can lead to permanent hair loss.

You may not even see the flea that causes this reaction, it may be long gone when you discover your dog scratching.
So the best thing you can do for your Bulldog is keep these parasites away! People who live in humid areas are more likely to have fleas so areas like Florida, the Gulf States, and California can be more threatened.

**PREVENTION**

To prevent flea bites it is important to rid your dog and house of not only adult fleas but the eggs as well. There may be thousands of eggs waiting to hatch in a few weeks and adults can live for up to twelve months.

Here’s some advise from Dr Weil, who has a pet area on his website www.drweil.com and I couldn’t have expressed it any better!

“The first thing I would recommend is vacuuming. This will remove many of the flea eggs, larvae and insecticide - resistant pupae developing in your rugs, furniture and other surfaces. Concentrate on areas where your dog spends most of his time indoors but don't forget hardwood and tile floors, and definitely use a good quality vacuum cleaner.

If you haven't already, thoroughly wash any cushions in your dog's bed (or have them dry cleaned). You might want to throw away old pet bedding and get a new dog bed after you've eliminated the fleas from the house. After vacuuming, seal the vacuum bag in a plastic garbage bag and throw it away outside. (You'll have to vacuum frequently until the fleas are gone, and be vigilant about disposing the bag after each vacuuming.)
If you want to eliminate the fleas with natural products, try pyrethrins, the active insecticidal ingredients found in chrysanthemum flowers. These will kill the fleas and then degrade rapidly in the environment. They're relatively nontoxic to humans (although they can aggravate asthma). You'll need to use them or other treatments more than once in order to eliminate more than one generation of fleas. You also might try growth regulators such as fenoxycarb, which mimic flea hormones and prevent the young larvae from becoming adult fleas. In addition, natural enzymes such as those in "Flea 'n Tick B Gone" can cause a mechanical disruption of the flea's shells.

Another natural option is neem, a powerful and relatively safe insecticide obtained from a tree in India. To rid your household of fleas you also can use diatomaceous earth - the fossilized skeletons of one-celled sea algae often used by organic farmers to kill insects. Try sprinkling it on carpets, furniture and areas where fleas tend to hide. Its sharp crystals puncture insect bodies but are harmless to mammals.

Whichever product you use, follow the instructions on the package but be thorough and treat all carpets and throw rugs, including those under beds and in closets. Even with powerful chemical insecticides, you'll probably see some fleas for two weeks or longer after spraying. Repeat the treatment if fleas aren't gone within four weeks.

These measures usually work. If not, I'm afraid you'll have to resort to a chemical "bomb." Be sure that you, your family members and pets stay out of the house during the application of the insecticide and afterward until the substance dries. No matter what kind of pesticide you use to rid your house
of fleas, be sure to vacuum repeatedly (and carefully throw away the bags) until you see (and feel) no signs of fleas and are sure that they're gone.”

Here are some more suggestions for keeping the fleas away:

- Shampoo regularly with flea shampoo but be advised this will only remove them and not prevent new fleas from taking up residence – better yet use the shampoo in your washing machine when you wash your dogs bed

- Wash your dog’s bedding regularly on the HOT setting - you will see the little critters float to the top. Then dry on HIGH heat to get the rest.

- make a spray of apple cider vinegar, water and essential oil of lavender, peppermint and eucalyptus and spray it on your dog’s coat

- use a product called Bug Off Garlic from Springtime

- or spray on Skin-So-Soft from Avon – mix 3 Tbs to a gallon of water

- be careful about using flea collars and commercial once a month drops or products with Deet as they are very powerful and can actually harm your dog or further depress his immune function

- Xenex, an herbal treatment has shown promise in repelling fleas
- Three drops of one of these essential oil: Cedarwood, Eucalyptus, Lavender, Lemon, Mint, Rosemary or Terebinth added to 150 ml (1/2 cup) and brushed onto the skin

**HOME CARE**

The article above mentions several home cures you can use:

- Flea 'n Tick B Gone, a natural enzyme product

- Products that contain pyrethrins, the active insecticidal ingredients found in chrysanthemum flowers

- neem, a powerful and relatively safe insecticide obtained from a tree in India

- diatomaceous earth - the fossilized skeletons of one-celled sea algae often used by organic farmers to kill insects - be careful that you and your pets do NOT inhale these

If your bulldog is **bitten by a flea** and has a reaction, there are some things you can do to soothe his body:

- keep the area clean with soap and water to prevent infection

- Use Witch Hazel to clean the affected areas on your Bulldog, then if there appears to be some infection apply Bacitracin or Neosporin antit-
biotic ointment.

- For scratching apply some cortisone cream to lessen the itching
- Rub a little Calendula cream on the bite to soothe the skin

**Atopy or Atopic Dermatitis - Allergic Reaction**

There are many reasons a dog can develop allergies, including the environment, other indoor pets, overbreeding, perhaps even overuse of antibiotics.

Allergies of many different things can cause dermatitis in your English Bulldog. There are three general causes of skin allergies. The first is contact dermatitis, where the allergen makes contact with the skin, the second is food, or drug dermatitis, where the allergen is digested, reaching the skin from the inside out and the third is Atopy, where the allergen is inhaled through the respiratory system.

The symptoms of all three types of allergic reaction may include:

- Paw licking and scratching are the classic symptoms of allergies in dogs
- Dry, flaky skin
- Scratching, licking, or biting at affected areas
Hair loss from repeated licking

Lesions

Contact dermatitis may be caused by many different allergens. Examples of allergens can include shampoo or soap used in bathing the dog, your soap or hand cream, laundry soap used on the dog's bed, the bark of a tree or some other type of plant found in your yard, or even the chemicals used in carpet cleaning. Grass seed is often an offending airborne allergen.

Food or drug dermatitis can also be caused by several different allergens. However, the majority of the time, your English Bulldog's diet contains the allergen.

With Atopy, the cause can be both natural and manmade. Atopy has been described as "hay fever for dogs" and English Bulldogs may be susceptible due to their shorter airway and respiratory systems. Atopy allergens can include air fresheners, pollen, dust mites, cigarette smoke, or even (ironically enough) pet dander.

The problem with allergies is tracking down exactly what is causing the reaction. Here are a few steps to follow when trying to ascertain what is causing the irritation:

- Assess any changes – new diet, snacks, plants, weather, shampoo, detergent, fabric softener, etc.

- Type of reaction – where is it and what is it.
• Any environmental changes – new perfume, new pet, someone moved out or in, different air freshener, new home, different water source, etc.

• Did you go somewhere new or different

• If recently stayed somewhere else, find out what your dog ate, played with, slept on, etc.

It may seem silly, but any one of these things could cause an allergic reaction with your dog. Finding out what is different will help you and your vet decide on the best treatment and future prevention.

Some veterinary practices are now treating allergies in pets. Some options are steroids, antihistamines and even immunotherapy shots. Although it can be expensive, it may be worth checking into for your pet’s well-being and quality of life.

HOME CARE

Just like you, your bulldog can be allergic to allergens that are lurking in your home environment. Dust mites are harmless little creatures that live in mattresses, pillows, carpets and upholstered furniture. They especially thrive in humid environments such as the dog bed. Although harmless, they produce a lot of ‘waste’ that gets into the air. And they reproduce like crazy, a new generation every three weeks.

Here are some tips if your Bulldog is showing signs of atopy:
• Benadryl is a good anti-histamine to help relieve symptoms. Buy the pink box and child dose and give 1mg per pound of body weight

• Add Omega 3 fatty acids to your dog’s diet (Nordic Naturals is good)

• Calendula (often with aloe) ointment can be applied to itchy areas

• An oatmeal bath can help soothe itchy skin. Many brands are available at your local pet store.

