

## Allergic Dermatitis

### Overview

Allergic dermatitis is a general term to describe a group of skin allergies that may be caused by a multitude of factors in dogs. The most common classes of allergic dermatitis seen in dogs are flea bite allergy, food allergy and atopy. Atopy, also called atopic dermatitis, is an allergic condition caused by inhaled allergens, or absorption of allergens through the skin

Atopy and flea bite allergy are usually seen in young adults, whereas food allergy can be seen at any age. There are a number of canine breeds predisposed to the development of atopy and some animals may be prone to development of certain allergies due to genetic factors. Allergic signs may be seasonal, depending on the cause of the allergy.

### Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Allergic dermatitis is generally diagnosed by a thorough history, physical examination, skin scrapings, skin cytology and bloodwork. Additional tests such as allergy blood tests, intradermal allergy testing and dietary trials are also beneficial.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Pets with allergic dermatitis may be treated with special shampoos, topical medications, antibiotics, antihistamines, steroids, special diet or immunotherapy. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

### What to Watch for\*:

- Scratching, licking, chewing or biting skin
- Red, raised scaly areas on the skin
- Thickened skin
- Loss of hair

*\*Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*