



## Allergies & Your Dog

Allergies in dogs generally take on one or more of three forms; sinus, itching/skin and digestive. Allergies can be environmental and or food related. Sometimes reactions like itching or a runny nose only show up at specific times of the year. If you have a dog with itchy coat or a runny nose only in the spring, they may be allergic to some type of pollen or mold that occurs only at that time of year. Generally, there is little you need to do for mild seasonal cases, as the allergy usually dissipates with the change of season. However, if the reaction is severe enough your veterinarian may recommend medication to ease symptoms.

Food allergies can also show up as itching, sores or scabbing from the itching. Food allergies may also show up as vomiting and or stool issues. Food allergies will persist as long as your dog is consuming the offending ingredient in the food. Almost all food allergies are protein related. If you suspect a food allergy, choose another food that does not contain any of the proteins that are in the current offending food. This can be a daunting task as many foods use whole plant products like potatoes, rice, blueberries or other veggie ingredients. All whole plant products contain protein and can be a source of allergens. For example corn, rice and potatoes all contain about 7-8% plant protein and can be the problem.

All of our Young Again foods contain only meat proteins, specifically chicken, pork and herring (fish). We do use potato starch in our food but it is purified and does not contain any plant proteins. If you switch from your current food to Young Again and the allergy goes away, problem solved. If the allergy persists on our food, you will have narrowed it down to chicken, pork or fish.

Yeast can sometimes be an allergen, but in our experience it is less likely. If your dog is allergic to one of the previous three proteins then you would need to find a single meat source food and test again. Most people choose

a canned food or specialty kibble that is made from only one meat to find out which meat source is causing the allergy, then buy foods without that meat source. If you try a single meat source in a food, make sure you choose one without any plant material. It is also likely that more than one type of protein will be involved in the allergy.

Mild food allergies usually produce skin and ear irritation and can have many levels of severity. However, severe food allergies usually cause vomiting and sometimes diarrhea. Vomiting is usually the first symptom observed. Almost always the dog will vomit within several hours of eating and the vomit will usually be liquid or syrupy and smell like gastric juices. The liquid nature is because it had already begun the digestive process. Diarrhea is also a possible symptom. Diarrhea is liquid stool, stool that is the consistency of soft serve ice cream is not always diarrhea, but can be indicative of a food allergy. Generally, if a dog is suffering from vomiting and diarrhea related to food allergies, it will become more frequent over the next few days until the dog is miserable. You will need to find another food with a different protein source and try again. There is seldom a medication that will be effective with this level of a food allergy.

Not all vomiting and diarrhea is allergy related. Eating some foreign material may cause an intestinal blockage. If vomiting and or diarrhea came on suddenly and severely then a blockage is possible and you should see your Vet immediately. Sometimes your dog just caught a virus and will recover fully in about 10 days; however it is usually best to check with your Vet just to be safe.

Allergies are complicated and if you have questions please contact us and we can discuss your dog's specific case. Always work with your veterinarian for assistance with any abnormalities or changes to your dog's eating habits and digestion.

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