

Skin allergies (atopy)

While humans may sneeze or get itchy eyes, pets with allergies commonly have skin inflammation and itching.

In pets, allergies are typically a reaction to inhaled, ingested, or absorbed allergens like pollen, mold spores, dust mites, or food ingredients. Many pets are sensitive to multiple allergens.

- ▶ Allergies are a lifelong condition and require patient and careful home care. Allergic itchiness can significantly impact a pet's quality of life.

What does it look like?

Common signs:

- Scratching
 - Reddened or darkened skin
 - Hair loss and skin sores from scratching
 - Chronic ear infections
- ▶ Allergies can be mild and seasonal, or constant and severe.



How is it diagnosed?

- Your pet's history
- Clinical signs, like scratching
- Physical exam results
- Allergy testing
- Food trials or elimination diets (for at least eight weeks)

How is it treated?

Allergies require lifelong management.

- Mild or seasonal atopy can sometimes be managed with medications
- Allergy injections may decrease your pet's sensitivity to specific allergens
- Food allergies, which are harder to diagnose and treat, are managed with a strict allergen-free diet

- ▶ Strictly follow all veterinary instructions to manage your pet's allergies.



How to help your pet

- Administer all medications as prescribed
- Carefully follow the prescribed schedule for allergy treatments
- If your pet is on a special diet, do not give them any other food, treats, table food, dietary supplements, or flavored medications
- Keep all follow-up appointments to monitor your pet's progress
- Contact your veterinary team with questions or if your pet's itching does not improve

