



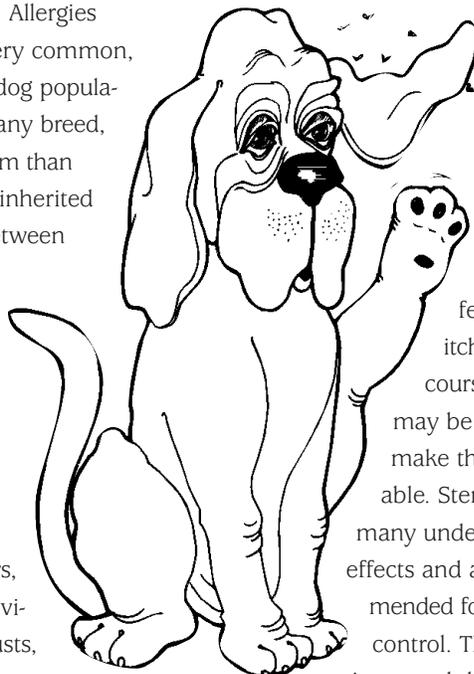
# All about Allergies Stopping the Itch

If your dog's scratching is keeping you up at night, it's time to find out why. Itchiness in dogs manifests as rubbing, scratching, scooting, head shaking and feet chewing. It can be caused by parasites, such as fleas, ticks, and mites, as well as infections, and allergies. If no obvious cause is found on examination, allergies are often the culprit. Allergies (called atopy in dogs) are very common, affecting up to 15% of the dog population. Allergies can occur in any breed, some are more prone to them than others. Atopy is considered inherited and will start to show up between one and three years of age. Many cases start as a seasonal problem and progress to year round disorders.

Allergies are the underlying problem in most cases of recurrent bacterial skin infections, anal sac disorders, ear infections and conjunctivitis. They cause hair loss, crusts, hot spots and tremendous discomfort. Dogs and people are allergic to the same things-pollens, weeds, molds, airborne irritants, household dust and grasses. Dogs can also develop food allergies to most any protein source. In

addition, flea bite dermatitis is a serious allergy that occurs when dogs develop an allergy to flea saliva. Even one flea bite will make that dog miserable.

Treatment of allergies is highly individualized. For the seasonally affected, it may include flea control,



anti-itch shampoos, antihistamines and foot baths to remove surface allergens from the feet. For the very itchy dog, a short course of steroids may be needed to make the dog comfortable. Steroids can have many undesirable side effects and are not recommended for long-term control. They will cause increased thirst and urination,

increased appetite and increased panting.

For the year-round allergic dog, we often try hypoallergenic diets to see if a food

allergy is present. We also may consider Atopica (cyclosporine), a drug that will help to stop the itch, without all the side effects of steroids. Some dogs will need to be skin tested to determine exactly what allergens are causing the problem and then they can undergo desensitization injections to help gain better control over the itch.

All dogs with allergies must have any secondary infections treated with antibiotics, ear medications and special shampoos or they will remain itchy. These problems can be frustrating but are controllable with patience and persistence.

Finally, it is very important to realize that atopy cannot be cured, only controlled. Your dog WILL have recurrence of signs from time to time and it will be important to address the problem promptly and completely. Most pets can be made comfortable and will live with their allergies as many humans do.



# Coyote Attack in Brooklyn Park

Lily, a sweet 10-month-old Bichon/Shih Tzu mix dog, was enjoying a nice stroll one early Spring evening with her owner, 14-year-old Sarah Allgood. Lily was on a leash near their home in northern Brooklyn Park. Little did Sarah know that Lily was being targeted for an attack. From the nearby wooded preserve, a coyote descended upon Lily without any warning. Normally, coyotes are more nocturnal and avoid people, so of course, a bold attack in broad daylight was completely unexpected. Sarah was able to fend off the aggressive coyote by kicking at him, and getting Lily away. Unfortunately for Lily, the coyote did not need much time to do some serious damage to her petite 13-pound body and Lily needed emergency care right away. Sarah quickly ran home with Lily, and mom, Diane, immediately called us and told us she was on her way.

On arrival, CVT Rhonda Noetzelman immediately brought Lily back to our treatment area where she and CVT Diane Paulus and Vet Assistant, Lynsy Jameson helped Dr. Lisa Carpenter assess Lily's injuries and started her on oxygen. It was not a pretty sight. She had a proptosed right eye which bulged out and was bright red. She had a large, gaping, bloody wound on her right chest

and numerous small cuts/puncture wounds and blood in her fur. She was panting profusely and very painful, refusing to stand up. Her left rear leg did not bear any weight. We quickly checked her vital signs and did some STAT blood work and applied lubricant to her exposed eye to prevent ulcerations. We administered pain medication, placed an IV catheter, gave her IV antibiotics and continued monitoring her vital signs. Lucky for Lily, her blood pressure, EKG and heart rate and rhythm were all stable. We now needed to anesthetize her to take care of her injuries. We replaced her eye back into the socket and stitched closed her eyelids to allow time for the swelling and inflammation to resolve, while protecting the eye. We debrided and cleaned all her wounds and placed a drain in the large wound on her chest, stitching it up and bandaging it to protect it. She received IV fluids throughout her anesthesia.

Lily woke up groggy and still somewhat painful, despite the medications. We started her on special eye medications and transferred her to the emergency clinic for further care and observation. Lily returned to us the next day for follow-up IV fluids, nursing care and monitoring and by that evening, she was able

to eat small amounts on her own. She was sore and bruised, with her eye sewn shut, wearing a protective cone collar and a bandage around her body. She was quite a sight, but she was alive and healing. She was discharged on antibiotics, pain medications and eye ointments. By the next day, she was able to walk, albeit slowly and carefully, on her own and her attitude was much better. Emily, Sarah's sister provided much TLC to Lily and nursed her back to health.