• Be sure to regularly wash your dog’s bed, and use a room air filter to help reduce dust.

• They can also be allergic to carpet shampoo, pollens in the spring, grasses, and many other allergens.

VETERINARY CARE

Your veterinarian can test for allergies in a variety of different ways. Blood tests can be used to determine the level of histamines in the dog's system and skin "scratch" tests can be used to provide quick answers. Less invasive diagnostic tests involve changing your dog's diet, habits, or environment.

• You can order a RAST testing or IGe allergy testing if you want to find out specific allergens, but these tests can be expensive.

Treatment for skin allergies will vary depending on the allergen. In some cases, your vet may prescribe vitamins to help boost your dog's immune
system. With Atopy, this may be treatable with immunizations, especially in cases of pollen allergies where it is difficult to remove the allergen from the dog’s environment.

Antihistamines and anti-itching shampoos may also be prescribed to help alleviate irritation and self-harming (biting, scratching, etc.).

**Food Allergies**

Although rare, some dogs do suffer true food allergies. Although rare, some dogs do suffer true food allergies. This should be considered when other allergens have been ruled out. The symptoms of food allergies include:

- Skin lesions (small sores)
- Severe itching and scratching
- Hair loss
- Diarrhea, sometimes bloody
- Vomiting
- Colic and gastrointestinal distress
- Seizures (rare and may be from other causes)
If you suspect food allergies, here are the top food allergens:

- Beef
- Soy
- Chicken
- Fish
- Dairy
- Wheat
- Corn
- Eggs

Try switching your bulldog to a limited ingredients diet to test your theory. In the included bonus book “Healing Your Dog With Food” I go into detail about how to test for a food allergy. If it is a food allergy, switching foods to a new protein source your Bulldog has not had can show improvement very quickly.

**Toxic Substances**

All dogs explore their world with their mouths. They often chew on things that are not good for them, especially if they are young.
Pesticides on plants or fertilizer on your lawn can cause an allergic reaction in your bulldog. Even if he didn’t eat it, he could have walked in something and then licked his paws and gotten the toxic substance in his mouth.

Typical allergic symptoms from exposure to toxic substances are:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Mouth sores
- Skin rash, hives or sores
- Puffy face or throat

Removal of the offending toxins will usually resolve the issue. If your dog is showing signs of severe toxicity you need to get to a vet immediately.

**Air-born Contaminates**

Just like humans, an English Bulldog can be allergic to particles floating in the air. And just like humans, these contaminants can cause problems with their eyes, nose and breathing.

There are a number of products available which target specific allergy symptoms whether nasal, respiratory or the eyes. I would have your English Bulldog examined by a Vet to determine the problem is related to allergies or
sinus and then ask for medication recommendations including dosage and usage.

Nasal allergies can also affect the eyes and ears due to their proximity to the nose. Be sure your Veterinarian examines these areas as well.

As for pollen in the air – try limiting the length of time outdoors, use an air purifier inside and change air filters often.

Typical allergic symptoms from the air:

- Runny nose or stuffy nose
- Coughing, wheezing, choking
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Straining to breathe
- Watery eyes
- Scratching – anywhere

Skin irritants

Simple rule of thumb: if it isn’t hypoallergenic or free of irritants, chances are it will cause an allergic reaction. English Bulldogs have very sensitive
skin and you should use products which are allergen-free in order to help prevent any skin rashes.

Bathe your Bulldog using shampoos specifically for sensitive skin. Wash their bed linens with dye-free detergent and do not use a fabric softener unless it too is dye and perfume free.

Also be conscience of what you use on your hands, arms and face as things like body lotion, cosmetics and perfume could irritate as well.

Be mindful of what you use to clean the floors with as well as the dog dishes. It is possible for your dog to be allergic to carpet freshener, floor cleaner, carpet cleaner and even dishwashing soap or detergent.

Typical allergic symptoms for skin irritants:

- Redness
- Scratching
- Itching
- Chafing
- Bumps
- Sores
• Flaking

• Hair loss

The possibilities of what is causing an irritation or reaction are endless but every conceivable factor must be considered when trying to determine what is causing your English Bulldog’s symptoms. Then you can effectively treat the problem and take the appropriate steps to prevent future occurrences.

**QUICK TIP**

Symptoms for many different allergic reactions are similar and it can be difficult to figure out which one your Bulldog is having. Remember the skin is an organ and it is used to expel toxins.

Pay attention to your dog’s habits: what they ‘get into’, eat, where they play, what they’re attracted to. In other words get to know your dog, each one is different and the more you get to know them the easier identifying allergic reactions become.

**OPPORTUNISTS - YEAST & BACTERIA**

The opportunists take advantage of an ongoing situation that has caused your Bulldog’s immunity to be compromised such as exposure to parasites or
allergens, but it can also be triggered by hormonal disorders. The Bulldog wrinkles can also offer opportunities to yeast and bacteria.

**Yeast Infection**

Yeast infections are very common in Bulldogs. Yeast is really a fungus that proliferates in dark moist areas. It is critical that you keep your Bully’s fold areas moisture free.

Yeast is most commonly found in the “wrinkles”, the face folds, the nose fold and in the tail pocket. It is also very common in the ears.

Caring for your English Bulldog's wrinkles is very important. If you allow the insides of your dog's wrinkles to become dirty or to retain moisture, then you are opening the door for infections and rashes.

Thus, while having wrinkles on the face is normal for bulldogs, improper care of these wrinkles can lead to many of the conditions described below.

The most common type of yeast infection seen on English Bulldogs is called Malassezia, although Candida may also be present. Yeasts are single cell organisms that dwell ubiquitously in our environment and usually remain harmless. They survive on a diet of sugars and fats. When they proliferate they release toxins which your Bulldog expels through the skin.

In most cases, this yeast does not cause problems for the dog. However, if the dog develops an allergy to the yeast, has an overabundance of yeast, or has an underlying skin condition, a yeast infection may develop. Yeast
infections may occur in the facial wrinkles, around the feet, and/or in the ear canal.

The symptoms of yeast infections may include:

- Skin appears greasy and exudes a foul smell
- Skin may appear reddened
- Flaking skin
- Brown waxy discharge in the ears

While these are the most common symptoms, dogs with a skin yeast infection may not have one or two of these symptoms. In addition, the symptoms of infection may be very well hidden; for example, the affected skin could be deep between the pads of the feet. This can make diagnosis very difficult.

Yeast infections can be systemic, meaning they get into the body and can spread throughout your dog’s organs. A dog with a severe yeast infection can have skin that appears black and greasy. This is a sad sight but can often be cured with proper diet.
PREVENTION

Yeast proliferation can best be prevented by feeding your Bulldog a healthy diet free of wheat, corn, brewers yeast, chemicals and additives. Your purchase of the Bulldog Health System includes my list of good food brands and supplements.

Keep your Bulldog’s folds, ears, and tail pocket free of moisture. This means be particularly careful when bathing him. Don’t let water get in these dark tight places. If it does, dry them out thoroughly.

HOME CARE

It’s important to start treating yeast infections as soon as they are detected so they do not become systemic and create misery for your Bulldog.
Once yeast gets started it grows pretty fast. The very best treatment I have found is the following:

- Clean your Bulldog’s nose folds three times a day with a cotton pad soaked in Witch Hazel. Witch Hazel is a drying astringent that does not cause pain like alcohol based pads.

- If there is brownish stuff in the folds that's pretty stinky then put a little vinegar mixed 50-50 with water on a cotton pad and moisten the area.

- If it persists get some anti-fungal cream available at a drug store, like foot fungus cream or miconazole cream (Monistat is one brand). Put a little on a q-tip and coat the nose fold. You can add this after you clean the wrinkles.

