



Why is my pet SCRATCHING?

Lots of things can cause a dog or cat to scratch, and finding the answer can be tricky. Here are a few things to expect during the exam as your veterinarian works to get a diagnosis.

1. Your veterinarian will go through an extensive list of questions as he or she obtains your pet's history. Some common questions may include:
 - > What clinical signs is your pet experiencing? Does your pet:
 - > Scratch his ears, head or other body parts?
 - > Shake his head?
 - > Scoot on the floor?
 - > React with pain or sensitivity to touch in certain areas?
 - > Lick, bite or groom his body or paws excessively?
 - > Have noticeable hair loss?
 - > Have a history of fleas, ticks or other parasites?
 - > Have a change in appetite or water consumption, activity level or weight?
 - > Have a recent change in food or treats?
 - > Have an odor or discharge from any part of the body?
 - > How long have the clinical signs been present? Do they fluctuate during the year or come about with a change in seasons, or are they constant?
 - > Are any other pets or people in the house experiencing any problems?
 - > Has your pet been treated with anything (bath products or cleansers, prescription or over-the-counter medications, flea and tick preventives, etc.) and if so, did your pet's itchiness seem to diminish?
 - > Has your pet traveled recently or been around other animals?
2. Your veterinarian will examine your pet thoroughly from head to toe, focusing in particular on these areas:
 - > Ears, eyes, mouth and face
 - > Under the pet's legs, belly and groin
 - > Feet
 - > Tail and hindquarters
3. Your veterinarian may also run some diagnostic tests, which may include:
 - > Collecting hair samples or discharge to examine under a microscope
 - > Using a device called an otoscope to view the inside of your pet's ears
 - > Collecting blood and urine for a CBC, chemical profile and urinalysis
 - > Using a special comb to detect the presence of fleas or flea excrement