

Allergies



" Oh, it's not that I don't like humans, it's just my allergies. "

When pets have allergies, their immune system is overly sensitive to certain everyday substances and begins to identify them as dangerous. Even though these substances—or allergens—are usually common in most environments and harmless to most animals, pets with allergies will have an extreme reaction to them. As their body tries to rid itself of these substances, they may show a variety of symptoms.

Unlike people who mostly show symptoms of allergies with congestion and inflamed eyes, pets react to allergies in a different manner. Pets with allergies tend to show most of the reaction on the surface of their skin. The common signs of allergies in pets include ear infections, hair loss, over grooming, crusts or papules on the skin, overly greasy coat, and repeat skin infections.

Allergens vary greatly between pets. Some pets have year round allergens, which are likely to be to dust, dust mites, perfumes, laundry detergent and occasionally food. Some pets have seasonal allergens, which are more likely to be associated with plants and pollen such as grasses and trees.

Allergies are very frustrating for the pet, pet owner and veterinarian. Each pet is different and may react to allergens and treatment for allergies differently. If you are concerned that your pet may have allergies, please let us know. During your pet's exam the veterinarian will discuss possible treatments to help your pet look and feel their best. Some pets are able to be managed on antihistamines, while others may need steroids, other medications, or allergy testing to help address and alleviate their symptoms.

Caution: Many pet foods claim to be good for pets with allergies. The truth is that only 10% of pets with allergies can be managed on food alone. Ideally they should receive a prescription hypoallergenic diet as a trial first to see if they are indeed allergic to food or not. If proven to be allergic to food, we can then try to find an OTC food that would work well. Please do not try several foods before visiting with your veterinarian, as it may make it more difficult to find a food that may work for your pet if needed later.