- Add 1 Tablespoon of apple cider vinegar in your dog’s water bowl each time you fill it up. I use raw unfiltered Bragg's brand - the raw tastes better. This will change the ph balance in your dog’s body and helps to suppress yeast proliferation.

- Vinegar is a natural anti-fungal and you can use it directly on yeasty spots. Mix 50:50 with water.

- If your Bulldog’s yeast has caused redness and a raw area and you think it may have a bacterial infection you can add some Bacitracin or Polysporin anti-bacterial ointment to the affected areas. Better yet, if your vet has ever prescribed Panalog, a combo of anti-fungal and anti-biotic with some cortisone that does a triple whammy on the affected skin.
**Tail Pocket cleaning:** Your Bulldog’s tail is very short because part of it dwells inside his body. The deep pocket that covers this “screw tail” can be an ideal breeding ground for yeast especially if it gets any moisture in it.

If you suspect a yeast infection in your Bully’s tail pocket I learned a great way to clean it from a breeder:

1. Clean it daily with Witch Hazel on a cotton pad, then thoroughly dry the same area.

2. Get "Gold Bond" ointment in the squeeze tube and apply a small amount using your finger. Work your finger round and round following the path of the tail until you get into the recess of the tail.

This will cause a little reaction from your bullie due to the slight stinging sensation but will dissipate within a few minutes. This procedure keeps the bacteria, yeast, and infection under control.

Once you get the Bully use to this cleaning procedure they won't fight you as much as at the beginning. After a period of time you can change your cleaning to every other day. Just stay on top of the cleaning and treatment.

It is critical to stay on top of this "screw tail" situation and if you do it is very manageable and becomes routine after a period of time.

It’s important to note that some Bulldogs have very tight tails that can become chronically infected. Often this is due to the tail bone rubbing against the inside of the tail skin to the point where it becomes infected.
This is a serious condition that is not simple yeast. And it may require the amputation of your Bully’s tail to keep him healthy.

**Ear cleaning** can easily be done at home. If you see your dog shaking his head or scratching his ears a lot, then take a look inside the ear. If you see brown pasty waxy substance then he needs an ear cleaning.

Brown in a dog’s ear does not necessarily mean yeast infection. It can just be ear wax. If it smells it’s probably yeast.

Cleaning is easily done with an over-the-counter ear cleaner like Oti-Clense. You pour a little in the ear and then clean with a cotton ball or Q-tip. When using a Q-tip be very careful not to put it into your dog’s ear canal as you could cause damage to the ear drum. I like to warm up the ear solution by putting the bottle in the microwave for a few seconds (not too hot - test it on your wrist) so it’s not such a shock to my dog’s ears.

Here are some additional “home cures” for ear infections:

- **Ear Flush**
  
  16 drops of Gentian Violet 1% solution 9% alcohol
  4 tsps. of boric acid
  1 bottle of 70% rubbing alcohol
  I mix it in a Lady Clairol hair coloring bottle (I usually only make half a recipe)

  Shake it well and fill an ear canal massage it for 60 seconds and then let the baby shake it out, clean the ear with cotton and depending how
often you use it you may have to do it twice...then do the other ear. Warning! do it out side or have towel ready as it can stain a light purple...

Gentian Violet is an old remedy used for moist infections and can be found at any drug store.

- 50-50% vinegar solution

White vinegar (acetic acid) is very effective at removing debris from the ears and killing the yeast and bacteria responsible for ear infections. Dilute the vinegar with water 50:50, pick up a syringe from your local pharmacy and put 5ml of the vinegar solution per 20lbs of body weight into the affected ear. If you don't have a syringe, just pour some in the ear.

Grab the ear where it attaches to the head (at the ear base), gently squeeze your thumb and forefinger together, rubbing the solution deep into the ear canals. Wipe the inside of the ear well with cotton balls to remove debris coming from the ear canal. Continue to do this daily for 5-7 days.

For dogs with recurring infections, this can be done weekly.

Other traditional remedies include:

- Panalog and Tresaderm are prescription medications for bacterial, fungal or inflammatory infections in the ears.
• Otomax is one of the best ear preparations for yeast and bacterial infections.

**QUICK TIP**

The best way I’ve found to clear up a yeast infection FAST is to add 1 Tablespoon of apple cider vinegar to your Bulldog’s water bowl each time you fill it up. I use raw unfiltered Bragg’s brand - the raw tastes better. This will help change the ph balance in his body and helps to suppress yeast proliferation.

**VETERINARY CARE**

If you take your Bulldog to your vet when he has a yeast infection your vet will do a test to see what kind of infection your dog has.

Yeast fungal infections such as Malassezia or Candida are diagnosed by pressing a piece of clear adhesive tape against the affected skin, staining the sample, and then examining it under a microscope.

Prescribed treatment may include shampoos like Chlorhexiderm or Malaseb, creams, and pet "dips". The basic goal of all of these treatments is to remove the grease from the affected skin, thereby making it less hospitable to the yeast. If the yeast infection persists, or comes back repeatedly, your veterinarian may prescribe an oral anti-fungal medication.
However, these medications sometimes have serious side effects. Therefore, they should be avoided in all but the most severe cases. Oral antibiotics may also be prescribed to treat secondary infections resulting from the yeast infections.

Since yeast infections sometimes occur because of a food allergy, your vet may recommend a special diet for a few weeks to rule out food as a cause. Atopy may also cause a yeast infection, so the vet may use skin test or blood test to rule out inhaled allergens.

He may prescribe antibiotics but my opinion is that they just increase yeast proliferation by killing all the friendly bacteria in your dog’s system and thereby allowing the yeast to multiply.

**Hot Spots or Acute Moist Pyoderma**

Hot spots are the common name for Acute Moist Dermatitis or Pyoderma. Pyoderma, which means “pus in the skin”, is a bacterial skin infection that can appear suddenly and can spread rapidly.

They are classified as either primary or secondary depending upon the depth of infection. They can be either superficial or deep. Superficial Pyoderimas react well to topical anti-bacterial treatments. Deep pyoderimas have gone far into the skin and can become difficult systemic infections.

The most common underlying triggers of superficial pyoderma include fleas, flea allergy dermatitis, atopy, food allergy, a hormonal disorder (such as hypothyroidism or hyperadrenocorticism i.e. Cushing’s Disease), and poor grooming. They occur more commonly in humid environments.
Pyoderma is caused by bacteria that forms a colony on the skin and create infections. The most common form of bacteria is called Staphylococcus Intermedius or staph. Strep is also common.

Staphylococcus Intermedius is found even on healthy dog's skin, but in a pyoderma situation, these bacteria start to cause symptoms. A superficial pyoderma may be identified by:

- Excessive itching
- Scaling often pierced by hairs
- Red, raised skin
- Hair loss
- Scabs, pimples, or lesions
- A foul odor from the skin

Surface pyoderma involves only the outermost layer of skin, which is generally considered the least serious for of pyoderma. Superficial pyoderma sees bacteria colonize the skin more deeply, often to the level of the hair follicles. Finally, superficial pyoderma may lead to the following additional symptoms:

- Yellow spots
- Larger wheals and scabs
Deep pyoderma occurs when the bacterial infection sinks deep into the skin. Additionally, deep pyoderma may cause more serious health problems for your English Bulldog producing any of the following additional symptoms:

- Abscesses
- Oozing sores of blood and pus
- Inflamed, oozing channels on the surface of the skin
- pain
- crusting
- odor

Pyoderma can be caused by many different factors, including Atopy, food allergies, injuries to the skin, fleas and other parasites, and poor grooming practices. Pyoderma can also occur on any part of an English Bulldog's body but the areas of particular susceptibility include the feet, the facial wrinkles, and the back.

