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A Dog And Puppy's History Of Medical Issues Is Helpful When Narrowing Down Causes Of Canine Skin Conditions

Skin complaints are one of the commonest presenting conditions in veterinary health. Many dog and puppy epidermal lesions are not differentiated in how they appear to the eye, yet have various possible underlying triggers, so an in office palpation (touching the skin) alone frequently doesn't point to the answers requisite to endorse a specific a treatment plan. Just before starting the exam, one of the most critical diagnostic methodologies is the taking of a medical history. By asking a specific set of questions regarding a dog's history, a vet can use his or her experience to cut down possible causes of the condition. This can save the owner time and help to avoid high-priced tests by narrowing the number of possible [dog skin conditions](#).

Most vets begin the office visit with a written questionnaire. The doctor will then review the written answers with you and discuss any suggested next steps. Standard lines of questioning include:

1. What's the type of dog? There are thoroughly researched epidermal diseases that have demonstrated a higher incidence in certain breeds. Note this the relevance of this information can differ by region. For instance, a few breeds are predisposed to atopy, which are inhaled seasonal allergens including Basset Hounds, Beagles, Boston Terriers, Boxers, Bullterriers, Cairn Terrier, Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Dalmatians, and German Shepherds.
2. What is the age of the patient? Certain skin conditions are seen in younger dogs like genetic issues. Others are due to a malfunctioning or immature immunological system, which isn't strong enough to avoid Problems to develop such as parasitic disorders. Middle age dogs are subject to allergic response to inhaled or food allergies, while older dogs are frequently subject to skin melanoma.
3. How long has the dog suffered from the problem? Sickesses that appear suddenly are associated with parasitic sicknesses or a food allergy. Ongoing conditions like itch can be the result of a change in food or dermatitis. Issues that have gone on for years without other Problems, allow issues such as hormonal issues to be discarded. Dog baldness without other symptoms can be hereditary or an issue called follicular dysplasia. Dependent on the cause identified, a vet can test for scabies, food sensitivity, or infection.
4. Where on the body did the issue begin? Location is often point to certain causes of the underlying cause of the problem. For instance, conditions on the ears can be caused by spring, summer or fall allergy, dietary allergy, parasites, skin polyps, and secondary infection. Lesions on the legs are usually due to spring, summer or fall allergy, food allergy, parasitic disorders such as scabies, vasculitis and pemphigus (pus filled spots). Issues on the head include mites, seasonal allergy, diet allergy or fungi.
5. What are the symptoms? Symptoms like itchyiness are related to several skin diseases and are not particularly useful in determining the the cause. Also, owners may mis-interpret scratching as being serious when it is really isn't as bad.

There are a few more questions, including seasonality, other signs and symptoms that aren't related to the skin such as the avoidance of food and behavioral change, dietary change, the presence of other animals and even if the owner has any skin lesions that would have been passed from a member of the family to the dog. The bottom line is that by taking the time by responding to a few insightful questions can significantly reduce the total cost of treatment and get your dog on the path to a cure and excellent prognosis.

Cathy Doggins is the writer of at least 50 pieces on dog health. She is the leading contributor to the online resource, the [Dog Health Guide](#), Cathy is dedicated to pet health care and has authored published on [canine skin disease](#).

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