



## Hot Spots

by Wendy Zimmerman, DMV

Now that the summer is upon us, hot spots are a far too common problem that is frequently evaluated in veterinary practice.

Hot spots are areas of skin irritation/inflammation. They are generally circular patches that lose hair, can be swollen, may exude a smelly pus, and can be painfully itchy, causing the dog to scratch, lick, or bite to the point of self-mutilation. Untreated hot spots can spread and provoke a normally even-tempered dog to growl or nip when touched. Skin infections (also called pyoderma) are also often associated with hot spots. The most common locations for hot spots are the legs, feet, flanks, and rump. But, these localized infections can also appear on the ears, neck, and chest if the dog is continually scratching.

There are several treatment/management approaches to help relieve your pet's itching and cure hot spots. The first thing that is necessary is to treat the hot spot itself. This is usually done by clipping/cleaning the affected area and treating it with a topical antibiotic and/or anti-inflammatory. Oral antibiotics to help manage associated skin infections are also typically prescribed as well as oral antihistamines or steroids in severe cases.

There is usually an underlying reason that will cause your pet to itch enough to cause a hot spot. In order to prevent hot spots from recurring it is very important to not only treat the hot spot itself but to identify and aggressively treat this underlying problem. Some major causes of hot spots can be fleas, allergies (food or environmental), inadequate grooming, or behavioral abnormalities that cause excessive licking.

If your pet seems to be demonstrating any evidence of excessive licking/scratching or if there are areas on your pet's skin that resemble a hot spot, you should have your pet examined by a veterinarian. Once your pet has been evaluated, the necessary diagnostics and treatments can be performed in order to keep your pet as comfortable and healthy as possible.

*Dr. Wendy Zimmerman is the owner and veterinarian of Door to Door Pet Doctor which is a housecall veterinary practice serving Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Delaware, and parts of Philadelphia County. If you have further questions, please feel free to e-mail her at wdzvet@yahoo.com.*

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Hot Spots . . . . .	1
General Health & Grooming . .	2
Overheating/Heatstrokes . . . .	2
Photo Album . . . . .	3
Travel Safety: Dogs in Cars . . .	4
Beach & Water Safety . . . . .	4
Lawn & Garden Safety . . . . .	5
Don't Forget! . . . . .	5
Happy Birthday! . . . . .	6

### CONTACT INFO & HOURS

457 Lancaster Avenue  
Frazer, PA 19355

(610) 725-8973 phone  
(610) 725-8982 fax

Mon - Fri: 6:15 am - 7:00 pm  
Saturday: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Sunday: 8:00 am - 12:00 noon  
(No Daycare on Sundays)

We are closed on all major holidays, and operational hours the day before and after a holiday are subject to change.

## General Health & Grooming

Most common in warm months, fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes carry diseases that may adversely affect your dog's health. Consult your veterinarian and make sure your dog is on a preventative. After playing outside, always check your dog for ticks. It is important to keep your dog well-brushed and clean to maintain a healthy coat and skin. Non-shedding breeds should be clipped regularly; however, long-haired shedding breeds such as Golden Retrievers and Labradors should not be shaved, as their coat insulates them, keeps them cool, and protects them from sunburn.

## Overheating/Heatstrokes

Overheating can lead to heatstrokes, causing permanent damage to vital organs. Dogs are most susceptible to heatstrokes in summer months, because they lack the ability to cool themselves quickly and efficiently. With sweat glands on their feet only, dogs rely on panting to reduce body heat. Extreme exposure to heat can make them easy victims, especially double-coated breeds such as German Shepherds and Old English Sheepdogs. Short-nosed breeds such as Boxers, Bulldogs, and Pugs are also at a high-risk for overheating because they do not pant as well.

Early stages of heatstroke include heavy panting, rapid breathing, excessive drooling, bright red gums and tongue, high body temperature (over 102°), and increased heart rate. Advanced stages include white or blue gums, lethargy (unwillingness to move), disorientation, labored and noisy breathing, shock, vomiting, and uncontrolled urination and defecation. If you see any symptoms of overheating or heatstroke, it is always best to contact your veterinarian immediately. Some ways to cool your dog off and reduce his body temperature include applying ice packs to his groin area or cold, wet towels to his head, chest, and neck. Hosing the dog down or dipping his feet in a bucket or small pool of water may also cool him off. Allow the dog to lick ice chips or drink a small amount of water or Pedialyte to restore electrolytes.

