



## The ITCHY DOG Part 2—ALTERNATIVE WAYS to MANAGE ALLERGIES

You may think that you have “tried everything” to stop your dog from biting, scratching, licking, itching, chewing and rubbing ... right ??? Hardly. You’ve likely just scratched the surface of what’s available. Perhaps you’ve tried Benadryl (rarely helps) ... bathing (relief for ~1 day) ... some magic potion or remedy from the internet involving vinegar? And while there are a number of conventional medications that we can use to help with environmental / seasonal allergies, I can assure you that many of the following recommendations will be totally new to you.

While I often recommend several simple, low or no-cost strategies to help your itchy dog, I will introduce some ‘out-of-the-box’ ideas that are worth trying, all while maintaining safe-to-use medications or methods.

As a quick review, the most common medications and recommendations that veterinarians use for managing allergies are:

- 1) Apoquel tablets - Works for most dogs, but we want to avoid using it long-term
- 2) Cytopoint injections - Works for most dogs, and it has virtually no side-effects
- 3) Cortisone injections - Works for nearly every dog, but we are limited in how often we can give it
- 4) Cortisone tablets (with or without anti-histamines) - Like the injections, it works very well, but we need to use it with caution

Let’s review **3 BASIC & ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES** that I frequently mention that may help give some relief for your dog:

- 1) **WIPE DOWNS:** Many of you have taken my advice to wipe down your pet with a damp cloth every time she / he comes inside after going outdoors to potty, play, go for a walk. If you haven't tried it yet, then do it ! And do it every time they go outside and come back in ! And be sure to use a wash cloth with cool water (not a dry wash cloth). Other key points:
  - Do NOT use Baby Wipes or Pet Wipes. Use only a **wash cloth moistened with cool water** !
  - Focus on wiping the **face** and the **feet (especially the bottom of the feet)** and legs ... but it’s best to do a **full-body wipe-down**
  - If convenient, you can also try using a foot bath for your pet, but that might not be convenient.

2) **OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS:** As I state on my main handout, every itchy dog should be on Omega 3 Fatty Acids. And the only reliable source of Omega 3’s for dogs is with **fish oils** (think “SMASH”: Sardines .. Mackerel .. Anchovies .. Salmon .. Herring ). Do NOT waste money on flax seed or flax oil products as dogs cannot utilize the Omega 3’s from flax very well at all. Fish oils help provide a better barrier for the skin to keep pollens from entering the body, while also maintaining hydration of skin. Also, fish oils have the added benefit of being anti-inflammatory (reduce irritation), but they are not ‘anti-itch’.

The 2 active components of Omega 3’s from Fish Oil are EPA and DHA. I have the formula in the main handout, but to repeat it: the proper dose for dogs is 30-35 mg / lb of combined EPA and DHA. (I also share an example of what to look for on a label.)

**Shameless plug:** At Carolina Value Pet Care, we have available for sale a tasty **Omega 3 Fatty Acid EZ Chewable Tablet for dogs** (follow the recommended dosage on the tub).

3) **FLEA CONTROL:** While this should go without saying, flea control is a must ! There are countless times when we find fleas on a pet that the pet parent didn’t even know were there. If this is the only cause for itching, throw a party ! Fleas are easy to get rid of nowadays !

We have several great products for Fleas (**Bravecto**, **Simparica**, **Activyl** and **Trifexis**). Ask us for more information.

DO NOT waste your time with FrontLine or any of the generic versions (active ingredient: Fipronil) of Frontline. It’s a 30 year old product that hasn’t worked effectively in nearly 10 years !

**WHAT’S NEW:** Now let’s introduce **2 foods** as well as **5 supplements** that are well worth trying. If you try the Probiotics and Quercetin w/ Bromelain and Sterolins, start giving them 6 to 8 weeks before your dog’s seasonal allergies typically begin, and continue throughout the allergy season. Vitamin D3 can ONLY be considered if your dog is supervised by a full-service veterinarian.

