

Hot Spots

A hot spot is a raw, moist sore on a dog or cat's skin, often covered by matted hair. The sore develops when your pet persistently licks, scratches or chews an area on their body, causing significant damage to the skin and ultimately an oozing sore.

Causes

Initially these wounds are often due to an irritant or allergen that causes your pet to itch. Most common allergens include fleas or other insects, food or treats, and environmental irritants, such as dust and pollens. Also, excessive skin-surface moisture, heavy or dense hair coats and matted hair then contribute to the formation of a hot spot.

Prevention

If the primary cause is not found and/or controlled, your pet could experience another hot spot in the future. It is important that we understand the pattern of your pet's skin problems in order to accurately diagnose the cause, so please call our office for an appointment if signs reoccur.

A blood test to diagnose environmental allergies or a diet trial for a food allergy may be recommended to further diagnose the cause of your pet's hot spots.

Treatment

Hot spots can be painful for your pet, so medical treatment is necessary to make them more comfortable. Also these sores are usually a sign of a larger problem, so our veterinarians will also want to find the underlying cause.

The specific treatments chosen by the veterinarian will depend on the severity of the problem, level of pain and how long the problem has been going on. Today your pet received the following treatments:

- _____ The hair around the hot spot will be shaved and the wound cleaned to remove crust and matted hair. Moisture and pus trapped on the skin makes the hot spot worse.
- _____ Topical antibiotics to apply directly on the hot spot.
- _____ Oral antibiotics to treat the infection systemically.
- _____ Oral steroids to reduce itchiness, pain and swelling.
- _____ Elizabethan collars to prevent your pet from bothering the infected area.
- _____ Flea preventative.