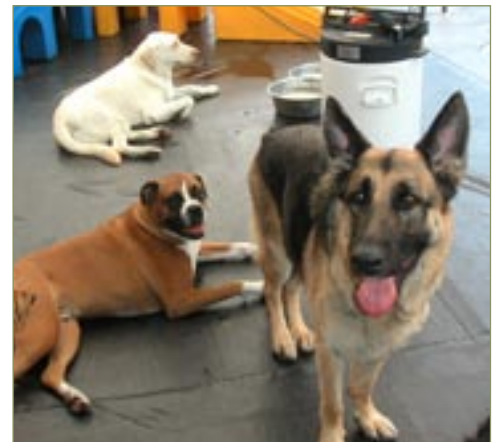
You can prevent overheating and heatstrokes by providing your dog with plenty of fresh water and shade on those hot summer days. Also, use common sense when exercising your dog, taking advantage of early mornings or late evenings when the sun is less intense.



## Summer Dogs

### Photo Album

Yay, summer!! Look to see if your dog made this season's cameos!



## Travel Safety: Dogs in Cars

Summers are hot and it may be your dog's favorite activity to hang out the car window, but that might not be the safest idea. Dogs that stick their head out the window are not only a distraction to the driver, but to others on the road as well. It can also be unsafe because debris from the road can get into your dog's eyes, causing permanent damage. Additionally, unrestrained dogs can be easily thrown at a sudden stop or accident. Many pet supply stores sell harnesses and seatbelts to secure dogs. A crate or pet carrier is ideal, but make sure they are secured properly so they do not shift or flip at abrupt halts. A barrier is another thing that can be added to the car to ensure that dogs are restrained because it confines them to the back of the car. Dogs should never ride on the driver's lap either; not only is it against the law because it could hinder the proper operation of the vehicle, but it is also irresponsible. In the event of an accident, air bags can cause injuries to dogs that are not restrained. Having your dog restrained can also help maintain control as they get in and out of the car because they will not be able to run off if they feel the urge.

Another important point to remember is to never leave your dog in the car on a summer day. Temperatures can rise up to 160° in a parked car, even if the windows are open. Never rely on air conditioners or generators if you plan on leaving your dog, especially in an RV, as these systems can easily malfunction. Always leave a window open for your dog, even if the air conditioning is on. When traveling, keep a first-aid kit, food/water bowl, and an extra leash in the car. To help your dog stay cool, provide ice packs in his crate and keep a spray bottle on hand to mist his face as needed. Make sure to visit a rest stop for you and your dog every couple hours during long road trips.

## Beach & Water Safety

If you plan on vacationing at the beach with your dog this summer, there are some important things to consider. As with any outdoor activity, always provide fresh water and ample shade. Dogs with short hair, white fur, and pink skin (i.e. nose, belly) are at risk for sunburn and should have sunblock applied 30 minutes before sun exposure. If heading to the beach, check beforehand to be sure that dogs are permitted. Be aware of your dog's swimming skills as not all dogs love to swim. If a beginner, start the dog in shallow water and use a lifejacket for deep water. Like children, never leave a dog unattended around water and be especially cautious of strong tides. If swimming in a pool, make sure your dog knows how to exit (ladder or stairs). After a dip in the water, rinse your dog's fur, as salt and sea minerals can damage his coat. Also, never let your dog drink seawater because the salt can make him sick.



Nutri-Vet® Sun Defense for Dogs: Fragrance-free Sunscreen with UVA & UVB Protection (SPF 15)  
[www.petsmart.com](http://www.petsmart.com) \$7.99

## Lawn & Garden Safety

It is important to be aware of the dangers of poisonous plants and lawn chemicals, as they can be hazardous to your dog's health. When treating your own lawn, follow proper use and storage of all fertilizers and chemicals. Cocoa bean mulch, a popular landscaping tool, has an attractive odor and taste but is very toxic for your dog. This type of mulch is a highly concentrated by-product of cocoa bean which, like chocolate, is poisonous to your dog when consumed. After ingestion, common side effects include vomiting, diarrhea, muscle tremors, seizures, hyperactivity, or even death. Another landscape feature to avoid is fungi such as mushrooms which may make your dog sick as well. The 10 most poisonous plants for dogs to avoid include marijuana, sage palm, lilies, tulip/ narcissus bulbs, azalea/ rhododendron, oleander, castor bean, cyclamen, kalanchoe, and yew. For a complete list of poisonous plants, refer to [www.aspc.org](http://www.aspc.org). If your dog eats cocoa bean mulch or other toxins, contact your veterinarian or poison control center immediately.

Sources: [www.decadentdog.com](http://www.decadentdog.com), [www.aspc.org](http://www.aspc.org), [www.unclematty.com](http://www.unclematty.com)



### **DON'T FORGET!**

#### **2006 DOG LICENSE**

All dogs must have a current dog license (PA state law). We sell Montgomery and Chester County dog licenses.

#### **ID TAGS**

Please have a current license and an ID tag on your dog's collar at all times.

#### **VACCINATIONS**

We don't want any sick pups, so make sure you get your dog vaccinated and bring us a copy of the records!

**10% OFF**

#### **Grooming Service**

Bring this coupon to your appointment. (First time dogs only.)

## Happy Birthday!

### July

Mattie Zubritzky, Abby Mollure, Boomer Bigelow, Cole Beyer, Crystal Callaghan, Dave Dennin, Foster Mansson, Echo Baiocco, Liberty Wurman, Scout Isayeff, Molly Lutzker, Bosco Dori, Scooter-Pie Betts, Mac Kavanagh, Tanner Gibson, Kiki Wildman, Marshall Wegemann, Striper Talbot, Tyson Cellucci, Spencer Jung, Teagan Feldstein, Max Ciccarelli, Abby Standring, Belle Regn, Preston Hankin, Scotch Pyle, Ginger Hanish, Shayla Evangelista, Ellie Rockefeller, Jack Hayes, Sofie Thomas, Chief Meely, Sam Reale, Harlee Handel, Gunthor Saracino, Mickey DePaulis-Hawn, Roxy Larsen, Thor Smith, Shadow Phillips, Bee Ship, Parker Childers, Foxy Birth, Abbey Layman, Chandler Oxenham, Reese Rosen, Abbey O'Connell, Kylie Whitman, Gunner Dougherty, Bentley Levy, and Gracie Walkowiak.

### August

Dakota DiFelice, Jack Ruthkosky, Daisy Donofrio, Fritz Rueger, Darby Campbell, Tippy Shive, Scout Firor, Sami Gerrish, Lily Doyle, Anni Ricci, Rosie Zawacki, Otis Wetten, Haley Lawson, Chyna & Ozy Rice, Sparky Macauley, Maizey Mae Dexter, Riley Crunkleton, Yogi Powers, Alli Ninneman, Raven Halpern, Sieben Keyser, Kayla Blu Cash, Abbey Barton, Precious Mazurek, Rudy Zabel, Zoe Reilly, Molly Ott, Khaki McMichael, Sadi Zimmer, Tasha Weinberg, Ginger Cohen, and Ajax Devine.

### September

Bogart McPartland, Bogey Renner, Arnie Cockshaw, Tucker Lavin, Zak Cutillo, Cindy Beatty, Jack Dempsey, Bella Rodgers, Amelia Steenland, Jesse Atterbury, Max Lisi, Milo Kersh, Ponce Cohen, Selene Koenig, Copper Clapper, Max Lewis, Addy Boux, Jagger Avery, Bacon Murphy, Colby Rice, Bailey North, Barkley Godshalk, Tiffany Griffin, Moose Yasgur, Gus & Rex Rubenstein, Megan Hsu, Emma Scalone, Cinnamon Lezcano, Roger Rifkin, Katja Clark, Molena Whitman, Max Ford, Sheba Meldrum, and Sadie Mikol.

*If your dog's name is missing, please let us know when his/her birthday is.*

