

How To Be Allergy Free

For



Your

Pet



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Foreword

Allergies can be defined as abnormal reactions of the immune system that occur in response to otherwise harmless substances.

In humans, allergies are among the most common of medical disorders. It is estimated that 60 million Americans, or more than one in every five people, suffer from some form of allergy, with similar proportions throughout much of the rest of the world.

Allergy is the single largest reason for school absences and is a major source of lost productivity in the workplace.

Interestingly an estimated 1 out of 5 domestic animals, such as cats, dogs and horses, suffer from some form of allergy.

You may be familiar with some of the symptoms of human allergies that can include sneezing, runny nose, constipation, diarrhoea, asthma, rashes and itchy skin, candida, PMS, headache and migraine, flatulence, arthritis, indigestion ADHD & ADD and bloating and fatigue. And the list just goes on.

Did you know that your pet could suffer (the animal version) of many of the above allergic reactions. Most common allergic reactions in animals are skin conditions causing constant itching, loss of fur/hair, dull fur/hair, constipation and/or diarrhoea and weepy eyes.

Does your best friend have runny eyes, sore feet or skin rashes?

Perhaps your cat/kitten has rough skin or dull fur?

Is your horse not as healthy as he once was?

Consider - **it could be allergy!!**

Allergies are a systemic disorder and can affect the nose, lungs, eyes, skin and gastrointestinal tract, simultaneously or in succession throughout an animal's life. The reason for the clinical expression of allergic reactions is not known.

Allergy – Signs & Symptoms

I would like to begin with some information about the general course of allergies, and I assume that the phases of allergic reaction in an animal are the same or similar to that in humans.

Allergies cause stress and inflammation within the body regardless of species.

The initial stage or the first stage in the progress of allergies is often called the addictive or alarm stage. Often there is a craving for the very food that is causing the allergy.

Being allergic to a food causes sensitivity to that food and eating it again and again stimulates the adrenal glands to release stress hormones (epinephrine). For a while this may create a feeling of wellness and increased energy, very much like a drug. When this feeling subsides there is a need for another “fix” of the “feel-good” food.

As you can see allergies or bio-incompatible foods cause stress within the body. The adrenal glands not only release stress hormones, but also inflammatory hormones/chemicals. In turn the sympathetic nervous system is over-stimulated. Besides causing allergic reactions, it may also trigger hyper-excitability, increased blood pressure, palpitations, anxiety, anger, and poor digestion.

If this merry-go-round continues for too long, the stress becomes permanent. The body adapts by releasing anti-inflammatory hormones/chemicals. The adrenals become exhausted and a lack of energy, tiredness, mental and physical exhaustion results.

In the second (the exhausting), state there will not be the experience of elation after eating the same food. The constant attack of the allergen has drained the body leaving it too weak to react.

Even this stage will pass as the capacity of the adrenal glands to produce sufficient anti-inflammatory hormones becomes exhausted. This sets the stage for chronic generalized inflammation and numerous chronic degenerative diseases *and could be called the third stage.*

Just as in the treatment of allergies in humans, the first step is **always** to find out the culprit foods and chemicals. Remove the culprits and the body can start the healing process.

Possible Allergy Related Conditions

Rhinitis - runny nose

Skin conditions/dermatitis - could include fur loss and dull fur

Gastroenteritis - this could include diarrhoea, constipation, smelly faeces and vomiting

Eye problems - weepy eyes, swollen eyelids

Dermatitis: This is often a problem your pet is facing. There are different kinds of dermatitis and not all of them are related to allergies, nevertheless I would like to include them here just to give you some idea of the different kinds your pet maybe suffering from.

Environmental or Contact Dermatitis: Happen when an animal's skin comes in contact with the material he's allergic to--if he rubs his face against a wool blanket, for example, and he's allergic to wool. The chemicals in flea collars can cause this problem as well. The skin at the point of contact will be irritated--it may itch, become thickened or discolored,

have a strong odor, and/or lose hair due to constant biting or scratching. You can try removing different materials that your pet touches until you find the one that irritates his skin. It can also happen while romping around in the great outdoors. Your pet may spend time swimming or excavating gopher holes or running through fields where thistles seem prevalent. Many dogs are sensitive to lawn grasses.

