

Cat's Dry Skin Could Mean Allergy

Dear Doctor: I have a black cat with dry skin that flakes like dandruff. She scratches so much that she pulls her hair out and occasionally makes herself bleed. She is miserable and I would appreciate knowing some way that I can help her.

In the past, I have tried using Noxema and Vaseline Intensive Care Lotion on her skin. This helps the scalliness for a bit, but it always returns within a week. Please advise me as to the best course of action to be taken.

Answer: Since your cat may have an allergy, you should take her to a veterinarian to determine the cause for appropriate treatment. As long as she licks herself, her barbed tongue can only damage her skin and inflict pain while trying to relieve the itch. Possible causes include flea bite allergy, fungal infection, food allergy and internal parasites.

Please discontinue the use of Noxema or any other human product for your cat. Cats are extremely sensitive to all products not specifically approved for them. Noxema contains a small amount of phenol. Digestion of phenol can lead to intestinal problems, whitening of skin and gums, and damage to the oxygen-carrying cells.

Dear Doctor: I have a five year-old Pomeranian. She has always been a nervous dog. When she was a puppy, she vomited almost every time she had a meal and she would also have diarrhea. The veterinarian said she had gastritis and prescribed Biosol-M for this problem.

She later began having epileptic seizures and was put on Mylepsin. Although she still has occasional seizures, it is not as serious a problem as her stomach trouble. Her stomach makes loud rumbling noises, and if I put my hand on her stomach I can actually feel the rumbling. She sometimes vomits, with or without blood, and will have occasional bloody diarrhea.

You and Your Pet

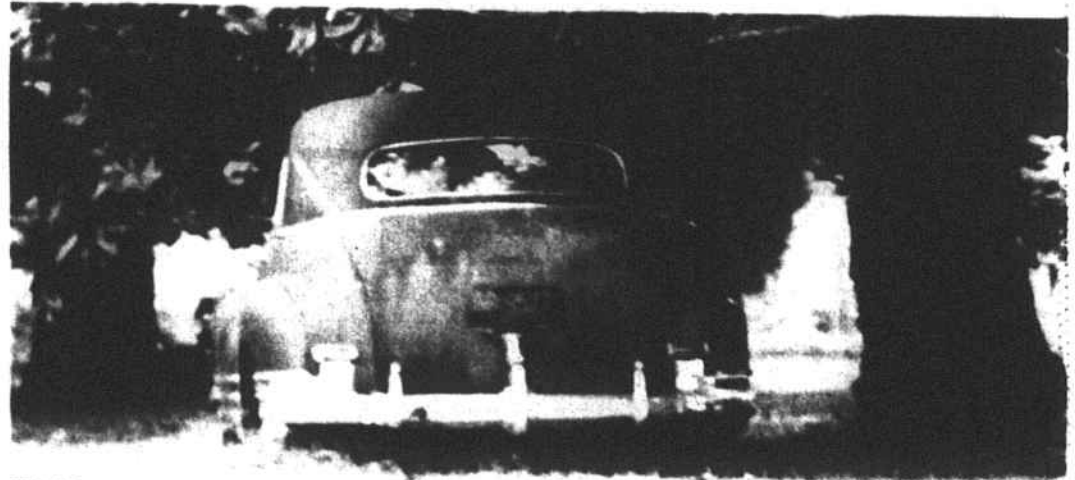
The veterinarian gave me some Pektin Plus to give her at these times. She used to have this condition only occasionally, but since the latter part of 1982, she has this problem every three or four days. I would appreciate any help you can give me.

Answer: A visit to your veterinarian for further tests is in order. Since medication only temporarily helps your Pomeranian's chronic problem, the cause may be more complex than previously suspected. Laboratory tests and special radiographic (X-Ray) studies may point to the exact cause which can then be treated.

Many causes are possible. If she has an anatomic defect, surgery may be necessary. If the stomach is producing more acid than normal, other organs may be responsible and the laboratory tests will help determine this. A heavy parasite load, alone or in conjunction with other disorders, will compound her problems.

Your veterinarian may recommend small meals of a bland diet. Too much food at once, especially when eaten quickly, can trigger vomiting by distending the stomach too much.

Do you have a question about pet care? If so, send it to "YOU AND YOUR PET" 112 Johnston St., Smithfield, N.C. 27577.



Waiting on a driver

This vintage automobile once offered its occupants a smooth luxurious ride with plenty of room. Since being replaced by smaller more efficient vehicles, the car appears to be waiting on a recent hot summer day under the shade of this Dundarrach magnolia tree for a driver to take it for a spin.

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Sunday School Lesson

The story of Naaman, the Syrian general, has always been one of my favorites. One reason is that Naaman's plight and reaction to that plight are so typical of human behavior today. He was a very important man, second only to the King of Syria himself. The chronicler tells us: "He was a mighty man of valor..."

Yet, there is more to the chronicler's comment on Naaman. Despite Naaman's undeniable importance and power, there was something that was going to take away all his power. There was a flaw in him that would negate his tremendous potential: "He was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper!" His career would collapse.

Many of us have had the same experience, for something in our lives sometimes keeps us from realizing our potential. "Jack would make a good supervisor, but he drinks too much." "Sally does a great job in sales, but she can't get along with people."

Naaman knew that his career would be over soon if he didn't do something quickly. Fortunately for him there was someone in his own household who could guide him to someone who could heal him.

We get a glimpse of Naaman's anxiety. He is so anxious to find help that he is willing to go anywhere and do anything.

Well, almost anything and almost anywhere. When it becomes obvious that the King of Israel cannot help him, the prophet Elisha invites Naaman to come to him for healing. It is a mighty host that appears before the humble house of Elisha: horses, chariots, and troops. No doubt about it, Naaman is a mighty man!

So, perhaps we can understand his reaction when Elisha sends him a messenger instructing him to bathe seven times in the Jordan. The fact that Elisha himself didn't come forth to meet him truly offended the proud man: "Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper."

Once again, however, it is one of those "little" people who is able to help Naaman help himself. First it was a "little" maid and now it is one of his servants who speaks persuasively to the proud general: "My father, if the prophet had commanded you to do some great thing, would you have not done it? How much rather, then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean,?'"

Only when Naaman was willing to "come down off his high horse" was Elisha able to heal him.

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