

PRESS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pet Allergies Are Nothing To Sneeze At!

Many of you may be suffering from the effects of extremely high pollen counts. Did you know that your pets can suffer from seasonal allergies, too? They may not have a sniffing or runny nose, but your pets can suffer right along with you. Our pets get itchy when they have allergies, and when they scratch, the itchiness gets worse.

Extreme scratching can lead to skin infections and oozing sores known as "hot spots". Recurrent ear infections are another frustrating sign of allergies. The term "atopy" is used for allergies to inhaled pollen, mold, and dust mites. Fleas can also be a source of itchiness in your pet, especially if they are allergic to flea saliva. Even the food your pet eats can lead to a lot of discomfort. It takes time for food allergies to develop- they are not the result of a recent diet change.

While allergies can't be cured, your veterinarian can examine your pet and suggest ways to keep your pet comfortable. In the case of fleas, an effective flea medication should resolve the immediate problem. Remember you must treat all pets in the household monthly, and you must treat the environment, where 95% of the fleas in various life stages are located. Based on your pet's medical history and physical exam, your veterinarian may suggest allergy testing and shots, antihistamines, a special food, or even a visit to a veterinary dermatologist.

If your pet is itching and chewing, schedule an appointment with your veterinarian, who can help provide some relief.

by M. Kathleen Shaw, DVM

Dr. Shaw is Chair of the VVMA's Media Relations Committee and is a veterinarian from North Bennington.

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The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA), founded in 1898, is a professional organization of 343 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine. For more information, visit www.vtvets.org or call (802) 878-6888.