

# DOWN HOME: Dogs get all the mosquito breaks\_62303

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Here's a scientific breakthrough I can't figure out: If veterinarians can prepare a pill that protects dogs from all kinds of flying bugs, why can't doctors make medicine to keep mosquitoes, say, 10 feet from people?

I can't turn on the TV without seeing a commercial about a new pill of some color and purpose. Most of the time, the announcer doesn't explain what the pill's for, only that you should "call your doctor." (Don't you know doctors love that? Every time a new pill premieres, all the hypochondriacs call up asking if the brand-new Zynthrax would be right for them.)

MARV KNOX <i>Editor</i>
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Forget human pharmacology. I've been intrigued by the commercial with the dog who trit-trots down the sidewalk, encapsuled in canine bliss because his owner fed him an anti-mosquito, flea and tick pill.

With West Nile Virus steadily advancing across the continent, wouldn't logic suggest every man, woman, boy and girl in America would be better off if he or she could swallow an anti-mosquito pill?

I've thought about this and figured out the trick is in the dosage. If my 7-pound dog, Betsy, is good to go with one pill, do I need to take 22 pills? And if I take 22 pills of dog medicine, will I develop irresistible urges to chase rabbits and eat grass?

So far, I'm too big of a chicken to try anti-mosquito dog medicine. But the whole issue is more than rhetorical at our house.

Our next-door neighbors, who never got the hang of keeping their above-ground pool clean, have moved away. Their house sits empty. Worse, the oh-so-still water in their pool is dark yellow and turning pea green.

A guy from the health department said empty tires, clogged rain gutters and old tin cans—just about all things that hold stagnant water—are dangerous breeding grounds for killer mosquitoes. And if a tin can can breed enough mosquitoes to present a health hazard, that slimy pool next door might morph into a mosquito megalopolis. Maybe if I feed Betsy her pills and carry her every time I go into our backyard, she'll keep the mosquitoes off both of us. Another reason why a dog can be man's best friend.

When “the roll is called up yonder,” I'm planning to ask the Lord about mosquitoes. Of course, God's will is perfect, but I haven't exactly figured out the divine plan for mosquitoes. Ditto for wasps. (If wasps were as big as chihuahuas, they're so mean they'd rule the world.) Some parts of creation don't seem exactly necessary.

Of course, biology tells us birds need bugs for food. Besides pitying the birds that have to eat wasps, I've always wondered why birds couldn't be vegetarians.

Just think of a place where birds eat weeds and nobody ever heard of mosquitoes, crickets and cockroaches. We'll probably call it heaven.

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