



# Common Skin Disorders in Dogs

Dogs with skin disorders experience irritation, itching, and/or pain and discomfort. *Symptoms* common to all skin disorders include:

- *rubbing* • *pawing* • *scratching* • *licking* • *chewing* • *biting*

## ALLERGIES

can be in response to food or the environment (e.g., dust mites, pollen, or grass). Dogs can be itchy all over the body or in one area such as the feet.



## HOT SPOTS

start when the skin is irritated, which causes the dog to lick or scratch at the spot. Irritation may be from allergies, fleabites, an ear or skin infection, or matted hair.



## FLEA ALLERGY

from fleabites causes itching, hair loss, and scabs and may appear more severe for dogs that are extra sensitive to fleabites. Irritation is often first seen at the tail base.



## PYODERMA

is a bacterial skin infection. Red, irritated skin and pustules are common, with or without hair loss.



## RINGWORM

is a fungal infection that can affect the skin, hair, and/or nails. Ringworm is **highly contagious**—it spreads through contact with infected dogs or contaminated bedding, brushes, clippers, and housing. People can also be infected.



## MANGE

is caused by mites. There are two types of mange commonly seen in dogs: demodectic and sarcoptic. Symptoms include hair loss, skin redness, and itching.

## DEMODECTIC MANGE

is caused by an overgrowth of mites that live and feed on hair. It is often found in young dogs who have an impaired immune system, are experiencing severe stress, or are malnourished. This type of mange is **not contagious**.



**SARCOPTIC MANGE** is caused by the scabies mite. This type of mange is **highly contagious** between dogs who are in direct contact. People can also be infected.

### DID YOU KNOW?

*Dogs will often differ in their response to the same disorder. The best way to identify problems early is to check your dogs' skin regularly for redness, wounds, sores, hair loss, or other abnormalities.*

*Also, some skin disorders may be genetic and can be passed on to the puppies. If you see any signs of a skin disorder, consulting with your veterinarian will help ensure proper diagnosis and treatment.*

This Animal Care Aid is part of a series developed to provide information about skin issues in dogs. Refer to the other topics in the series for more information on skin, feet, and ear care.

Questions? Email us at [CenterforAnimalWelfare@usda.gov](mailto:CenterforAnimalWelfare@usda.gov)

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