Infectious Dermatitis: Bacterial, fungal and yeast organisms are notoriously obnoxious skin and coat pathogens. Fungal organisms are called dermatophytes. One type, called *Microsporum canis*, causes non-pruritic, circular patches of hair loss, often called ringworm. Transmissible to other dogs (and occasionally some strains of fungi can be transmitted to humans)

Nutritional Dermatitis: Pets like humans need to eat a balanced nutritional diet, just feeding the animal tin foods (many of them claim to be nutritional balanced) will lead to deficiencies. Unfortunately, there are dogs and cats (and possible other animals) live their entire lives in less than optimum health because their caretaker feeds the least expensive food they can find... and feels secure in doing so because of that “Complete and Balanced” statement. A case can certainly be made against feeding your dog or cat commercial pet foods.

(For an alternative and for more information see “**website 1**” in Website References” at the end of the book)

Parasitic Dermatitis: The most common response a pet owner makes when they see their dog scratching and biting at itself is “I think he’s got fleas” and you do what is needed to get rid of those parasites. But did you also know that your pet can be actually allergic to fleas?

Neurogenic Dermatitis: one of the least found conditions. It is mostly seen in dogs. Characterized by persistent, obsessive licking and chewing at the target area, most cases have a suspected cause such as boredom, separation anxiety, frustration, confinement, or even a minor physical

origin such as a tiny abrasion that captivates the dog's interest.

Allergic Dermatitis: Is common. It can be lifelong and it is a challenge to diagnose. Food ingredients, synthetic and natural fibers, medications and pharmaceutical products, plant material and even dust all can trigger an Allergic Dermatitis. Even common bacteria on the dog's skin can provoke an allergic reaction to themselves.

You might not necessarily relate many of those dermatitis symptoms to an allergy reaction. However, an underlying food or chemical allergy can make any of your pet's symptoms worse, as the body is weakened, because of stress and inflammation.

Food, which is not bio-compatible for your pet- can set off an alarm in the immune system, causing it to pump out large amounts of white blood cells, hormones, and other material called histamines into the bloodstream. The result for animals can be a range of different effects from itchy skin to vomiting and diarrhea. Animal allergies generally fall under one of four main categories.

Food Allergies: Diet can be a complicated factor in pet allergies. As you have read before allergies can cause dermatitis (allergy dermatitis), then again maybe your pet has no dermatitis, instead has digestive problems. Allergies, just like in humans, can take many forms. Most animals are not born with allergies to food; their immune systems develop an allergic response over time to some part of their diet, often one of the animal proteins. A food allergy can present in a lot of different ways, including the itching, digestive disorders, and respiratory distress already mentioned. They can be a real challenge to solve, however. You can try to figure out what's causing your pet's allergic reaction by feeding him different diets, but the allergic effects of food can stay in the system for eight weeks. You may have to keep your furry friend on a special hypoallergenic (non-allergy-causing) diet for eight to twelve weeks to see how he reacts, and you may have to do it

several times with several different diets before you find one that doesn't cause an allergic reaction. And while you're feeding these test diets, you'll have to make very sure that your pet doesn't eat any treats, vitamins, leftovers or scraps, or even plants around the house. He has to eat the test diet exclusively for the entire eight to twelve weeks to determine whether he has an allergic reaction to it.

Inhalant Allergy: Inhalant allergies are the kind we humans are most used to. Just like us, our pets get hay fever, meaning they can be allergic to the pollen and mould that fills the outside air during the spring and fall. They can also be allergic to the dust mites, mildew, and mould that can be inside every home. These kinds of allergens usually produce severe itching in pets, which is usually concentrated in the ears, feet, groin, and armpits, though it can be spread across the entire body. Dogs in particular may develop hairless, irritated "hot spots" from constantly chewing on and scratching the affected skin.

