Hot Spots - Cases Increase in Warm Summer Months

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

The incidence of hot spots, also known as acute moist dermatitis, increases during the warm summer months.

These circular lesions generally occur on the head, over the hip, and along the ribcage. They begin at the site of a minor skin irritation, such as a flea bite. Bacteria multiply in the warm, moist environment, causing a sudden inflammatory response of oozing, redness, and itching. The itching can be severe, and the dog scratches himself incessantly, sometimes to the point of self-mutilation.

Prompt intervention is necessary because hot spots grow in size quickly. The veterinarian's first task is to diagnose and treat the underlying cause, which can be food allergy, fleas, ear infections, and poor grooming, just to name a few. Measures are then used to bring the skin infection under control. These include clipping the hair on and around the lesion so that air can get to the inflamed area, cleaning the skin with a non-irritating solution, and applying a drying agent. In severe cases, oral antibiotics and antiinflammatory medications may be prescribed. Clipping the nails and placing socks on the hind feet can protect the dog from injury from scratching. Elizabethan collars can prevent the dog from gnawing at the spot.

Many cases of hot spots can be avoided. Longhaired dogs and those with heavy undercoats can benefit from having their coats clipped in summer. Regular medicated baths and a good flea preventive program are also effective safeguards against this irritating and painful skin disease.

We Recommend

Drs. Foster & Smith Itch Stop Shampoo and

Comfy Cone

Drs. Foster & Smith N

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Stop Shampoo and Creme Rinse		

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