



# Animal Clinic of Chardon

440-285-9191

MAY 2018 NEWSLETTER



## Did you know?

### **Over 30 Breeds of Dogs Have Spots on Their Tongue**

*- How many times have you heard that any dog with dark spots on their tongue is part Chow? Well it's not true. There's over 35 breeds of dogs prone to having spotted tongues.*

**Stuck Up-***Ever wonder why cats get stuck up in trees? All of a cat's claws point the same way, so to get down from a tree they need to back down it. One exception to this is the Norwegian Forest Cat – their extra thick claws and strong legs allow them to climb down from trees head first.*

**Your Dogs Pee Says A Lot About Him to Other Dogs -**  
*Did you ever wonder why your dog wants to stop all the time when you're out taking him for a walk? Turns out all that sniffing is letting him keep track of what's going on with other dogs in the neighborhood.*

*Dog urine contains messages that can be interpreted by other canines – the scent can tell other dogs their sex, age, and mood.*

## Why Is My Dog So Itchy?

Is your dog constantly licking and scratching? If so, you're not alone. Many dogs lick and scratch as result of itching (also called pruritis). The itching may be minimal or extreme, and can even cause injury.

Itching is a characteristic of many possible [skin conditions](#) and, treating an itch effectively requires determining the underlying cause. This is not a road you want to go down alone. Finding the cause of an itch requires testing, and help from your veterinarian.

### What might make my dog itchy?

It is important to remember that itching is not a disease, or a cause of disease, but rather the result of a disease process. Effectively treating itching requires treating its cause. If your dog is frequently itchy, you may first suspect a problem with [fleas](#). It's a common assumption, but fleas are far from the only cause of skin irritations and itches. That said, your dog should absolutely be on year-round flea and tick medication.

The most common broad causes of itching are:

- [Parasites](#)
- [Infections](#)
- [Allergies](#)
- [Skin disease](#)
- [Skin cancer \(less common\)](#)



Some diseases only start to itch when a dog develops secondary bacterial or yeast infections. Whatever the cause, it's understandable that intense itching is a serious source of distress for your dog.

### Dog allergies

**Exposure to allergens may occur any number of ways:**

- Inhalation
- Topical exposure
- Ingestion

All may result in a cascade of inflammatory chemicals from cells in the skin. A dog may show allergic signs like itching when his immune systems begins to recognize everyday substances (allergens) as dangerous. Allergic conditions will also be considered by your veterinarian and efforts made to identify the causative agent, as well as attempt to block the allergic reactions.

Atopic or allergic dermatitis is associated with inhaled or even topical materials that enter the body and trigger an excessive release of inflammatory secretions that result in itch.

## Special Deals!

### Heartgard

Buy 12 doses, get a \$12 rebate

### Heartgard & Nexgard

Buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 12 doses of Nexgard, get \$50 rebate

### Nexgard

Buy 6 doses of Nexgard, get 1 dose free

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Need medications?  
Food? Heartworm, flea and tick preventatives?  
Visit our [online store](#) and have your purchase conveniently shipped to your home!

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**Planning a summer vacation? Let us take care of your pet! We offer all-inclusive service and will treat your family member like our own!**

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### My Puppy Is A Handful

By Ann Davies

My puppy is a handful,  
So full of energy.  
She jumps around to greet us,  
And wags her tail with glee.

She digs when in the garden,  
Getting muddy from her head to her toes.

Whatever goes on in her mind,  
Heaven only knows.

Interpreting allergy tests requires experience and you may even need a specialist.

There are recent developments in the treatment of allergies and allergic reaction. Ask your veterinarian what can be done.

### Diagnosing an itchy dog

Determining the cause begins with your veterinarian taking a detailed medical and chronological history:

- What have you seen and when did you first see it?
- How has it progressed?
- Are other pets affected, are you?
- Next is a thorough physical examination, focusing on— but not limited to— the skin. Parasites and infectious conditions should be considered. They are relatively common, and generally respond to appropriate treatments very well. They may or may not be the main cause of itching.