Chronic Deep Pyoderma is considered a secondary infection, because the underlying cause of pyoderma is usually some other medical condition such as a hormonal disorder.

Pyodermas can often combine with yeast infections for a double whammy on your bulldog.
HOME CARE

You can treat a superficial hot spot or pyoderma if you catch it quickly. Pay attention to any little pimple type sores and treat them by cleaning the area with soap and water and then applying anti-bacterial cream.

Here are some options for treatment:

- Application of topical ointments such as Bacitracin or Polysporin. If you have any Panalog (Animax) or Bactoderm prescribed by your vet it works really well to fight bacteria, fungus, and itching.

- Gold Bond powder can help with hot spot

- Calendula ointment is great for hot spots and general skin irritations

- Shaving affected skin areas to allow added air flow to skin irritations

- Bathing your English Bulldog in medicated soaps such as Chlorhexamine to treat skin staph and fungal infections – be sure to read precautions on label

Bacterial infections can cause itching and you don’t want your Bulldog to scratch infected areas as it could lead to more infection. For itchiness you can consider the following:

- Benadryl is an anti-histamine and works well for general itchiness. Be sure to give a children’s dose and preferably buy the dye-free (pink
box). There are liquid forms; however some may contain the artificial sweetener xylitol which is extremely toxic to dogs.

- Keeping you English Bulldog from scratching, biting or licking affected areas, either by diverting your animals attention or through the use of an Elizabethan or "spaceman" collar

For relief of general itchiness, some herbs may be helpful. Use commercial tinctures and follow directions on the bottle. Use for one week to see if it’s effective. Stop treatment if the condition worsens.

- German chamomile flower
- Burdock root
- Curled dock root
- Liquorice root
- Southernwood

To soothe itchy skin, try calendula cream. Apply to a rash and gently rub into the skin.

QUICK TIP
- When dealing with a bacterial infection it is always best to treat immediately and aggressively. When you see a small pustule or red papule immediately wash with soap and water. Then dry thoroughly and apply anti-bacterial ointment (Bacitracin, Polysporin, Panalog). Then clean with witch hazel and reapply ointment at least twice daily.
VETERINARY CARE

Should your Bulldog have a deep pyoderma or is covered with small papules that are not responding to your home care techniques, you may need to take her to a veterinarian, preferably a dermatologist.

What your vet will do is skin scrapings to confirm the diagnosis. If he suspects an underlying condition related to hormone he may order some blood work analysis.

He will then prescribe medications to treat the infection which may be any of the following:

- Antibiotics Clavamox, Amoxi, and Batyril are typically prescribed for sub-dermal infections
- Panalog or Animax is prescribed for topical infection. This powerful medication contains antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, anti-itch and antifungal agents

The use of antibiotics should always be accompanied with probiotics added to your Bulldog’s food. These promote the beneficial bacteria that is also destroyed by the antibiotics. See my supplements bonus book for recommendations.
While the majority of English Bulldogs live happy and healthy lives, the breed is susceptible to two major joint problems - luxating patella (floating kneecap) and hip dysplasia. Again, these conditions are caused by bulldog breeding and can lead to arthritis and other more severe problems.

All Bulldogs have hip dysplasia to some degree which is what causes that charming rolling gait that characterizes the Bulldog: loose hips cause the swagger. In most Bulldogs this is never a problem. In fact some Bulldogs actually have very loose ball joint sockets but never have any problems.

These conditions can often require expensive surgery to correct, and can have a serious effect on your dog's quality of life. Both of these diseases are considered inherited conditions so you should check carefully with your breeder to see if either the sire or dame has a family history of one or both diseases. Whether they say so or not, they are most likely evident to at least a lesser degree.

LUXATING PATELLA - FLOATING KNEECAP

Luxating patella is a condition that occurs when your dog's kneecap slips out of place. The patella is meant to rest in the center of the dog's knee joint, within the patella ridges (see diagram below).

The most common form of luxating patella found in
English Bulldogs is medial luxation. There are four different grades of medial luxation, and these are determined by the severity of the luxation.

1. Grade One - The patella pops in and out of position on its own. Your dog may even develop the ability to "shake a leg" to pop its own leg in and out.

2. Grade Two – The patella pops out of position and has to be returned to its position with manual pressure

3. Grade Three - A luxation is described as grade three when the patella is permanently out of position, but can be put back into position (albeit briefly) when your dog's leg is straight

4. Grade Four - The most serious form of luxation is when the patella cannot be pushed back into place

Luxation of the patella can occur in dogs of any age. There have been several cases of congenital patella luxation, but just as many cases develop in older dogs. Many symptoms can be an indicator of a luxating patella, some of which include:

Your dog may cry out in pain although bulldogs tend to be very stoic and not likely to yelp

Holding up the leg to relieve the pain

Dog may try to straighten its leg out to try and pop the leg into position
A bowlegged stance (usually only seen in younger animals, this stance puts extra pressure on the patellar ligament)

Whether your dog develops a luxating patella early on or later in life, the condition is considered as inherited (unless it is shown that the patella has been knocked out of place by an injury).

English Bulldogs with luxating patella can live an active life, although it is recommended that they not be bred.

**HIP DYSPLASIA**

As mentioned previously all Bulldogs have hip dysplasia to a degree. Hip dysplasia is a disease that affects the development of the hip joint or joints in a young English Bulldog. A healthy hip joint consists of a ball and socket, which is the head of the femur and the acetabulum. These two bones are attached to one another with a ligament and by a thick band of connective tissue called the joint capsule.
Normally, the ball and socket fit together, being cushioned by a spongy layer of cartridge to keep the bones from grating against one another.

However, when there is a weakness in the dog's muscles, cartilage, connective tissue, or ligaments surrounding the hip joint, this is hip dysplasia.

Puppies that develop hip dysplasia actually begin life with healthy looking ball and sockets. However, as the puppy grows, the increased weight and activity levels, along with the weakness of the joint, cause the ball to begin to separate from the socket. When this happens, the tendons and connective tissue is stretched, causing the bones to grate against one another.

This grating will cause new bone to grow, gradually replacing the original socket with a new shallower one. Because this is not the way that the joint is supposed to work, the new arrangement tends to cause the dog inordinate amounts of pain. Dogs with hip dysplasia also commonly develop painful arthritis later in life. Puppies usually begin to display symptoms associated with hip dysplasia between five and thirteen months of age.

That said, many Bulldog puppies can experience strong growth spurts that cause stress on the hip joint and some discomfort that disappears when the joint growth catches up to the leg growth.
The symptoms may include some or all of the following:

- Your dog may refuse or be reluctant to climb stairs or jump obstacles
- Your dog may display signs of obvious pain or discomfort
- Small fractures may develop in the hip bone or ball

Hip dysplasia is definitely hereditary, and animals with severe hip dysplasia should never be bred, although they can live a full and mostly pain-free life! Your vet can certify your English Bulldog as being free of hip dysplasia with an x-ray when the animal is more than 24 months old.

![x-ray of dog with hip dysplasia - notice loose joint sockets](image)

**HOME CARE**

First, it is important to understand that you cannot prevent your English Bulldog from developing either a luxating patella or hip dysplasia. However,
early detection can help you design activities to limit the amount of damage caused by these conditions.

Do not let your Bulldog jump down from furniture, the car, the bed, etc because the jumping down is particularly hard on joints.

One of the primary side effects you will need to worry about with either of these conditions is muscle mass degradation. To fight this loss of muscle, you should maintain an exercise regimen for your English Bulldog. At the same time, however, you need to avoid high impact exercises that will cause bones to grate against one another.

To develop the best plan of exercise regimen for your dog, you should work closely with an orthopedic veterinarian. Then, canine physical therapists may also be available in your area, which are professionals that can help your puppy maintain its muscle mass.

