



Allergies & Skin Disorders

Is your dog itchy?

Vets are seeing more and more allergic dogs. There are many theories as to why this is occurring such as:

More chemicals in our environments; more stress, defective skin barriers, preservatives & additives in commercial diets, immune issues & thyroid issues etc.

Great Danes as a breed are considered to be an 'affected breed' by some Dermatologists, therefore it would be recommended that you avoid purchasing a puppy from parents with allergies to avoid any genetic pre-disposition.

If your Great Dane starts to show symptoms of allergies, please speak to your Vet. If your Vet and yourself are unable to get a handle on the Allergies within a couple of months it is recommended that you ask your Vet for a referral to a Dermatologist - the sooner you see a Dermatologist the sooner you can address the problem.

If your Great Dane is from a breeder be sure to let them know. They may be familiar with the condition and be able to give you some advice. You would also want to let your breeder know incase there is a possibility of it being a genetic condition.

A common treatment for allergies is Cortisone. Long term treatment with Cortisone can lead to a number of different side effects depending on the dosage rate such as Cushings Syndrome, thinning of skin, liver problems, weight gain, predisposition to infections, diabetes, hair loss, lethargy and increased thirst & hunger.

If your Vet and Dermatologist are not able to control your dog's allergic reaction with other treatments / management systems you may end up turning towards Cortisone to provide the dog with quality of life. Be sure to speak to your Vet / Dermatologist about the effects of different dosage rates.

There are many dogs that have lived their entire lives on Cortisone without any major issues; the dosage rate is what is the deciding factor in a number of cases.

As an alternative to Cortisone there is another product called Atopica. Atopica still has side effects however is safer to use on a long term basis. Unfortunately it is a very expensive drug and may be financially out of reach for Great Dane owners.

Anti-histamines may also assist, although it is important to note that they work differently in dogs than they do in humans. The main side-effect from anti-histamines is drowsiness. This is uncommon, and can be remedied by decreasing the dose. Anti-histamines work better with evening primrose oil than alone. Some anti-histamines to try include: Phenergan, Periactin, Polaramine & Teldane. Obtain dosage rate from your Vet.

Hydro Therapy is the most under-utilised treatment; this is where you bath/rinse the dog as much as daily if that is what helps the dog. Using a product like Human QV Shampoo and finishing with dabbing on QV Oil can also assist some dogs.

Testing

Once the allergy diagnosis has been made, there are a few options to determine what they are reacting to. Your Dermatologist will choose an option that is best suited.

1) **Blood test**, there 2 types:

SPOT which has no Cortisone withholding period, although the food allergy results are thought to be unreliable by Dermatologists.

HESKA which has a Cortisone withholding period. The HESKA is more expensive and is said to be on par with results from Intra Dermal testing.

2) **Saliva test**

Only available through Hemopet in America

3) **Intra Dermal**

Dog must not be on Cortisone at the time, there is also a withholding period

4) **Elimination food diet**

Desensitising Injections

After having the SPOT / HESKA or Intra-Dermal testings, the Lab can prepare Desensitising injections for your dog if required. The results are varied



Plants that can cause irritation to dogs



Bolivian Jew Turtle Vine



Commelina-Cyanea



Itch Plant



Moses in a Boat Rhoeo



Purple Heart



Scurvy Weed

The Biggest Culprits of Contact Itchies!

Wandering Jew / Dew, this weed comes in a number of different varieties, it's hard to kill!



A common household chemical that is often overlooked is No-Vac Carpet Sprays:

