

## Pet Care



**DR. JEFF NICHOL**  
For the Journal

## Change in color of nose is common

**Q**: My terrier mix and my friend's golden retriever, at the age of about 2, had their noses slowly change color from top to bottom and from near black to a pink. Is it due to age, environment, diet, types of food dish, etc.?

**Dr. Nichol:** A gradual nose color change is a common genetic trait in many breeds. Consider it normal unless you see swelling, redness, blisters or scabbing. These signs of inflammation are indicators of trouble.

There is a handful of immune mediated (autoimmune) diseases that can affect a canine nose. The most common is discoid lupus erythematosus. The skin on top of the nose can

become severely inflamed, especially in the summer. DLE is manageable in nearly all cases with oral or topical medication. There are other, more complex, immune disorders of the skin that may involve other areas of a dog's face and body as well as his nose. These pets need a lot more care. Cancer can develop on inflamed noses that are not properly treated.

The two dogs you describe have a normal condition called Dudley nose, also known as snow nose. Seen in adult dogs, some have a top-to-bottom stripe of a lighter color, which can vary depending on the season. It occurs most commonly in huskies, Staffordshire terriers, Labs and golden retrievers. No treatment is needed, but sunblock is a good idea. A racing stripe can look pretty cool on a fast dog, but skin cancer would take all the fun out of it.

**Q:** I have a cat, Jinx, who is about 4 or 5 years old. He is indoors only, although he does have an outdoor catwalk and pen. A few months ago another cat started coming into his backyard. Jinx has always been an anxious cat, but once that cat started coming daily, Jinx started spraying in the house. There are other cats that come around from time to time. Am I doomed to this behavior for good? Is there any way to "re-program" Jinx?

**Dr. Nichol:** Jinx is a private fellow who is serious about his territory. There are no job openings for second cat in his household. He is who he is; there is no

changing him. Your job, as the human in charge, is to strongly discourage those interlopers.

The Scare Crow is a motion-activated sprinkler you can attach to your fence that will give feline visitors a wet surprise. Jinx will laugh heartily as he watches those bozos head for the hills. There is also the Cat Stop, which emits a high-pitched sound in the direction of feline trespassers. Either way Jinx should get his

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peace.

To help your boy maintain his own good house-keeping, you must eliminate all traces of indoor cat urine. Make your house really dark as you scout around with a UV light. Treat all suspicious areas with an enzymatic cleaner like Nature's Miracle or Anti Icky Poo.

Jinx is a nervous wreck about all of this. Plug in a Feliway pheromone diffuser to help him relax and enjoy the sanctity of his kingdom. You are welcome to contact me if you need more help.

Dr. Jeff Nichol provides medical care for pets at the Petroglyph Animal Hospital in Albuquerque (898-8874). He treats behavior disorders at the Veterinary Specialty Centers in Albuquerque and in Santa Fe (505-792-5131). Contact Dr. Nichol on his website [www.drjeffnichol.com](http://www.drjeffnichol.com) (click Submit, a Question?) or 6633 Caminito Coors NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120.