Controlling your English Bulldog's weight is essential to minimizing the stress on the knee and hip joints. This is especially true when you start restricting the animal's activity in that English Bulldogs may tend to pack on the pounds if they are not exercising regularly.

There are a number of ways you can help your English Bulldog recover from surgery to correct either of these problems. These include manual manipulation of joints to promote muscular activity, as well as ensuring that your English Bulldog does not "over-do" it following surgery.

Additionally, you may need to treat symptoms of arthritis, whether or not your dog has surgery, with anti-inflammatory or homeopathic remedies.
NSAIDs (non steroidal anti inflammatory drugs) are often prescribed for inflammation. But a word of caution is in order. Some of them, including the popular Rimadyl have been shown to cause severe stomach reactions in dogs that can result in death.

The importance of diet and exercise in treating arthritis cannot be stressed enough. An anti inflammatory diet (no wheat, yeast, corn) and regular exercise to strengthen the support muscles is a must!

Again, working closely with your veterinarian is your best course of action.

**VETERINARY TREATMENT**

**Luxating Patella**

A luxating patella can be corrected with a variety of surgeries. The goal of each of these surgeries is to stabilize the knee joint. In many cases, the patellar groove is deepened to make it harder for the patella to slip out of position.

Surgical options are always being refined. Here is a current list from website dogkneeinjury.com:

- Traditional Repair or Extracapsular Imbrication Technique – A leader line is woven in a figure-eight pattern through the joint beginning at the outer aspect of the femur to the tibial crest. The heavy suture will eventually be replaced by scar tissue providing support for the joint.
• Tibial Plateau Leveling Osteotomy or TPLO - The head of the tibia is surgically altered and plated to create a new joint angle and prevent the femur from sliding off of the tibia. This procedure is an invasive one and involves cutting and plating of bone; it is associated with a higher rate of complications than the other surgical options.

• Tibial Tuberosity Advancement or TTA - This is very similar to TPLO, yet considered to be less invasive, and involves stabilization of the stifle joint by cutting the bone and changing the angles of the knee.

• Fibular Head Transposition – The head of the fibula is rotated and the lateral collateral ligament is moved in such a way that it mimics the cruciate ligament. The new positioning of the fibula is held in place using pins and wires. This procedure is not done very often and you may have a hard time finding a veterinarian that will actually perform it.

• Tightrope Repair – An extracapsular technique using the lateral suture stabilization (LSS) procedure in conjunction with a material called FiberTape to provide bone to bone stabilization. Similar to traditional repair, the joint will form scar tissue, but the Fibertape will also provide support for a greater length of time.

• Triple Tibial Osteotomy or TTO – The idea behind the TTO is to combine aspects of the TPLO and TTA to create a new angle within the injured knee joint. During a TTO CCL surgery a veterinarian will make three cuts (where the “triple” comes from) into the dog’s tibia. These three cuts into the tibia bone will allow the surgeon to then rotate the tibial plateau slightly (as they do in a TPLO), while moving the tibial tuberosity forward slightly (as is done in a TTA).
Hip Dysplasia

Hip dysplasia can also be corrected (or at least relieved) with surgery. Surgery should only be performed if absolutely necessary. It’s advisable to get more than one orthopedic veterinarian opinion. Surgery and recovery are hard on a Bulldog and quality of life is always the most important consideration.

For this problem, four currently available surgeries can be performed depending on the severity of the injury. This surgical information comes from website peteducation.com

1. Triple Pelvic Osteotomy (TPO): TPO is a procedure used in young dogs usually less than 10 months of age that have radiographs that show severe hip laxity, but have not developed damage to the joints. The procedure involves surgically breaking the pelvic bones and realigning the femoral head and acetabulum restoring the weight-bearing surface area and correcting femoral head subluxation. This is a major surgery and is expensive, but the surgery has been very successful on animals that meet the requirements.

2. Juvenile Pubic Symphysiodesis: A less invasive surgery for treating hip dysplasia is called Juvenile Pubic Symphysiodesis. This surgery prematurely fuses two pelvic bones together, allowing the other pelvic bones to develop normally. This changes the angle of the hips and improves the articulation of this joint, lessening the likelihood of osteoarthritis. Early diagnosis is critical, since the procedure must be done before 20 weeks of age, preferably 16 weeks, and before any signs
of arthritis are evident.

3. Total Hip Replacement: This may be the best surgical option for dogs that have degenerative joint disease as a result of chronic hip dysplasia. Total hip replacement is a procedure that can produce a functionally normal joint, eliminate degenerative changes, and alleviate joint pain. The procedure involves the removal of the existing joint and replacing it with an artificial joint or prosthesis. To be a candidate for this procedure, the animal must be skeletally mature. With the new micro-prosthetics there is no minimum size limit. In addition, there is no maximum size limit. If both hips need to be replaced, there is a three-month period of rest recommended between the surgeries. As with the TPO surgery, this is an expensive procedure but it produces very good results. Most dogs return to a near normal level of activity without pain.

4. Femoral Head and Neck Excision: Femoral head and neck excision is a procedure in which the head of the femur is surgically removed and a fibrous pseudo-joint replaces the hip. This procedure is considered a salvage procedure and is used in cases where degenerative joint disease has occurred and total hip replacement is not feasible or if the expense of a total hip replacement is prohibitive. The resulting pseudo-joint will, in most cases, be free from pain and allow the animal to increase his activity, however, full range of motion and joint stability are decreased. For best results, the patient should weigh less than 40 pounds; however, the procedure may be performed on larger dogs.
A Word of Caution!

Because the bulldog has a compromised respiratory system, surgery should always be considered as a last resort. The anesthesia is very hard on the bulldog and can be life threatening if not administered and monitored properly.
Other Bulldog Issues

There are some other conditions that are known to affect Bulldogs, perhaps not as commonly, but are worth mentioning.

INTERDIGITAL CYSTS

Sometimes a bulldog will get an inflammation of the skin between the toes, called an interdigital cyst or Interdigital Furuncle. These are thought to be bacterial infections caused by ingrown hairs. The Bulldog has short bristly hairs located in the webbing between the toes and walking can force them inward, causing bacterial infection.

Another less common theory is they are caused by a fungus.

Many vets recommend surgical removal, but this is not always effective and it can become quite costly if the cyst returns because not all of the stalk has been removed. Most of these cysts will clear up on their own but there are some home treatments you can use.

The best home treatment is to soak the paw in Epsom Salts mixed in warm water. This will help to soften the cyst so it can start to drain. It also will keep it clean. When done cleaning, look at the underside of the paw and if you see a little black hair poking out of the cyst, this could be an ingrown hair. Pluck it out with tweezers.
If you don’t see a hair, do not pick at or lance the cyst as your dog might get an infection. Keep an eye on the cyst and if it looks like an infection is starting, apply an antibiotic cream such as Bacitracin or triple antibiotic or Panalog.

If soaking the cyst for a few days does not clear it up or if it worsens or looks infected, a trip to the vet is recommended.

Other home treatments are the following:

- Nolvasan Surgical Scrub solution; 5% Surgical Scrub, 95% water, applied with a spray bottle and massaged onto the affected area twice daily. Nolvasan Surgical Scrub is a bit pricey, perhaps $55.00/Gallon, but it's also very effective for hot spots and simple skin problems. It's an anti-bacterial agent and an effective fungicide.

- 50% rubbing alcohol, 50% water. Boil the water and add 2 heaping tablespoons of salt till it dissolves. Let is cool a bit then mix with the alcohol put in a sprayer bottle and spray several times a day. It dries up the moisture and the cyst.

