

# Dogues, Under The Skin

How many times have we heard a desperate dogue owner say their dog has something wrong with its skin? Skin is a bit of a problem in the breed, from demodectic mange, to teenage acne even to some skin problems that we do not officially have linked with our breed. It is always advisable to see a vet if your dogs skin does not clear up with a bath in hibiscrub.

## Mange

There are 2 types of mange that your dog can have, both are very painful if not treated promptly. Both need special shampoo to clear the skin.

## Demodectic mange

This is a miniscule mite, not seen by the naked eye. All dogs have this mite on them, but it is only a problem when the dog has an under developed or weakend immune system, stress, malnutrition amongst other things. Under these conditions, the mite multiplies at a fast rate and symptoms include hair loss and scratching.

The vet will do a skin scrape to find out if this is definitely what the dog is suffering from. Then, a shampoo is usually prescribed to bath the dog at regular intervals to reduce the amount of mites. Secondary infections, can also be treated with antibiotics.

## Sarcoptic mange

This is caused by a mite from the scabies family!! It is highly contagious. The mite burrows into the skin and causes an intense itching for the dog. It starts around the eyes and edges of the ear usually. There are various treatments for this mange, shampoos, some spot on flea treatments are also used to control this. The dog should be isolated and all bedding should be cleaned.

## Sebaceous Adenitis

In my own personal opnion, I think this could be a skin problem dogues suffer from. There has not been enough research into dogues yet to say for definite that this is the problem, but I hope people will come forward and ask vets to skin scrape for this skin disease.

This skin problem displays itself in different ways, depending on length of coat.

Short coated dogs might have a moth eaten appearance, they may have slight swelling to the face, fine dandruff and skin lesions. When the lesions heal, the skin becomes leathery.

It is also an autoimmune, inflammatory skin disease. It is not contagious, but is a lifelong problem and can be treated, but not cured.

Diagnostic procedures used to test for sebaceous adenitis include skin scrapings and endocrine function tests, which usually return as normal. Skin biopsies may also be taken for lab testing. Pathologic testing may reveal inflammatory reactions of the sebaceous glands -- the fatty glands found in the hair follicles, which provide oil to the hair and skin.

If your dog is tested positive for this skin disease, please inform the club, no names have to be given, but it will help with future data, to determine how much of a problem this is and then hopefully act accordingly within the breed.

These are just a small example of skin problems your dog can suffer from. Please groom your dog regularly so you get a feel for your dogs normal coat texture. If anything changes, please do not hesitate in taking to vets for a diagnosis and treatment.