

Dear Dr. Fox: Is there a supplement that is safe to give my two dogs to stop yellowing of my grass when they urinate? I looked into gypsum for the lawn, but it seems to do more harm to the grass than good. They currently eat a little kibble mixed with your dog food twice a day and added vegetables (Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, carrots) and fruits (blueberries or apples) once a day. â€” T.G., Tulsa, Oklahoma

Dear T.G.: I am frequently asked this question, and my response has usually ruffled some feathers. There are fraudsters out there selling various products to give to dogs with the claim that their urine will be changed so the lawn grass will not be harmed. These products are not FDA-approved and need not be if they are marketed not as drugs but as food supplements. Any compound that changes the acidity/alkalinity of a dogâ€™s urine is altering complex biochemical processes and could cause harm, including disrupting the normal bacterial flora in the urinary tract that prevents cystitis and infections. The three solutions that I offer are:

1. Adding a little milk or low- or zero-salt chicken bouillon (you can make your own) to your dogsâ€™ drinking water so they drink more and have less concentrated urine.
2. Soak the grass sod where your dogs have urinated with a liberal dousing of water at the end of the day to dilute their urine.
3. Put down sand and a layer of pea-gravel in one area where the dogs can evacuate in your yard, and let the rest return to the wild by seeding various indigenous perennial grasses, flowers and shrubs.

Dear Readers: Before being purchased by the German pharmaceutical company Bayer, Monsanto Corp. demanded that I retract my comments about the many health and environmental risks of their herbicide Roundup, which I refused to do, and they sent a letter discrediting my science-based concerns to all newspapers that published my article. Now, in one of the largest civil settlements in U.S. history, Bayer has agreed to allocate close to \$10 billion to resolve around 125,000 filed and unfiled cases claiming its glyphosate-based weed-killer Roundup causes cancer. The deal will

still allow Bayer to sell Roundup without adding any warnings, The New York Times reported. It comes after three juries in early, high-profile trials awarded more than \$2.4 billion to plaintiffs who developed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma after long-term Roundup use. This herbicide, still widely used in agriculture and around private property by homeowners and public places by municipalities is often combined with the herbicide 2,4-D, which is also used separately to kill "weeds" invading lawns. 2,4-D is an endocrine disruptor that can damage thyroid gland function and is a potential carcinogen. A 2004 study by Purdue University scientists showed that Scottish terriers exposed to lawns treated with herbicides such as 2,4-D had greater risk of bladder cancer than other terriers. A 1991 National Cancer Institute study concluded that dogs exposed to just four lawn treatments a year significantly increased their risk of malignant lymphoma. (For details visit ewg.org/research/24D/pets-wildlife-24D.) In 2015, the International Agency on Cancer declared 2,4-D a possible human carcinogen, based on evidence that it damages human cells and, in a number of studies, caused cancer in laboratory animals. More conclusive is the proof that 2,4-D falls into a class of compounds called endocrine-disrupting chemicals, compounds that mimic or inhibit the body's hormones. Laboratory studies suggest that 2,4-D can impede the normal action of estrogen, androgen and most conclusively, thyroid hormones. Dozens of epidemiological, animal and laboratory studies have shown a link between 2,4-D and thyroid disorders. (nrhc.org/stories/24-d-most-dangerous-pesticide-youve-never-heard). Homeowners, community leaders, regulating the use of these and other chemicals in agriculture need to stop this insanity. Organic farmers are leading the way, along with books for homeowners like Doug Tallamy's "Nature's Best Hope," to get rid of their perfect lawns and landscape with indigenous plants for the benefit of insects, birds, other wildlife "and our own health as well as our animal companions. Send all mail to animaldocfox@gmail.com or to Dr. Michael Fox in care of Andrews McMeel Syndication, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64106. The volume of mail received prohibits personal replies, but questions and comments of general interest will be discussed in future columns. Visit Dr. Fox's website at

