Hair Loss in the Dog

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Adult Edition

Dogs 1 – 8 Years Old

THE DOG IS ITCHY

1 The hair loss pattern is follicular centric

***Demodex canis* - Uncommon in adult dogs** (although may have been undiagnosed since puppyhood)

- Variable pruritus and hair loss
- Annular to ovoid areas of scale, comedones, or crusting
- Paws may be diffusely affected

- Diagnosed by trichogram or skin scraping
- Treatment with Isoxazolines, Ivermectin, Moxidectin
- Some adult onset patients may have underlying endocrinopathy, immunomodulatory drug use, or neoplasia

Dermatophytosis - Uncommon in adult dogs (although may have been undiagnosed since puppyhood)

- Typically annular to ovoid macules of hair loss with variable scale and crust
- Minimally to mildly itchy in most patients

- Diagnose with Woods Lamp, DTM, or PCR
- Treat with topical and oral therapy

2 Pododermatitis only

Pyoderma - Common

1 Staphylococcal folliculitis - papules, pustules, crusts, and epidermal collarettes on haired skin (Pyoderma is common in patients with allergy)

2 Impetigo - flaccid pustules typically on minimally haired skin such as inguinal region

3 Canine chin 'acne' - typically face and chin - papules, pustules, and furuncles

- Diagnose by skin cytology
- Treat with topical and oral antibacterial therapy (Pyoderma is common in patients with allergy)

Allergy

- Environmental allergy is common in adult dogs. Typical age of onset is 1-3 years of age. May be seasonal or non seasonal.

- Diagnosis by excluding similar appearing conditions
- Food allergy is less common to have first onset in adulthood. It may not be diagnosed until adulthood if missed in puppyhood.
- Diagnosed by a strict 8-12 week food trial

3 There is no hair loss

Flea allergy - Common

- Dorsum, inguinal area
- Live fleas or flea dirt can typically be demonstrated with flea combing of affected areas

- If there is any chance of flea allergy - treat for it
- Isoxazolines or Spinosad are recommended

Vasculitis - Uncommon to rare in adult dogs

- Can occur secondary to vaccination or can be idiopathic
- May appear as erythema, erosion, scale to crust OR as hypopigmentation, erosion, and fibrosis

- Biopsy to confirm diagnosis

Pemphigus foliaceus - Uncommon in adult dogs.

- Variable level of pruritus
- Larger pustules spanning multiple hair follicles
- Haired and non-haired skin can be affected

- Biopsy to confirm diagnosis

Cutaneous lymphoma - Rare in adult dogs

- May or may not be pruritic
- May present as erythema, white scale, hypopigmentation or erythema of mucus membranes, or nodules

- Biopsy to confirm diagnosis

4 There is hair loss but it is not follicular centric

***Malassezia* dermatitis - Common in adult dogs.**

- Variable pruritus
- Secondary to other inflammatory skin diseases - *Demodex* and allergy most common
- Rarely present in hound-type dogs without proven underlying disease

Other ectoparasites - Uncommon in adult dogs

- *Cheyletiella*
- *Sarcoptes*
- Lice

- Use superficial skin scrapings or tape impression for diagnosis
- Treat if any chance of atypical ectoparasites
- Treatment - Consider topical Selamectin or Isoxazolines

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