

Food Allergy

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Overview

Food allergy is an uncommon problem in dogs and it can start at any age. A change in diet is not necessary for development of food allergy. About 70 percent of affected pets develop allergies to food ingredients that they have been fed for a long time, usually more than two years.

Food ingredients most commonly responsible for allergies are beef, chicken, fish, eggs and milk. Dogs with other allergies like inhalant allergies or atopy may be at increased risk for developing a food allergy.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Food allergy is generally diagnosed by an elimination food trial. The pet is fed a special food for 8 to 12 weeks to see if signs resolve.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. The primary treatment is to avoid the offending food or ingredient. Up to 80% of affected dogs are benefited from a special diet. Other treatments include antihistamines and antibiotics or antifungals to treat secondary infections. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Itchy skin, especially around the face, paws and ears
- Bad skin odor
- Excessive scaling
- Red bumps or papules
- Ear infections
- Self-inflicted skin trauma resulting from severe itching
- Diarrhea and vomiting, although most dogs with food allergy only develop skin problems

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*