

Flea Allergy Dermatitis Checklist

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Does your dog or cat frequently bite at the base of his tail? Does he excessively scratch at his back? Worse, is his skin red and inflamed? Unfortunately, these are some signs of what may be flea allergy dermatitis (FAD).

Flea allergy dermatitis is among the most common causes of dog and cat skin disease. FAD is an allergic reaction to flea saliva. In some cases, it is caused by just a single flea bite. Flea saliva

contains a multitude of antigens that can cause allergic reactions. Some symptoms in severely affected dogs or cats include itching over their entire body, generalized hair loss, red and inflamed skin, and the development of hot spots.

Have your pet examined by a veterinarian if he exhibits any symptoms of FAD. Sometimes, in the stress of the moment, however, it is easy to forget to tell your veterinarian relevant information about your pet. Use this useful checklist to keep track of your dog or cat's symptoms and take it with you to discuss with your veterinarian.

Symptom Checklist for Dogs

Check the box beside each statement if it is true:

1. Chews or bites at his back, legs, abdomen, or base of tail
2. Developed itchy, red and inflamed skin
3. Lost hair on his back, upper tail, or down the backs of his legs
4. Developed a secondary skin infection (which may be odorous)
5. Is agitated or nervous and paces or won't sleep
6. You've found fleas or flea dirt on your dog

Symptom Checklist for Cats

Check the box beside each statement if it is true:

1. Chews or bites at his back, legs, abdomen, or base of tail
2. Excessively grooms his body

3. Developed itchy, red, and inflamed skin
4. Lost hair on his back, abdomen, or legs
5. Developed skin lesions (feline eosinophilic granuloma)
6. You've found fleas or flea dirt on your cat