



DOES YOUR ITCHY DOG HAVE YOU SCRATCHING YOUR HEAD?

Spring is invigorating. New life is emerging everywhere. And with it comes a sudden urge to skip through the fresh grass and jump in puddles with your faithful animal companion by your side. Unfortunately, all those beloved outdoor activities in the rising heat and clouds of pollen could also be the start of many skin irritations that can mean endless itching and discomfort for your dog.

Parasites, allergies, bacterial infections and nutritional deficiencies may be the reason why your dog is constantly scratching, nibbling, and licking their skin, paws, and ears. In this article, we look at symptoms and five common causes of itchy skin conditions in dogs.

What you should look out for:

- Persistent scratching, especially in one spot
- Biting or licking of paws, sides, or the base of their tail
- Redness and inflammation
- Hair loss
- Rough patches and crusts

Why is my dog itchy?

1. Hot Spots

For many dogs, there is nothing better than splashing about in every puddle, pool and farm dam along their path. And who can blame them? Unfortunately, wet skin and damp fur are the perfect breeding ground for bacteria that causes acute moist dermatitis, or hot spots. Scratching and licking spread the bacteria faster. **Treatment:** Wash your dog thoroughly with antibacterial shampoo. Shave the area and treat the skin regularly with antibacterial disinfectant and ointment for dogs. Use a cone collar so the wound can heal.



2. Parasites

Parasites can be a real flea in the ear. And sometimes that flea is ticks, mites, or lice too. Long walks in the veldt and playing with other dogs can easily lead to unwanted parasites. Not only do parasite bites cause allergic reactions and itching in dogs, but they also transmit a variety of other diseases, including tapeworms. **Treatment:** Antiparasitic medications can effectively treat flea and tick infestations. Since fleas lay around 2000 eggs, it is extremely important to treat your environment as well. Vacuum regularly, wash bedding of humans and animals in hot water, and spray animal-friendly parasite poison.

3. Environmental allergies

Allergies are one of the most common causes of itching in dogs. Allergens are everywhere, including food ingredients and environmental elements such as grass, dust, pollen, dust mites, mould, and cleaning products. **Treatment:** Blood tests and skin scrapings may be needed to determine the cause. Your vet may recommend medicated shampoos, tablets, injections, or cortisone sprays. Long-term use of food containing essential Omega 3 and 6 fatty acids, such as JOCK dog food, may help to reduce the impact of environmental allergens.

4. Fungal infections

Various fungi and yeasts cause inflammatory skin conditions. Two of the most common problems are ringworm (dermatophytosis) and yeast infections (Malassezia dermatitis). Ringworm is highly contagious. Look for round crusts on the front legs, paws, ears and head. Malassezia fungi grow in warm, moist areas. It causes ear canal infections and lodges between your dog's toes, in the groin, and perineum.



Treatment: Since skin fungi, especially ringworm, spread easily to other family members, it must be diagnosed and treated promptly. Treatment often involves a combination of antifungal pills, antibiotics, ear drops, ointments, sprays and shampoos.

5. Dry skin

Dogs, like humans, can suffer from dry skin. This means dandruff and a persistent itch. Dry skin can be exacerbated by bathing your dog frequently, especially with strong shampoos that strip the skin of its natural oils. **Treatment:** For dry skin, Like JOCK Dog Food with natural oils and Omega 3 and 6 essential fatty acids can help strengthen your dog's skin. Fatty acids also have anti-inflammatory properties that can reduce itching. Oils, such as coconut oil, olive oil, and vitamin E oil, can be used on hot spots. Other treatments include baths or soaks with chamomile tea, oatmeal, or aloe vera. For severe cases, it's advisable to consult your veterinarian.

Keep an eye on your dog's behaviour this season. If things get a bit scratchy, you can react fast to ensure your dog gets the right treatment to combat itchy skin conditions.



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