Three times per day soak the foot in Epsom salts. Fill the laundry tub up with 2 to 3 inches of fairly warm water with a cup of Epsom Salts. Stand your Bully in the warm water for 10 minutes. Gently dry with a thick towel. Then fill a large, wide coffee cup with about an inch of hydrogen peroxide, and hold his foot in the cup for a few moments. Again pat dry. Then apply either Panalog ointment, or Anusol hemorrhoid ointment.
PROLAPSED URETHRA IN MALES

This is an odd condition but happens with frequency in male bulldogs when they are about a year old. The dog gets ‘excited’ and blood gushes from his penis. Or you may just notice your dog in a pool of blood but otherwise fine. It is thought this happens due to an stretched blood vessel that develops a small tear and bleeds out the penis area. It can happen once or several times. In severe cases, the bulldog can become anemic.

Vets used to 'amputate" the end of the penis to fix this problem, but there is a new and very easy, non-invasive procedure now that does not mutilate the dog, but tacks the urethra back into the penis. It's called a Urethropexy, and it only takes about 15 minutes to perform.

BUTT SCOOTING

If your Bulldog starts dragging his behind across the rug or sits and rocks or twirls, and then turns around to smell the area, it usually indicates one of two things: anal glands that need to be “expressed” or and infected tail pocket.

He scoots because the rear end itches and a carpet has a nice rough edge to it so it feels good. And he’ll turn around and smell it because he just likes dog smells.

Unfortunately the scooting only temporarily relieves the situation. If your Bulldog continues to scoot he is probably very uncomfortable.
Your vet can check to see if the anal glands are impacted and need to be cleaned out. This is a very stinky procedure and best done by a vet.

The second possibility is an infected tail pocket. Tight screw tails can get dirt and yeast in the pocket. It can get infected easily, especially if some moisture has gotten in. Use the method I describe in the Yeast section to clean the area.

All English Bulldogs have part of their tail still inside the body as an extension of the tail bone. Some have straight tails and some have screw tails. An inverted tail is a condition where part of a screw tail makes a loop inside the body and then comes out.

Sometimes the skin is so tight that when it rubs together part of the bone inside the dog starts to rub through. This can lead to serious infection.

If you are unable to keep the area clean or the infection recurs or does not respond you may need to consider tail amputation. Chronic infection can lead to other disease since it constantly depresses your dog’s immune system.

**HEAD BOBBING OR NODDING**

If you see your Bulldog nodding or bobbing her head, it could have a simple cure.

Sometimes during a growth spurt (which happens in a bulldog at 18 months)
the dog experiences low calcium and glucose at times which can lead to some tremors that look like nodding.

If you suspect your dog has low blood sugar, there's an easy way to find out. Give him a little yogurt or Karo syrup or even ice cream and he should stop nodding within a few minutes if this is the case.

If this works then you know what to do the next time it happens. This should just be a phase he's going through and he should outgrow it.

If it doesn't work and/or if you are still concerned you should take him to your vet for a full blood count to rule out other causes.

See the article on seizures later in this chapter for more detailed information.

SEIZURES

How to recognize a seizure. English Bulldogs may become anxious just before a seizure. They may hide from you, but they may also be "in your face" seeking attention. Total or "tonic clonic" seizures in English Bulldogs usually affect the whole body and may result in loss of consciousness.

A seizure is like a "short circuit" in your English Bulldog's brain, which causes all of your dog's muscles to activate at once. Signs of a seizure typically include stiffening of the muscles, rapid jaw chomping, and salivation, inability to control urination or defecation, and a rapid thrashing of all four legs.
Some dogs will have milder generalized seizures than other seizures, which may not result in a loss of consciousness, but will typically involve uncontrollable trembling and muscle rigidity. Following a seizure, your dog will likely be confused and may even seem to be blind.

If your bulldog loses consciousness and stops breathing during a seizure, administer CPR.

If your dog has experienced a seizure, it is a good idea to see your veterinarian as soon as possible, especially if the seizure is associated with symptoms of heat stroke.

Seizures can also be caused by some surprising substances that your dog may have ingested in the house or yard. Some plants known to be toxic to dogs are Fichus, Philodendron, English Ivy, Jasmine, Mistletoe, and some ferns.

There is another condition called “head tremors” or “head bobbing” that often occurs with bulldogs. The following article provides a lot of useful information on seizures.

**Partial/Focal Seizures, Paroxysmal Dyskinesia, Head Tremors In the Bulldog**

By Kathy Jacobsen

Bulldogs World
The topic of this article, very simply put is: head tremors, fly biting and circling behaviors in our beloved Bullies. Looking at the title, however, it becomes painfully apparent that these neurologic anomalies that we are seeing in the bulldog today fall into the “grey” area of veterinary and human neurologic disorders.

What qualifies me to discuss such a topic, you might ask? My answer to you would be good old experience. I have been in bulldogs for close to 16+ years, had 7 litters and of those 7 litters have had 5 dogs/bitches who have exhibited 1 or more of these behaviors.

I plan on reviewing the scientific findings from articles I have pulled from the internet and then share my experience, including what I did to minimize the behaviors along with how well it worked on each dog.

Let's start with some general definitions taken directly from the literature:

1. **Epilepsy**: a chronic condition characterized by recurrent seizures. It is a disorder of the brain where abnormal electrical activity triggers further uncoordinated nerve transmission. This uncoordinated and haphazard nerve tissue activity scrambles messages to the muscles or your dog’s body and the coordinated use of muscles is then inhibited.” The characteristic seizure activity seen in epilepsy are classed as

2. **Seizures**: involuntary contraction of muscles, caused by an electrical storm in the brain that can be everywhere at once and can be seen on EEG. Partial seizure where the abnormal electrical impulses begin in a small area of the brain and may or may not migrate to other areas of the brain.
1. **Focal/Partial seizures**

   Simple focal seizures (minor motor or focal motor seizures) when consciousness is preserved. The area of the brain that is affected is the area that controls movement. Usually the face is affected, resulting in twitching or blinking. This is usually limited to one side of the face. The dog is usually alert and aware of its surroundings.

   Complex focal seizures when consciousness is altered—ie the pet is staring off into the distance but you cannot gain their attention. This seizure will originate in the area of the brain that controls behavior and is sometimes called a psychomotor seizure. The dog’s consciousness will be altered and he may exhibit bizarre behavior such as unprovoked aggression or extreme irrational fear. He may run uncontrollably, engage in senseless, repetitive behavior or have fly-snapping episodes where he appears to be biting at imaginary flies around his head.

2. **Grand Mal (tonic-clonic) seizures** – which begins with an involuntary contraction of all skeletal muscles and loss of consciousness.

3. **Paroxysmal Dyskinesia** is a movement disorder. There are brief attacks of the symptoms with the dog appearing perfectly normal between the episodes, the same way there are discrete attacks of seizures in epilepsy. Dyskinesia refers to an abnormal, involuntary movement or posture. Movement disorders usually originate from the deeper areas (the basal nuclei) of the brain. These areas are responsible for translating the commands from higher brain areas (e.g. get the ball) into movements (e.g. stand up, begin trotting, etc).
The distinction in the human between seizure activity and dyskinesias is based on looking for abnormal electrical activity on the surface of the brain with an EEG. By definition, seizures have abnormal EEG activity, while paroxysmal dyskinesias do not. People with paroxysmal dyskineasis often experience a decrease in episodes as they age while epileptic people and dogs will worsen with age.

Let's talk now about Head Tremors in the Bulldog.

In my experience, head tremor activity in the Bulldog usually starts around the age of 2 years old. The motion you will see will almost always be a fast side to side rocking motion (ear to shoulder - ear to shoulder) occurring in rapid succession. Occasionally I have seen an up and down motion (like they are shaking their heads to say yes) but for the most part it is the same fast rocking.

