

Dog Skin Irritated After Grooming

If a dog returns from the groomer with skin irritation, a return trip can help soothe her.

By Kathy Salzberg, NCMG

Q. We had our Schnauzer groomed yesterday and she seems to be very irritated with the grooming around her female parts. She keeps licking the area, but doesn't appear to be cut. Now it is getting red from her licking. We put an Elizabethan collar on her, but were wondering if you had any suggestions to calm the area down. We will be calling the vet to ask them, but would appreciate any advice.

A. Sometimes the clipper blade will irritate this highly sensitive area when a dog is groomed, and sometimes the pet's vulva and anus will be sore from urine and feces that can build up and burn sensitive tissue. This is more likely to happen if the blade is too hot or has become dull from use. In my salon, if such a situation occurs, we encourage pet owners to call us immediately and take the dog in as soon as possible for a free medicated bath. We let the pet sit in a tepid bath for 10 or 15 minutes using an oatmeal shampoo to soothe the tender area.

Once we have become aware that a dog is highly sensitive to close clipping, in future grooming sessions we change to a blade that leaves more hair on – a #7f, for instance, instead of a #10, #15 – and use a hypoallergenic shampoo. We will also dry that pet with a cool or room-temperature airflow from our dryers. The best remedy I have found for this is Skin Works by Coat Handler. A greaseless, fragrance-free ointment that helps heal irritations to the pet's private area as well as hot spots, rashes, and insect bites, it is available in small sizes at many grooming salons.