

One in Five Dogs Affected by Summertime Allergies

Skin irritations and licking or scratching are signs of summertime allergies in dogs.

Posted: June 23, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

Summertime allergies affect one out of every five dogs nationwide, according to the ASPCA. Symptoms, although not life-threatening, often involve skin irritations and hair loss due to excessive licking and scratching, and frequent skin and ear infections.

Skin disorders caused by allergies are the most common reasons for visits to the vet, says Jeanne Budgin, veterinary dermatologist at the ASPCA Bergh Memorial Animal Hospital. She adds that determining the source of the allergy is important in treating it appropriately.

Some common causes of allergic reactions in dogs include: Flea allergies, the most common form of allergy, can cause itching for up to three weeks. Food allergies can cause skin irritations, vomiting, and diarrhea, and may occur in combination with other types of summertime allergies. Molds, pollens, and dust can cause atopy, an airborne allergy which results in itchy rashes. Tree pollen, especially oak, and grass can cause allergy symptoms and are the major pollen allergens currently present in the environment.

Talk to your veterinarian if you think your dog may have allergies.