

Pet Allergies

Like people pets are subject to a wide variety of allergies. The big difference is that we can usually identify our symptoms, ask for help, and resolve the issues, while out pets rely on us to figure out what is wrong and how to help.

Spotting the Symptoms

Our first challenge is to be able to spot the symptoms. Allergy symptoms commonly present in five main areas: ears, face, haircoat, paws, and skin.

Common visual clues are:

- Discharge
- Odor
- Hair loss
- Discoloration
- Nasal and eye discharge
- Crusts or scales
- Inflammation

Common behavioral clues include:

- Scratching or rubbing
- Sneezing
- Licking and chewing
- Pacing
- Inability to get comfortable

Identifying the Source

Our second challenge is narrowing down the source. There are two sources of allergies; food and environment. Foods that are unnatural for your pet may be a prime source for food allergies. Environmental sources may include pollens, dust mites, smoke, cleaning products, cotton, and weeds and grasses.

The best method to deal with food allergies is to work with your veterinarian to identify foods that would be better for your pet. This may take multiple attempts as various food types are eliminated. This process is much like we would experience as we try to identify our own food allergies through an elimination diet.

In dealing with environmental allergies observation is your best tool. Identify if the problems occur at a certain time of year. This would be a good indication that something that blooms at that time may be the culprit. Link the severity of the symptoms with cleaning schedules. If the symptoms flare after you clean the floor or launder their bedding this would be a good indication that there is something in the cleaning solution or soaps that is the source.

Tips to Help Your Pet

Improve your pets drinking water. Fluorides, heavy metals, and other contaminants found in water can trigger allergic reactions. Filtering your pets water, like you would filter yours will help eliminate these contaminants and improve the overall health of your pet.

With noses that are up to seven times more sensitive to airborne toxins than humans, pets have a much higher sensitivity to their atmospheric environment. Help your pet avoid second hand smoke. Use an air purifier to eliminate pollens, smoke, and dust mites from inside environments.

Find foods that are more appropriate for your pet. Excessive corn, rice, soy, wheat, and other fillers are not part of a biologically appropriate diet for cats and dogs. A better diet will help reduce the inflammatory response reducing symptoms and potential for the development of food allergies.

Eliminate using harsh cleaning chemicals where your pet frequents. This would include floors and bedding.

Give your buddy a bath. A rinse of the paws or a nice bath will help remove the irritants that they collect as they move about. This will provide immediate relief and bring comfort to your pet.