Most animals that are allergic to airborne particles are usually allergic to more than one. Often, they will only experience itching during the pollen-heavy seasons of the year, just like humans with hay fever. If you find that your pet's allergies seem to be seasonal, you may be able to limit his outdoor time during allergy season. Your pet may be reacting to an indoor allergen, however, or an allergen that doesn't vary by season. In that case, there's not much you can do to keep him away from whatever he's allergic to, though an air filter might provide some relief.

Flea Allergies: This is an extremely common problem for pets, possibly the most common allergy of all. Animals aren't actually allergic to the fleas themselves, but to proteins that fleas secrete in their saliva when they bite. Your pet doesn't have to be a walking flea circus to suffer from an allergy, either. Affected animals can itch severely from a single bite for over five days! So, if you suspect your pet is allergic to fleas, you're going to have to work very hard to keep the little pests away. Frequent baths are a good idea, as are the prescription flea applications and pills. Consult your

veterinarian when you chose a flea repellent for your pet, though; the wrong kind or too strong of a concentration could cause irritated skin, seizures, and even death in extreme cases. You will also want to treat your pet's environment, including any bedding or carpeting he comes in contact with.

Contact Allergies: Can be caused by the same environmental culprit than is listed in the above Environmental Dermatitis. They are generally not a hard problem to solve--they're usually confined to a specific area of an animal's body, and the allergen shouldn't take too much work to discover.

One question I have been asked by a friend of mine who is a vegetarian. She asked me if she should feed her cat a vegetarian diet? Would this be healthier and less allergy forming for him?

While your dog can certainly exist on a vegetarian diet with few or no problems and without dietary additions, your cat cannot. Cats are obligate carnivores, which means they require meat to survive. They must have an amino acid called taurine which they get from animal sources. To deprive a cat of this will result in blindness and degenerative heart problems. There is now a synthetic taurine which makes it possible for a cat to subsist on a vegetarian diet, so you must ensure that your cat receives it. However, human or animal it all comes down to what is bio-compatible to the individual.

Treating Your Pet For Allergies

If your pet exhibits symptoms of allergies, talk to your veterinarian about testing and treatment options. Your veterinarian can test with a simple blood sample or skin test. If it's allergy, there are ways to alleviate your pet's ppeeve. If tests confirm your animal is suffering from allergies, you have three options:

Immunotherapy: Is a safe, long-term treatment that builds your pet's immunity to allergens [substances that cause allergies] through injections with increasingly larger doses of a serum specifically formulated to your pet's sensitivities. This option is effective for treating atopy but not recommended for flea and food allergies.

Avoidance: Of all environmental allergens is virtually impossible. However, avoidance can decrease exposure and may lessen your animal's symptoms. This option is most effective for flea and food allergies but impractical for atopy.

Symptomatic treatment: Addresses animals' symptoms with steroids, antihistamines or fatty acids but does nothing to stop the progression of the allergy.

Your veterinarian will help you decide which treatment option is most appropriate for your pet.

Steroid use is commonly used to relieve animals from the everyday discomfort caused by allergies. This approach, although effective, merely hides the symptoms and can cause serious side effects. There are new advances in medicine, such as immunotherapy, that can lessen or eliminate your pet's allergies. As with children, studies show that if started at an early age, immunotherapy can have a much greater impact.

(For more information see "**website 2**" in Website References at the end of the book)

What makes allergies hard to deal with, is that in many cases, you either won't be able to determine exactly what is causing the reaction or won't be able to remove it from your pet's environment. This is where your veterinarian comes into the picture. You and your veterinarian will probably have to work together to determine the best treatment, or combination of treatments, for your pet's allergy. You may have to go through a series of trying a possible solution, waiting to see how your pet reacts to it, and moving on to another solution. Your veterinarian may suggest one or more of the following things:

- **Testing:** Your veterinarian has a few different tools to help determine the source of your pet's allergy. Intradermal or "scratch" tests involve making small abrasions in an animal's skin and inserting small amounts of materials that the veterinarian suspects the pet might be allergic to. If the animal is allergic to one of the materials, say dust mites or ragweed pollen, the immune system will react to it and that particular scratch will become inflamed.

