

# PET TALES

## By the book

BY CHRISTIE KEITH  
Universal Press Syndicate

For more than a quarter-century, pet owners have turned to the "Home Veterinary Handbook" series when faced with questions about pet illnesses and injuries.

While the questions are mostly the same today as when the series debuted, the world of veterinary medicine has changed dramatically. New technologies, advanced diagnostic techniques, newly emerging diseases, and recent research on drugs, vaccines and surgeries have made having current information a necessity.

Fortunately, newly updated and revised editions of both of these classic reference books were released in the last few months, authored by a team of four veterinarians led by Dr. Debra Eldredge.

"The goal was to update the books with the wealth of new veterinary information we have had in recent years," she said. And the authors succeeded: From cutting-edge diagnostics to alternative therapies, the handbooks cover it all.

The "Dog Owner's Home Veterinary Handbook" and "Cat Owner's Home Veterinary Handbook" (Howell Book House, \$35 each) are organized by body system, with a comprehensive index in the back and a handy mini-index inside the front covers. Pet owners can read about the causes, symptoms, prevention and treatment of common as well as unusual animal health problems, from allergies to cancer. Sections are also

included on first aid and medication, as well as instructions on how to monitor a pet's vital signs.

There's more than just practical advice on how to cope with health problems, too.

"The books are meant to make pet owners better health advocates for their pets, more informed and better able to communicate with their veterinarians," said Dr. Eldredge.

That's because the authors managed the tricky task of offering pet health information that's genuinely useful but doesn't confuse pet owners into skipping veterinary care when it's needed. Easily followed guidelines tell owners when it's appropriate or even necessary to give immediate aid to a dog or cat, when symptoms require an immediate trip to the emergency clinic, and when the pet can wait until regular office hours to be seen.

Also on the cutting edge are two new books on pet first aid from the American Red Cross. While there's nothing new about pet health emergencies, some recent hurricanes, floods and fires have underscored the need for resources to cope with them. And these two spiral-bound books — one for dogs and one for cats — are great resources. Each book comes with a companion DVD that gives step-by-step instructions on how to give first aid to pets. The sections on animal poisoning are particularly impressive, as is the information on what to do in

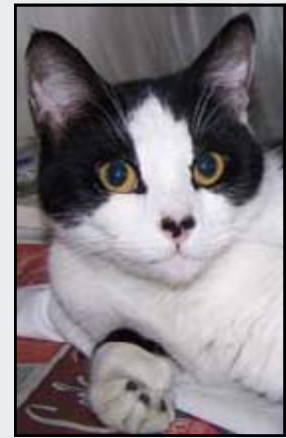


Even in the age of the Internet, it's good to keep a couple of basic pet health reference books at hand.

an emergency until veterinary care can be obtained. They cost \$17 each and are available online at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) (click on "Store" and then "Reference Guides"), or by calling 1-866-782-3347.

One more book to round out the pet owner's health library is Eldredge's "Pills For Pets: The A to Z Guide to Drugs and Medications for Your Animal Companion" (Citadel, \$15). It lists drugs by brand and generic names, covers issues including online pharmacies and compounded medications, and gives tips on how to get medicine into the pets — yes, even those uncooperative cats. ■

### Pets of the Week



>>Gizmo  
Gizmo (345514) is a neutered male, domestic short-hair who was surrendered by his owner who was moving. He's very affectionate and mellow.



>>Tiger  
Tiger, (393767) is a neutered male Maine Coon. He is declawed and very striking with his thick coat and beautiful golden eyes.

### To adopt a pet

These are just a few of the many dogs and cats available at Lee County Animal Services, 5600 Banner Drive, Fort Myers. Call 432-2083 or visit the agency's Web site at [www.leelostpets.com](http://www.leelostpets.com). Adoption applications may be downloaded from the site or completed at the shelter, which is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. Please use the animal's ID number when inquiring about it. The adoption fee is \$65 for dogs and \$50 for cats.

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