1) **FOOD:** **Royal Canin Skin Support ... and ... Hill’s DERM COMPLETE** have proven to be very beneficial for protecting a dog’s skin from the exposure to pollens and environmental allergens. **Hill’s DERM COMPLETE** is also an excellent choice for dogs with Food Allergies as it has proven benefits for dogs with any type of skin allergy. Order these foods from our website with home delivery: **www.CarolinaValuePetCare.com**. Go to “Food Delivery” on the homepage, and order either Hill’s, Royal Canin or Pro Plan ..

2) **DERMOSCENT ESSENTIAL 6 Spot-On and PYOSpot Spot-On:** It is widely recognized that keeping the skin moist and free of dandruff and scaliness can be crucial to managing itching, scratching, etc in pets. **Essential 6** is a topical liquid (applied to the back of the neck) that is a blend of essential oils + ingredients that will help maintain the skin as an effective barrier by keeping it moisturized. With the once-a-week application, you can expect to see less itching over time, plus a shinier coat and less dandruff and greasy or dry, scaly skin. And the funky odor can be better controlled as well. In addition to Essential 6, we also carry Dermoscent **PYOspot**, a different topical liquid that can help manage and prevent recurring bacterial and/or yeast infections of the skin.

3) **PROBIOTICS:** Probiotics have no affect on your dog’s itching, but since they promote gastro-intestinal health, they can prevent pollens and allergens from ‘leaking’ from the gut into the body.

I recommend using **PURINA FORTI-FLORA (available at our events or through our online store) which comes in either chewable tablets or packets of powder to sprinkle on your pet’s food**. Also, **VISBIOME capsules are excellent**. While Probiotics are mostly used for managing diarrhea in pets, their main benefit is restoring the healthy bacteria in your dog’s gastro-intestinal tract.

4) **QUERCETIN (with BROMELAIN):** Quercetin is a pigment found in many plants (such as berries, apples and green tea) that has both anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits. For best results, use Quercetin with Bromelain for best absorption and benefit.

These are recommended dosages to follow:

- \* Small dogs (under 20 lbs) - Give 125mg once a day (Give 1/2 of a 250mg capsule once a day, mixed in wet or canned food)
- \* Medium dogs (20 to 50 lbs) - Give a 250mg capsule once a day
- \* Large dogs (50 to 75 lbs) - Give 375mg once a day (using 250mg capsules: Give 1 whole capsule + 1/2 capsule)
- \* Really big dogs (over 75 lbs) - Give a 500mg capsule once a day

5) **STEROLINS:** Sterolins and plant sterols are substances that occur naturally in fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts. They help promote a healthy immune system. The best brand available is Thorne with their Moducare (it’s a human product, but safe for pets). Give 1 capsule a day for dogs less than 50 lbs. And for dogs over 50 lbs, give 1 capsule twice a day

**6) REDONYL ULTRA:** Redonyl Ultra is a chewable tablet for dogs that contains PEA (PalmitoylEthanolAmide), a naturally-occurring fat compound found in both plants and animals. PEA is produced in the body whenever there is injury to tissue or skin. When allergies 'disrupt' normal skin, the PEA in Redonyl helps control and reduce mast cells which release histamine. Since PEA reduces histamine release, there will be less inflammation and less irritation of the skin.

**7) VITAMIN D3:** Vitamin D3 is an essential nutrient that helps the body regulate the balance between calcium and phosphorus. Recently, two studies have shown dogs with seasonal allergies improved *significantly* when given high doses of Vitamin D3. But let me be clear: **Giving Vitamin D3 (Cholecalciferol) without monitoring a dog's bloodwork comes with serious risks.** When Vitamin D3 is given at high doses over a period of time, it can lead to kidney failure and potentially death. But if you are willing to work with a full-service veterinarian who can monitor kidney, calcium and phosphorus levels, you may see great allergy relief at an extremely low cost since Vitamin D3 is very inexpensive.

### **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS TO TRY:**

**1) RESPIT:** ***RESPIT can be more affordable than APOQUEL.*** And the rate of success is similar to Apoquel ... without the potential side effects !

**RESPIT** is a form of "immunotherapy", meaning that the product is used to de-sensitize your dog to the 22 most common causes of allergies in each region of the U.S. It is aimed at de-sensitizing allergic pets to dust mites as well as molds and pollens (from grasses, trees and weeds) that are common to that region.

