

FOXTAILS

Barbed Seeds That Can Torture and Kill

Many Bay Area pet owners are not aware that from April until, after the first rains of autumn their dogs and cats are exposed to the danger of "foxtails" and the barbed seeds of other wild grasses.

Nature designed foxtails in such a way that they can actually plant themselves by burrowing their way into the earth. But they can also burrow into your pet. They work their way into any body opening, especially the ears, and can penetrate the skin, get between the toes and into the armpits. The eyes are very vulnerable. Foxtails can also be inhaled into the nostrils or lodge in the teeth and gums, forming abscesses and serious infections. They can move through the body and penetrate the chest cavity and the reproductive organs with serious and sometimes fatal results.

If your dog or cat exhibits any of the following symptoms, don't wait to see if it goes away. It will only get worse; get your pet to a veterinarian as soon as possible.

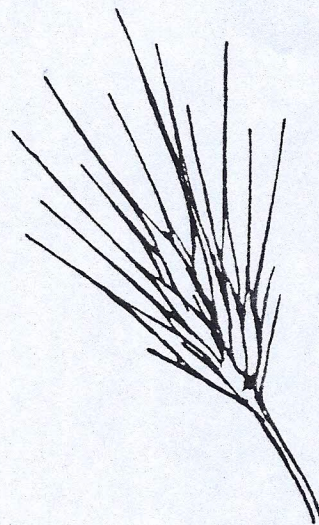
- Pawing at the ears and eyes and shaking the head.
- Rubbing an eye or squinting.
- Rubbing the head on the ground and wheeling in circles or licking and biting at the rectum or other parts of the body.
- Repeated violent sneezing, sometimes with bloody discharge from nostrils.

- Yelping or whining for no obvious reason.

- A small raised infected spot showing signs of inflammation. Clusters of these barbed seeds can penetrate the skin and cause deep wounds and abscesses.

If you suspect that your pet may be suffering from these barbed seeds, **GET PROFESSIONAL HELP IMMEDIATELY.** If the condition is left untreated, it may necessitate complicated surgery or even result in death.

Protect your pets from the hazards of foxtails during this season. Examine them daily, especially between the toes and in the ears. Keep long-haired dogs clipped. Avoid areas where there is dry grass and weeds.



Actual Size
Foxtail

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