Dry skin can also be a cause of itching, or can be a result of other conditions. In either case, dryness makes itching worse and needs to be addressed.

Because some metabolic and systemic illnesses can cause itching, blood tests may be advised to evaluate the health of organ systems other than the skin.

One important thing to remember is that while you may be annoyed by your dog's itch, they are genuinely suffering and need to be diagnosed and treated without delay.

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## Cat Have Allergies Too!

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Skin problems are among the most common troubles for dogs and cats. They can be caused by a variety of diseases, one of the most common being allergies. Allergies that affect the skin are grouped together under the term allergic dermatitis.

As with people, our pets can suffer allergies related to food they eat and the environment they live in. Additionally, they can have an allergic reaction to the bites of fleas and other parasites.

More often than not, allergic reactions in cats affect the skin.

Signs include:

- **Itchy skin**, especially around the face and feet
- Foul odor
- Red bumps or scaly areas
- Bumps that resemble acne
- Darkened skin that feels thicker than usual
- **Thinning or loss of hair**
- Stained fur due to excessive licking
- Frequent shaking of head



She bolts her food so quickly,  
And barely chews at all.  
She saves her chewing for the  
rug,  
Our shoes and the kitchen wall!

Everyone tells me she will  
improve,  
And I want to believe what they  
say,  
So I'm hoping our dear little  
puppy  
Will become docile one day.

We want to create a harmonious  
home,  
So we'll try exercise, discipline  
and rest,  
And trust that she will calm  
down,  
For we can only do our best.

Remember the saying,  
"Let sleeping dogs lie."  
Now I have my own puppy,  
I can understand why!



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**We're on the Web!**

[AnimalClinicofChardon.com](http://AnimalClinicofChardon.com)

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## Diagnosis/Treatment

If your cat is scratching incessantly, it's time to visit your veterinarian! Because itchy skin also can be caused by conditions other than allergies, your veterinarian may want to rule out the other potential causes, such as parasites, bacterial or [fungal infections](#), or systemic diseases.

Tests can include a thorough physical examination; evaluation for external parasites such as fleas or mites; skin tests to rule out fungal, yeast, or [bacterial infections](#); and others, such as blood tests and urinalysis, to determine if your pet has a systemic disease.

Once your veterinarian determines that your cat has allergies, the next step will be to find out under which category they fall.

## Food allergies

Food allergies are common, can affect cats of any age, and represent approximately 10% of all allergic conditions. After performing food trials to determine what ingredient your cat is allergic to, treatment involves feeding a diet that does not contain that ingredient.

## Environmental allergies

Another common form of allergy is caused by exposure to environmental allergens your cat either breathes in or absorbs through the skin. In people terms, we call this "hay fever." Common allergens include house-dust [mites](#); pollen, grasses, and weeds; and a variety of molds. While allergies often give people runny noses, they usually make cats itchy.

Your itchy pet may benefit from topical treatment including cool baths, medicated shampoos and conditioners, and soothing sprays. If your cat has mild allergies, she may be treated with antihistamines or omega-3 fatty acids. More severe cases may require stronger medications such as prednisone or allergy shots.

## Flea allergies

Flea allergy is the most common skin disease in cats (and dogs). It is also called flea bite hypersensitivity because it is caused by an allergic (or hypersensitivity) reaction to flea saliva. Fleas are very common and live both on your pet and in the environment. All pets in a household where there are fleas will be infested. In addition to causing allergies in susceptible cats, they can also transmit other diseases.

Treatment for flea allergies involves eliminating fleas from your cat and the environment using products recommended by your veterinarian that are effective against all stages of fleas—from eggs to adults. To control itching your veterinarian might prescribe various medications including antihistamines, omega-3 fatty acids, prednisone and others.



## Prevention

While there is no way to prevent allergic dermatitis, treatment is often very effective once the type of allergy has been determined. Check your pet often for fleas and watch for signs such as scratching or excessive grooming. If you suspect your cat may have skin allergies, contact your veterinarian right away. Early diagnosis and

treatment will keep your pet's symptoms from becoming severe.