Lily is continuing to improve and only time will tell if she will retain vision in her eye. But one thing is for sure, Sarah's brave actions saved Lily's life!

## Unwelcome neighbors

Coyotes rarely attack in broad daylight, however many suburban municipalities are noting an increase in coyote aggression, often stalking people and pets. As coyotes lose their fear of humans, they may prey upon pets and small children if the opportunity presents itself.

### Here are a few tips to prevent attacks:

1. Never feed or attempt to "tame" a coyote.
2. Don't leave small children or pets outside unattended.
3. Remove sources of water, especially in dry climates.
4. Trim ground-level shrubbery to reduce hiding places.
5. Store trash in tightly closed containers that cannot tip over.
6. Do not leave pet food outside, and bring pets in at night.
7. Provide secure enclosures for pet rabbits.
8. Pick up fallen fruit and cover compost piles.
9. Install motion-sensitive lighting around the house.



# Cats need the vet, too!

Why do we love cats? Cats are very independent creatures. They seem so capable of taking care of themselves and never seem to complain about anything. Most pet cats live inside and are never exposed to other strange animals, parasites, or the elements. We can keep them safe indoors so we never have to experience the stress of finding our pet with a broken bone or a skin infection from a fight with another outdoor cat. We have done a great job of protecting our cats. However, there are some things that can happen to cats even if they are kept indoors for their entire lives. Cats can develop metabolic problems (diabetes, kidney disease, thyroid problems), cancer, dental disease, heart disease, or intestinal problems.



We love our cats because they are independent and stoic. But, unfortunately, these character traits also make it difficult to know when they are ill. Cats are very good at hiding illness and pain. Many will only show weakness after an illness has been festering for a long period of time. Sometimes we can pick up on subtle hints or changes in our cat's behavior, but not every cat will give an indication that he or she is sick.

One of the best things you can do to detect illness early is to bring your cat to the veterinarian at least once every year.

If your cat is over ten years of age, we suggest twice-yearly examinations. During your cat's appointment, the veterinary team will take a detailed history of your cat's daily routine. The veterinarian will do a complete physical examination in search of any signs of illness. She will listen to the heart, check the teeth, feel the abdomen, and check the eyes and ears. The vet may give vaccinations to your cat. However, vaccinations are just a small part of your cat's wellness regimen. Most of our cats will only need vac-

cines every three years, but it's still essential that a complete history and physical exam be done every year.

Did you know that your cat ages seven years every year? A ten year-old cat is equivalent to a 70 year-old person. A lot can happen in just one year's time.

You have done a great job keeping your cat safe. Please be sure to take the next step and allow your veterinarian to search for any hidden health problems.

## Spring Pest Alert

**Mosquitoes** are starting their annual aerial attack and your pet could be targeted for a deadly bite. Mosquitoes can carry the heartworm larvae and transmit it to your dog or cat. This can be a life-threatening parasite and needs to be controlled whenever mosquitoes are around. Since even indoor pets can get bitten by a mosquito, all dogs and cats are considered at risk. In dogs, we recommend annual blood testing for Heartworm infection and if clear, the dog should be given heartworm preventative once a month from **June to November**. Cats typically do not get heavy infections with

heartworm and testing can be somewhat problematic. Most cats could benefit from being put on preventative. We use **Heartgard Plus** for dogs, and **Revolution** for cats. Both of these medications will also control roundworms and hookworms.

**Ticks** are generally very prevalent in cool weather and live in brushy, woody, long grass type of environments. They transmit many serious diseases including Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, and Ehrlichiosis. There are many effective tick control products on the market. We recommend **Frontline Plus** as it is water resistant

and can be applied monthly.

**Fleas** are the most common parasite of our companion animals. Pets can pick them up from contact with wildlife, other infested pets and infested environments. **Frontline Plus, Sentinel, Revolution and Program** are products that will help control and prevent flea problems.

With the advent of modern parasite control medications and insecticides, we can safely prevent many problems in our companion pets. Call now to be sure your pet will be protected this summer and fall.

**Dr. Jennifer** attended the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association's annual convention in February, attending seminars on business management and marketing. All five of our Certified Veterinary Technicians, **Corrie, Rhonda, Diane, Jessica** and **Kathy** attended the annual Minnesota Association of Veterinary Technician's Convention in February as well. **Dr. Lisa** has attended several interesting continuing education seminars on conditioning the athletic dog and evolving clinical syndromes in performance dogs as well as reproductive problems in dogs and cats.

Our veterinary assistant, **Lynsy Jameson**, has added a new furry member to her family. This adorable four-month-old lab mix was unwanted and abandoned. Now her name is Eden and she will never be unwanted for even one moment of the rest of her life.



**Dr. Lisa** has been very busy showing her dogs and competing in agility trials. She is proud to announce that her Phalene, Abby, attained her AKC conformation championship in April when she also took Best of Breed at the



Indianhead Kennel Club show. She has also gained several agility titles to boot. She is now officially, Ch. Johtina's Ambrosia, NA, OAJ, CGC. Dr. Lisa also shares that her other Phalene, Mellie, attained her MX and MXJ agility titles recently and is competing for her Master Agility Championship title (MACH).

## Welcome Kailee Wright

**Kailee Wright** has joined the Edinburgh team! She applied to become a veterinary assistant because she knew it would offer her many new and exciting learning experiences that she couldn't get working a typical after-school job. Her favorite subjects at Osseo Senior High are history and English and she also enjoys soccer, track, band and Ultimate Frisbee. She has a pet rabbit, Kristy, who is happy to be the center of attention once she's dressed in doll clothes and cheerfully hopping around. Kailee is really enjoying

learning more about animals while being able help them as a part of our veterinary team.



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