There are also a number of blood tests your veterinarian can use to analyze the amount of certain chemicals that the immune system releases into the bloodstream when exposed to different allergens. These tests can be used to tell whether your pet is having an allergic reaction or whether the problem is caused by something else, and sometimes they can determine the source of the allergy.

- **Steroids:** These drugs work to suppress the immune system and make the allergic reaction less severe. Steroid treatment can help your pet even if you can't determine what he's allergic to or how he's being exposed. They can have several side effects, however, and they affect nearly every organ in the body. Steroid use can cause weight gain, increased thirst and urination, and increased aggression and other behavioral changes. They are generally used if the allergy occurs for a short amount of time, because long-term use makes animals more prone to infection, as well as susceptible to diabetes and seizures.
- **Immunotherapy:** This is one of the safest and most effective ways to treat allergies, but it also takes the longest amount of time to work. In immunotherapy, animals are given regularly--often weekly--vaccinations that contain small amounts of the substance they're allergic to. The same therapy is used for people who go in for allergy shots. It gradually desensitizes the immune system to the allergen, meaning that as time goes by, the immune system is reprogrammed and doesn't react to the allergen as strongly. Unfortunately, it takes some time for the immune system to readjust.

It can sometimes be six to twelve months before animals show any improvement from the treatment.

- **Antihistamines:** These drugs, much like the allergy medication people take, work to block the chemicals released by the immune system, called histamines. They are effective at reducing itching and inflammation, and they are relatively safe to use. Their major drawback is that they cause sedation, and can make pets extremely drowsy and sluggish. Occasionally, they can change an animal's energy level enough to affect his quality of life.
- **Symptomatic treatment:** Even if none of the above treatments are effective, you can still give your pet a lot of relief by simply treating his symptoms as they come up. There are a number of soothing shampoos on the market that contain ingredients like oatmeal or Epsom salts. Your veterinarian may also be able to suggest ointments, ear treatments, or sprays that can make your pet more comfortable.

Be cautious about using home remedies or herbal treatments on your pet, however. Consult with your veterinarian before trying any new treatment, because you could damage your pet's skin or aggravate the allergic reaction. Most of all, remember that while you can give these symptomatic treatments often, they will only provide temporary relief. If your pet still seems uncomfortable despite the baths or other treatments, you can talk to your veterinarian about long-term treatment.

Whatever treatment decision you and your veterinarian come to, rest assured that the patience and determination it can take to treat allergies is well worth it. Though it may take some time and effort, you can help your itchy, grouchy pet feel comfortable again.

As with babies, it might be more complicated to find out what is wrong with your pet. Communication is limited and unfortunately your pet cannot tell you where and what hurts. You need some imagination and persist with your search for the problem. A few times I have emphasized to seek the help

of a veterinarian, but often several visits are necessary and this can hit your purse rather hard. The allergy test I have spoken about could be a simpler and less expensive option in the long run.

Yes, your Pet can Be Tested for Bio-compatible food

In my e-book “How to be Allergy Free” I have written extensively about allergies specifically in humans, however much of the information is also relevant to your pet.

The bio-compatible testing that I recommend for humans, also works for animals. It comes as a 6 month program.

You will know what foods and chemicals (shampoos etc) you must NOT give to your pet.

However, more importantly you will have a list of products that have been tested and are SAFE. This absolutely takes the guess work away.

Also, imagine fewer visits to the vet and no more suppressive therapies.

By removing the know problem foods, your pet will soon be back to healthy active self.

As with humans, all it needs is some hair/fur and the procedure is the same. The sample of your pet will get tested against a list of items.

Information about the animal allergy test

<http://www.freeofallergies.com>

For the e-book “How to be Allergy Free”

<http://www.allergydefence.com>

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Website References

“Website 1”

<http://17a313miqitig2nfq2o6as9pf5.hop.clickbank.net/>

“Website 2”

<http://www.greerlabs.com/vet/vet.pet.owner.education.php>

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The aim of this e-book is to provide information on using methods for allergy relief and health improvement. We cannot accept any legal responsibility for any problem arising from experimenting with these methods. For any serious disease, or if you are unsure about a particular course of action, seek the help of a competent health professional.

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