The way it was defined to me was that the neuron cluster that controls a certain motor function, in this case head movement, begins to fire continuously. The reason for this rapid fire is truly unknown.

I have not experienced any drooling or other body part involvement. It has always been isolated to the head. When you call the dogs name they can stop the bobbing motion for a few seconds and will look at you, then it will kick in again. They can move their heads and watch you move from place to place, they can even walk around etc.

Scenario I: The bully will be sleeping very soundly and all of a sudden the head will start rocking – usually from side to side very quickly- occasionally you might experience one bobbing up and down. This sudden head motion
will cause the bully to awaken suddenly. An episode will last from 15 to 30 seconds, sometimes longer. It may stop on its own and then as the dog lays down to go back to sleep the head tremor will reoccur.

Scenario II: A bitch will be pre-season or just come into season. Males head is bobbing for all it is worth.

Scenario III: A bitch is post whelp, in the milk let down phase of lactation, and trying to nurse a litter of hungry pups. In this case the bitch has had surgical trauma as the result of a C section, is in pain, is not eating and is trying to make milk. This, in my opinion is different than the head tremors described in Scenario I and II.

When you see this What Do You Do?

The first time we experienced this phenomena was a scenario III post whelp– I panicked. I grabbed the puppies off the bitch and almost caused one to aspirate. When I gained a little composure I called a breeder friend of mine and explained what I was seeing. She told me that it was not uncommon and I should try to get some sugar, honey, Karo syrup into her. The thought is that the blood sugar had experienced a sharp drop at that point in time thus stimulating this type of a response. We gave the girl the Karo and low and behold the tremors stopped within a couple of seconds.

The next time we witnessed this behavior – was a little different. The bitch was not post whelp. However, she was 3 days prior to coming into season. She had been sleeping on the couch. We gave her honey. It stopped. Started up 15 minutes later we repeated the karo. Same result. We gave her frozen yogurt, same result. This went on for almost 24 hours with the
length of time between episodes varying from 10-15 minutes to as long as a half hour.

Needless to say we packed her up and went off to the vet who said: this is not unusual in this breed. Normally we don’t do anything. Epilepsy meds have proven to be ineffective for the most part, phenobarb has too many side effects.

The Veterinarian stated that they suspect it has something to do with the growth activity at this age or stress which can cause a sudden drop in glucose levels in the blood.

There can be different things or circumstances that can trigger an episode. Such as a traumatic experience, and injury, hormones, etc. In this girls case we have determined that it is a hormone trigger, specifically at the time of a progesterone spike associated with ovulation.

The vet recommended Calcium and Taurine supplementation twice daily. As you know calcium is one of the minerals needed for healthy nerve growth and electrical conductivity, Taurine is an amino acid that works with Calcium. The Vet said she may grow out of it.

So, we took that information and we asked for a referral to a neurologist. This specialist did all of the neurological tests and determined she was fine. She ordered ionized calcium levels along with several other specific blood tests. The results all came back normal. She recommended an MRI to determine if there was an injury or tumor.
We declined this step at the time, due to finances but decided if she showed any other neurological symptoms such as falling down or aggression, which could be indicative of an injury or tumor, that we would come back to do the MRI.

Six months went by on the Calcium, Taurine supplementation to which we added a heaping tablespoon of Ricotta cheese every morning and every couple of days a heaping bowl of frozen vanilla yogurt with honey in the evening. No incidents.

The day we bred her – in at the time of the progesterone spike indicating ovulation that we were waiting for– she had one mild episode then nothing for the entire pregnancy. The episodes started up the second week of lactation when the calcium bolus given at the time of the C-section was gone and 6 hungry puppies were pulling on her calcium/glucose levels. Five months have since passed and she has been just fine – no episodes.

My Recommendations if your dog exhibits this head bobbing behavior

1. DON'T PANIC!!! This could only worsen the situation by adding additional stress on the dog.
2. give them a bowl of ice cream or frozen vanilla yogurt with honey to get the situation under control. If you don’t have any of those then Ensure, Pediasure, Karo syrup all work because of the sugar and or calcium content. Liquids work quicker because they are absorbed into the mucosa of the mouth.
3. Call your veterinarian and advise of the situation. Schedule an appointment for a visit and have your vet do a health screening with blood work. Odds are the blood work for calcium and sugar will be fine.
4. Keep a record of each episode, every time one occurs – describe it in great detail, time it occurred – how long, how frequent. Give this info to the vet when you see him.

5. IF they do not get any worse than the head bobs – don’t do anything else but observe and document. If the behavior changes in any way – call the vet, you may need additional assistance at this point.

Two other behaviors I would like to mention briefly are the fly chasing and the circling behaviors. Fly chasing is just that, the dog seems to be chasing and trying to catch imaginary flies. Again, if you call the dog by name he will stop and look at you then resume the behavior.

The other is circling. This looks like VERY slow motion tail chasing. Usually in the same direction each time it happens. IF you call the dog they will stop to acknowledge you then start up again.

In this case, I go over and give my girl a nudge and she stops and resumes whatever she had started to go outside to do. This seems to happen outdoors only, so I sometimes wonder if bright sunlight is the trigger mechanism for her.

In any event, both of these behaviors are neurological events. Basically harmless. Both of these dogs are on the same calcium and taurine supplementation. The supplementation has basically eradicated the fly chasing in the one dog and the episodes of circling are fewer with the other dog.

In closing I would like to say that these behaviors are basically just annoyances to you and the dog. I would never discourage you from having
the dog checked by a Veterinarian. Remember, every dog just like every person is different and they react differently to certain stimuli and medications. I suggest you try this regimen and if the behavior continues see your veterinarian for more extensive testing and follow up.

---end of article

**REVERSE SNEEZING (PHARYNGEAL GAG REFLEX)**

Because of the Bulldog elongated palate they sometimes experience what’s referred to as a reverse sneeze. When my Bulldog does this I just put my hand under his chin, elevate his head, and rub his throat from the chest to the muzzle. This usually stops it.

Here’s an informative article by Becky Lundrum DMV

Reverse sneezing is a disconcerting event in which a dog makes unpleasant respiratory sounds that sound like it is dying -- or will die in the next few minutes. Reverse sneezing sounds similar to the honking noise made by a dog with a collapsing trachea, but reverse sneezing is a far simpler condition that usually does not need any treatment. It is called reverse sneezing because it sounds a bit like a dog inhaling sneezes. The sound the dog makes can be so scary that many owners have rushed in a panic to emergency clinics in the middle of the night.

The most common cause of reverse sneezing is an irritation of the soft palate and throat that results in a spasm. During the spasm, the dog’s neck will extend and the chest will expand as the dog tries harder to inhale. The
problem is that the trachea has narrowed and it’s hard to get the normal amount of air into the lungs.

Anything that irritates the throat can cause this spasm and subsequent sneeze. Causes include excitement, eating or drinking, exercise intolerance, pulling on a leash, mites, pollen, foreign bodies caught in the throat, perfumes, viruses, household chemicals, allergies, and post-nasal drip. If an irritant in the house is the cause, taking the dog outside can help simply because the dog will no longer be inhaling the irritant. Brachycephalic dogs (those with flat faces, such as Pugs and Boxers) with elongated soft palates occasionally suck the elongated palate into the throat while inhaling, causing reverse sneezing. Small dogs are particularly prone to it, possibly because they have smaller throats.

Reverse sneezing itself rarely requires treatment. If the sneezing stops, the spasm is over. Oftentimes, you can massage the dog’s throat to stop the spasm; sometimes it’s effective to cover the nostrils, which makes the dog swallow, which clears out whatever the irritation is and stops the sneezing. If the episode doesn't end quickly, you can try depressing the dog’s tongue, which opens up the mouth and aids in moving air through the nasal passages. Treatment of the underlying cause, if known, is useful. If mites are in the laryngeal area, your veterinarian may use drugs such as ivermectin to get rid of the mites. If allergies are the root of the problem, your veterinarian may prescribe antihistamines. Because reverse sneezing is not a severe problem, do not worry about leaving your dog home alone; if it occurs when you're not there, the episode will most likely end on its own.

