

Common Dog Hair and Coat Problems

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Does your dog's coat lose its luster in winter? Or, does your pooch seem to continually itch from fall to spring? Winter's cold, dry weather and the increased air circulation, forced heat, and lowered humidity of your home all take a toll on your dog's skin and coat health. In fact, winter skin and coat problems are common concerns of most dog owners. However, there are simple ways to help keep your dog's coat beautiful and skin healthy.

PROBLEM: dull haircoat

SOLUTION: Loss of coat luster can be due to a variety of factors. These can include some health concerns, such as hormonal imbalances, parasites, and allergies. Poor nutrition, including low levels of protein and essential fatty acids, can also cause a dull haircoat.

Therefore, it is important that your dog is fed a diet rich in proteins, essential fatty acids, and more. Our [Signature Series Adult Dog Food](#) contains up to 24% protein, plus Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids to help keep your dog's coat healthy. Similarly, our [Country Classic Dinners®](#) contain natural, hearty, highly digestible, and protein-rich chunks of real beef, turkey, or chicken. Supplement any diet with our [Vitacoat® Plus](#), which uses powerful marine lipids and flaxseed oil to help promote soft, silky, and luxurious coats.

PROBLEM: fleas

SOLUTION: Fleas thrive, unfortunately, in almost every area of the world. True, they prefer areas with high humidity and mild winters, so in the southern United States, fleas are a definite year-round threat. But even in northern portions of the country fleas can sneak into your home and survive the winter. In fact, mid-winter indoor flea infestations can be the worst. By the time you spot the first signs of fleas they have had ample time to establish a stronghold throughout your home.

The best protection against fleas requires you to maintain your flea and tick control regimen year-round with topical solutions for your pet such as [Advantage® II](#) or [Fiprotrol Plus Flea & Tick Control for Dogs by Drs. Foster & Smith](#). An increase in Omega-3 fatty acids in your dog's diet may also help.

PROBLEM: dry, flaky skin

SOLUTION: Your home's furnace or central air system emits dry heat. This low humidity environment can rob your dog's skin of necessary moisture, which results in dry, flaky, and sensitive skin. True, your dog's body continually replaces this layer of damaged skin. However, if left unmanaged, the condition will continue throughout the winter. Worse, damaged skin – and your dog's incessant scratching to relieve her itch – opens the door for more serious skin problems.

Daily use of the [Dog Grooming Brushes](#) promotes circulation and stimulates and distributes natural oils to help moisturize your dog's skin. In the winter, reduce bathing frequency, which can also rob your dog's body of essential moisture. When baths are necessary, use our gentle [Advanced Formula Oatmeal Shampoo](#) with Oat Beta Glucan for gentle cleansing. Follow up with a moisturizing conditioner, like our [Premier System® Conditioner](#). Increasing the humidity in your home may help as well.

PROBLEM: indoor irritants

SOLUTION: Irritants can wreak havoc on your dog's skin and coat health throughout the year. However, during the winter months, your dog spends the majority of her time inside your home. Even in the cleanest homes, indoor irritants circulate throughout your home due to forced air heat. As a result, your dog cannot escape from the dust, insects, and other irritants that are trapped inside your home.

Our [Premium Plus® Omega-3 Gel Caps](#) are rich in Omega-3 fatty acids to support healthy skin. Also try our [Maximum Healthy Skin Kit](#) which conveniently combines Omega-3 Gel Caps with [Healthy Skin Tabs](#) for optimal support at an economical price.

Recommended Products for Skin and Coat

Drs. Foster & Smith Signature Series® Adult Dog Food - Chicken & Brown Rice Formula	Drs. Foster & Smith Vitacoat® Plus	Drs. Foster & Smith Advanced Formula Oatmeal Shampoo & Conditioner	Drs. Foster & Smith Advanced Formula Premier System® Shampoo & Conditioner
Drs. Foster & Smith Maximum Healthy Skin Kit	Advantage® II Topical Flea Treatment for Dogs	Premium Plus Omega-3 Soft Chews for Dogs by Drs. Foster & Smith	Drs. Foster & Smith Country Classic Dinners® Canned Dog Food