

# Dermatitis

**Dermatitis is a general term for skin inflammation. It can have many different causes.**

Skin inflammation often results from normal skin organisms that are typically kept in check by a healthy immune system. Causes include allergies, irritants, skin trauma, bacterial or fungal infections, external parasites, general poor health or nutrition, hormonal imbalances, or immune system abnormalities.

## What does it look like?

Common signs:

- Red and swollen skin
- Hair loss
- Pustules, crusts or sores, and scabbing
- Scratching, chewing or licking the skin

- ▶ Mild dermatitis can rapidly become severe and cover large areas of the body.



## How is the cause diagnosed?

- Clinical signs, like sores and scabbing
  - Physical exam results
  - Laboratory tests as necessary, including allergy or blood tests, skin scrape analysis, cytology, and skin biopsies
- ▶ Additional testing can help to identify what's causing the inflammation.

## How is it treated?

Treatment depends on the underlying cause of the infection, which may require additional medications. It often includes:

- Prescription antibiotics, medicated shampoos, and skin products
  - Antihistamines and steroids
  - Flea control, and other external parasite control
- ▶ Routine bathing, coat care, and year-round parasite control are essential for good skin health.



## How to help your pet

- Administer all medications and skin products as prescribed by your veterinary team
- Monitor your pet carefully and schedule checkups as recommended
- Use year-round flea and tick prevention
- If your pet requires a special diet, do not allow them other food, treats, or table scraps
- Follow your veterinary team's recommendations for bathing and grooming your pet
- Contact your veterinary team with any questions

