

## Book Review: Speaking for Spot

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By [Janet Tobiassen Crosby, DVM](#), About.com

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### The Bottom Line

Get this book. I would give this book six stars if I could. It is a valuable tool for pet lovers and veterinarians alike.

The purpose of the book *Speaking for Spot* something I very much agree with; being an advocate for your pet. The goals are many: teaching people how to know when their pet is sick, find a veterinarian that works for your pet *and* you, informing people about medical procedures, diseases and conditions, straight talk about money, and finally, how and when to know it is "time" to say goodbye. This book meets and exceeds all of these goals.

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### Pros

- Friendly conversational style; serious information that is easy-to-read
- Excellent overview of dog and veterinary info, from puppyhood to saying goodbye
- Nice mix of humor and true stories
- Excellent reference book for pet lovers AND veterinarians
- Creative typography and graphics make each page visually interesting

### Cons

- The book is dog-specific, but much of the information works for cats lovers, too
- A few of the hand-drawn images are a little close to text or distracting

### Description

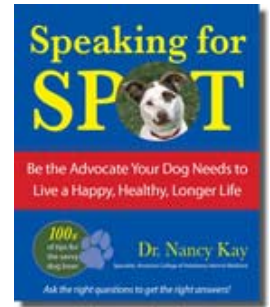
- Find the "best" dog for you and then find the vet that will work best for you and your dog. Assemble a medical team.
- Learn how to ask effective questions and have a successful office visit. Get a second opinion when necessary.
- Find out about the many tools and treatments and that are now available for dogs. In-depth looks at vaccinations and cancer.
- Talking about the "M" word - money. Price shopping, written estimates and insurance.
- Euthanasia: making the best of a difficult situation.
- Appendix 1: Common symptoms and the questions your vet will ask you about them
- Appendix 2: Common diseases and the questions you should ask your vet
- Resources include information about your dog's vital signs, toxins and recommended reading.
- ISBN 978-1-57076-405-9, 388 pages (including index).

### Guide Review - Book Review: Speaking for Spot

The first thing I appreciate about this book, aside from the vast amount of tips and medical information, is the candor of the author, Dr. Nancy Kay. In addition to being a veterinarian, she is also a specialist, a diplomate of the Academy of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM). But don't let that scare you. She writes in such a comfortable easy tone that I feel like I know her in person, and I wish I did. This book is like a trusted friend you can turn to for questions and advice concerning your best friend the dog.

Before the book, Dr. Kay had her own medical scare: breast cancer. Thankfully, after three months of worry, this turned out to be completely negative. However the experience made her realize that she had a huge advantage navigating the workup procedures as a medically trained person. It was one of the reasons she wrote this book, because our dogs cannot always tell us what is wrong, where it hurts, or what they think we should do. Dog caregivers likewise may not always notice or able to communicate to their veterinarian what is going on. This book was written to bridge that gap by enhancing our pet observation skills and encouraging effective communication with veterinary staff.

I liked the pullout quotes, quick reference guides, checklists and case profiles found throughout the book. This added interest, and and drove home the points of the main text.



Speaking For Spot  
© Dr Nancy Kay

Dr. Kay offers a wealth of information that is easy to read, memorable and even humorous at times. The appendices of symptoms and diseases are packed with information and could really be their own book. They are cross-referenced to the main book for additional questions to ask your veterinarian, and when applicable, information on veterinary anesthesia and surgery.

One final note: this book is focused on dogs, but cat lovers will gain valuable insight and tips here as well.

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