If reverse sneezing becomes a chronic problem rather than an occasional occurrence, your veterinarian may need to look up the nasal passages
(rhinoscopy), and may even need to take a biopsy to determine the cause of the problem. Sometimes, however, no cause can be identified.

Some dogs have these episodes their entire lives; some dogs develop the condition only as they age. In most dogs, however, the spasm is a temporary problem that goes away on its own, leaving the dog with no after-effects.

--end of article

To see a video of a reverse sneeze, visit my blog and search for the post on Reverse Sneeze  http://www.askbulldoghealth.com/?p=191

SEASONAL FLANK ALOPECIA - BALD PATCHES

This condition causes hair to fall out on the flanks of your Bulldog. No one is exactly sure why this happens. It is thought to be from lack of sunlight exposure to the pineal gland. The pineal gland is located at the base of the brain and is the gland responsible for telling bears to hibernate.
It is characterized by bald patches that appear symmetrically usually on your Bulldog’s flanks. The exposed skin is often dark.

The “seasonal” aspect occurs more often in northern areas and starts when the days get shorter. In the spring when the days lengthen it disappears.

There is no known cure but some people have reported success with Melatonin (9 mg per day or per your doctor’s orders). It also is a good idea to let your Bulldog lie in the sun during the winter months.

**GENERAL SIGNS OF ILLNESS**

If your bulldog becomes listless and won’t eat for any length of time, you should seek veterinarian advice. As you know, bulldogs love to eat, so when your bully refuses to eat, it is definitely a sign that something’s amiss.

If he does not want to drink water (as well as food) this can be a sign of illness, especially if accompanied by vomiting and diarrhea.

Vomiting and diarrhea are not always life threatening. If your bulldog ate something like cat poop, he will probably vomit and/or get diarrhea. Just feed him a diet of rice cooked in beef or chicken broth for a couple of days and he should revive.

Continuous or bloody vomit and/or diarrhea are a different matter and may be signs of serious illness such as pancreatitis. Your dog will become seriously dehydrated and can die, so seek veterinarian advice immediately.
Another sign that all is not well is when your bulldog tries to lay down, then gets up, paces around and tries to lie down again or attempts to vomit at this time. You know when your bulldog acts normally and when something’s not right. Pay attention, especially to prolonged discomfort.

*Bulldogs Love to Play - if yours is listless there may be a problem*
My Favorite Home Cures

I have a little box of supplies that I carry with me wherever I go with my Bulldog. It’s come in quite handy over the years and its contents can alleviate most everyday Bulldog issues.

It contains the following:

- Cotton pads and Q-tips to help apply liquids and creams
- Witch Hazel - mild astringent good for cleaning wrinkles, tail pocket and any minor scrapes or papules
- Hydrogen Peroxide - for more serious looking scrapes
- Anti-biotic ointment (Bacitracin or Polysporin or similar) - for use on minor cuts or scratches or any red bump that appears
- Anti-fungal cream (Monistat or foot fungus cream) - for use in nose folds when they get yeasty
- Panalog or Animax if I have a prescription for it - the triple whammy fights infection, fungus, and itching
- Ear cleaner (Oti-Clens or similar from the pet store) - for use in case of ear infection
- Toothbrush and doggie toothpaste - weekly or more
• Brush - use weekly to keep coat clean

• L-Glutamine - an amino acid (available in powder form at natural food stores. I use Jarrow brand) that works wonders for diarrhea or mild intestinal problems. Remember if you use human brand products they are designed for a 150 pound human and you must adjust the dosage.

• Flea treatment - since I live in the Rocky Mountains we don’t have a flea problem but I carry a dose of either the regular Frontline type product as well as the “holistic” brands. Sometimes if your Bulldog had an infestation of fleas, only the heavy duty stuff will work.

MOST IMPORTANT PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

This may seem obvious but it’s worth restating. The best way to keep your Bulldog healthy and happy is by following this checklist:

• Feed a healthy diet - see my bonus book “The Miracle of Healing Your Dog With Food”

• Keep nose folds clean and dry - take care of minor skin issues before they become major

• Take care of eye lash issues (vet) to avoid tear stains and loss of eyesight
• Walk daily - it’s good exercise and a great way to bond with your Bulldog

• Avoid over heating - it’s surprising how fast a Bulldog can overheat, even when it’s only 75 outside

• Give lots of love - you’ll sure get it back!
Summary

As you have learned in this book, the English Bulldog is a wonderful pet. They are intelligent, loving, loyal, protective, and funny, and an all-around great animal for adults and children alike.

Just as with any dog, this breed has some specific health issues that need to be addressed. None of these is difficult or overly challenging but they do need to be known. By understanding the various things that your pet could face, you will be able to get him or her, the right type of treatment.

When you provide your English Bulldog with the things it needs to live a healthy life, the result will be a loving pet. If you are considering buying an English Bulldog, you will not be disappointed with this breed.

Using the information provided in this book, you will know exactly what to expect and know how to take care of your pet for each problem. But you must understand that an English Bulldog will most likely require many visits to the vet for these health conditions.

The high price you paid for your wonderful bulldog is just the beginning. And I happen to think it’s been worth every penny. Purchasing dog health insurance is definitely recommended, preferably when they are puppies.

The best way to be an excellent pet owner is by understanding the breed of dog you own. With an English Bulldog, you will have years of enjoyment and comedy. We hope that the in depth research we performed answers all your questions and will help guide you with your new pet!
Thank you for reading and we wish you much success many long wonderful years with your English Bulldog!

Questions and Answers

The Questions and Answers section has been moved online to:

be sure to visit and see what people have been asking about their bulldog’s health!

The Healthy Bulldog Updates and Bonuses

When you purchased this printed copy of The Healthly Bulldog from www.bulldoghealth.com, you automatically became eligible to receive updates to the book as well as all bonus materials.

You will receive a series of emails from me that contain a lot of additional, valuable English Bulldog information not contained in the book and Bonus CD.

Be sure to add jan@bulldoghealth.com to your contacts list so my follow up emails will reach you. If you do not receive my series of emails that includes the downloads page links and other up-to-date information about bulldogs, send me an email.
Please note: all updates will be in digital downloadable form, not printed. You can print most of the material right from your computer by simply opening your email and clicking on the update link, then print the material from your computer desktop.

Don’t forget, since you purchased this book, you can email me with any questions that have not been answered in The Healthy Bulldog. Before you do, be sure to check the Q&A blog where I post answers to many of your questions. You can find the blog at http://www.AskBulldogHealth.com

Contact me at jan@bulldoghealth.com

Jan Oswald
Bulldog Health
5425 E. 3rd Ave
Denver, CO 80220
www.BulldogHealth.com

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - DISCLAIMER: PLEASE READ

The author of this book is not a medical practitioner or veterinarian. The author is a Bulldog enthusiast.

All information provided on or through this book is provided for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for professional veterinary advice, care, diagnosis or treatment, and is not designed to promote any veterinary practice, program or agenda or any medical testes, products or
procedures. This book does not contain information about all diseases, nor does this book contain all information that may be relevant to a particular medical or health condition. You should not use any of this information provided for diagnosing or treating a medical or health condition. If your dog has or you suspect that your dog has a medical problem, you should contact your professional veterinary provider through appropriate means.

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Information provided on or through this book regarding herbal treatments, home diets, dietary supplements, human over the counter products, holistic products have not all been evaluated or approved for use in animals.

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