

ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

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All about Allergies

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

If your pet is scratching, has red, irritated skin, licks his feet, sneezes or has chronic ear problems, he could have allergies. Pets can be allergic to many things; flea bites, pollens, molds and mildew, wool, even some of the foods they eat.

First you must eliminate fleas as a possible problem by using Frontline, a prescription flea control ointment. Nothing else kills 99% of the fleas. Most over the counter flea ointments only kill 40% of the fleas.

Diet is the next most important factor to consider. Fatty acid supplements may help and there are diets for pets with allergies. But at the very least make sure your pet is on a good quality food.

Many times your pet will respond to conservative treatments such as flea control, allergy pills, ointments and bathing and grooming. But if not, allergy testing and allergy shots are necessary.

If your pet is allergic to certain materials in the food, only prescription diets will help. These diets are sold through veterinarians and are made for allergic pets. Hill's has a new food that has the proteins in it broken down so small that the pet can't be allergic to them. Eukanuba makes a food that uses fish and potatoes as its main ingredients to help those pets allergic to corn, beef and poultry, which is in almost all other foods, at least in small amounts.

It is important to remember that we don't cure allergies, but we can help you and your pet cope with them better. If you stop giving the shots, pills, food or ointments, and the allergens are still there, the pet will start scratching again. It is a life long illness that without treatment will only get worse.

Also, since this is a hereditary disease passed on from parent to offspring, pets that have this condition should not be bred, even by accident.

If you have any questions, please call us at the Animal Hospital of Lanesville, 952-3643. 