

Common Dog Allergens And How To Avoid Them

A dog exposed to an allergen can quickly develop itching, inflammation, digestive issues, or other symptoms. Around 20% of dogs experience allergies, often starting between ages one and two.

Dog allergens are common, stemming from environmental, dietary, and hereditary factors. If you're getting a new dog, plan ahead for possible allergies by choosing breeds and breeders that minimize these risks through selective breeding. For dogs already in your home, take preventive steps and use treatments to manage allergy symptoms and maintain their quality of life. Being proactive helps prevent problems—after all, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

When a dog is exposed to an allergen, its immune system produces histamines that cause symptoms like itching, licking, chewing, vomiting, and diarrhea. Identifying and avoiding these allergens—by limiting grass exposure, keeping the dog indoors, or removing certain ingredients from its diet—can help manage the issue. Veterinarians can conduct food trials with new proteins to determine if food allergies are the cause.

Not all adverse reactions to dog food are allergies; true food allergies are less common than often believed, according to AKC Chief Veterinary Officer Dr. Jerry Klein.

What Are The Most Common Dog Allergens?

Grass, weeds, bushes, and trees, mold spores, dander, dust mites, fleas, cleaning products, cigarette smoke.

Food ingredients such as specific proteins (chicken, beef, pork), wheat, corn, soy, egg, dairy, etc.

Feathers, perfumes, medications (topical or oral)

How To Avoid Dog Allergens

Dogs can develop allergies due to genetics, but their effects can be reduced. Avoid exposure to known allergens, keep allergic dogs away from grass, mold, or mildew as needed, and provide appropriate food for those with dietary allergies. When avoidance isn't possible, treatments like antihistamines, special shampoos and hydrating conditioners, steroids, immunosuppressive drugs, and specialized diets can help manage symptoms.

What Are The Most Prevalent Allergic Reactions?

Increased scratching, constant licking, feet chewing, ear infections, itchy, red, moist skin.

Itchy, bloodshot or runny eyes, scratching or rubbing face, itchy back, side or base of the tail.

Sneezing, diarrhea, vomiting, hair loss, hot spots

In conclusion, these symptoms can indicate underlying health issues that require attention. If your pet exhibits any of these signs, it is essential to consult a veterinarian promptly to ensure they receive appropriate care and treatment. Early intervention can make a significant difference in improving your pet's quality of life and addressing potential problems before they worsen.