There are 2 different forms of **RESPIT**: either an injectable form that the owner administers to their pet once a week at home (the injection is given under the skin ~ we'll show you how)... or ... an oral spray that is sprayed into the mouth of the pet once a day. Most pets show improvement within 3 months, but it may take a year before any benefit is seen. Some dogs may not benefit at all. On average, 57% of dogs do 'good to great' ... 25% do 'fair' ... 18% do 'poorly'.

RESPIT Injectable: 1 bottle lasts 10-20 weeks; costs \$155 per bottle (\$8.25 to \$15.50 per week - and includes syringes).

RESPIT Oral / Mouth Spray: 1 bottle lasts 14-21 weeks and costs \$165 per spray bottle (\$7.85 to \$11.78 per week).

**If you are interested, please let us know and we can order it for you, and help get you started with RESPIT.**

**2) LOCAL RAW HONEY or BEE POLLEN:** For honey, it's gotta be LOCAL ! And it's gotta be RAW ! Get some at your local Farmer's Market (you should be supporting them, anyway, right ?) With honey, give 1/4 Teaspoon for every 20 lbs of body weight. But avoid giving it to puppies and diabetic dogs. With bee pollen, give 1/2 teaspoon daily, and it's OK for diabetics.

**3) HOUSEHOLD:** Reduce allergens inside the house as much as possible. Here are several strategies to consider:

- Frequent vacuuming and cleaning of carpets and rugs, furniture and floors
- Wash pet beds weekly
- Use non-toxic cleaning agents in your home (better for you AND your pets !)
- Keep windows closed during allergy season
- Change air filters in the home regularly
- Use an air filtration system or device to remove allergens from the air

### **FOR RELIEF of AGITATION and ANXIETY and MISERY from NON-STOP ITCHING ... BUT WON'T HELP THE ITCHING:**

Many dogs with allergies suffer from anxiety and endless agitation. Think about it. If you've had poison ivy, didn't the itching and irritation drive you mad ??? Of course it did ! Now imagine your dog being itchy for weeks or even months at a time. Can you imagine what that must feel like to be so irritated and uncomfortable 24/7 ???

Here are 2 supplements that won't help the itching, but may **relieve the anxiety and nervousness that comes from the constant itchiness.**

**1) L-THEANINE:** Derived from green tea leaves, L-Theanine has proven anti-anxiety benefits for most dogs.

There are a variety of pet products containing L-Theanine, with a range of dosages: Solliquin ... Composure ... Anxitane. L-Theanine is also available online in a variety of strengths: 100mg, 150mg, 200mg, 250mg capsules, and it even comes in a liquid. Make sure that **Suntheanine** (the active form of L-Theanine) is listed on the bottle.

Important: **It needs to be given regularly to be beneficial.** While you may need to experiment with your dog to find a dose that helps relieve agitation and anxiety from excessive itching, here are some guidelines:

**Start at a dose of ONCE a DAY** to begin with (and to make sure your pet tolerates it well). When stress is high (intense itching ... traveling ... going to the groomer ... going to the vet ... thunderstorms, etc), you can give it more often:

10-20 lbs - 100mg every 8 to 12 hours as needed (2 to 3 times daily) - But always start by giving it ONCE a DAY !

20-40 lbs - 200mg every 8 to 12 hours as needed      40-60 lbs - 300mg every 8 to 12 hours as needed

60-80 lbs - 400mg every 8 to 12 hours as needed      80+ lbs - 500mg every 8 to 12 hours as needed

### **2) MAGNESIUM CITRATE:**

Magnesium citrate can have a calming effect on your dog. Give this before bedtime so your dog will sleep better through the night. Use a Liquid Magnesium supplement for easier dosing for some dogs. Give 5mg / lb once a day ...

10 lb dog = 50 mg / day

25 lbs = 125 mg / day

50 lbs = 250 mg / day

75 lbs = 375 mg / day

**With so many choices of things to do, where do you start ??? Start with the first 3 suggestions (frequent wipe downs and fish oils and flea control ... and perhaps Probiotics) Then once these become ongoing routines, add more and more items to see if you can reduce the effects of seasonal allergies.**