

STAPH SKIN INFECTIONS

Staph infections are usually a surface infection of the skin. They are often a recurrent infection associated with an underlying disease, such as allergy, insects, Cushing's, or low thyroid levels. Please refer to: www.wormsandgermsblog.com/resources/MSRP for useful info. Many pets with this infection are itchy and it is important to determine if your pet is itchy because of the infection or because of an underlying allergy (is your pet itchy when the skin infection is absent?) so concurrent treatment with corticosteroids is discouraged.

Staph that affects dogs is not *generally* contagious to other pets or people because the bacteria involved are normally present on the pet's skin but do not normally cause disease. HOWEVER, always **use excellent hygiene**, wash hands, and avoid close and prolonged contact with your pet. Avoid contact of dog saliva with open wounds. Avoid contact with feces and similar basic measures are also key....along with making sure physicians know about animal contact and think about potential zoonotic infections. That's particularly true for people that are at increased risk of disease.

It is recommended *not to allow your pet to sleep in your bed*. Antibiotics should only be used when bacterial infection is confirmed or strongly suspected to exist. If you or another person in your household is having a surgical procedure, be sure to tell your physician about your pet's infection.

Staph infections can be frustrating because they are often chronic and require long term antibiotic therapy in pets. There are four different types of Staph bacteria that can affect the skin of the dog or cat. A bacterial culture of the skin is often required to determine which antibiotic will be effective. **Once an effective antibiotic has been found, that antibiotic must be continued until the entire skin surface is normal and then 1-2 weeks longer.** Treatment should not be discontinued before the infection is eliminated. Prolonged treatment is more successful in reducing recurrence of infection. Then, every effort should be made to find and control the underlying disease or the infection will come right back. Ask us about skin barrier repair & Staph desensitization.

Please, give your dog the following antibiotic: _____.
Give _____ capsules/tablets by mouth _____ times/day for a minimum of _____ weeks.
Doses used should always be high enough to reduce survival of resistant bacteria but occasionally may cause nausea. **DO NOT reduce or stop** the prescribed amount of antibiotic for your pet without telling us.

Topical antibacterial therapy helps clear the infection faster. Please, bathe your pet _____ weekly with _____ shampoo. Apply and wait 10 minutes before rinsing. Flea products must be re-applied when using medicated shampoos but not when using an oral flea preventative. Please make a dilute Clorox bleach solution fresh daily (2-4 tsp/half gal water) and apply to your pet's skin, daily if possible. Caution with fabrics.

We must re-examine your pet PRIOR to discontinuation of the antibiotic. Call our office if any ill effects (vomiting, diarrhea, poor appetite) are noted.