

Your vet may shave an area of hair so that they can clean up the hotspot and help the skin to dry. They may use medications such as anti-inflammatories (to help stop the itching) and antibiotics (to treat the skin infection) either as tablets or topical treatments. Many dogs will need an Elizabethan collar (head bucket) to stop licking and scratching until the hot spot starts to heal.

#### Can you stop a Hot Spot?

The short answer is no! Unfortunately Hot Spots can occur for a number of reasons (see previous notes) however prevention (regular parasite control, routine ear cleaning) and early identification are the key factors in making sure that your pet does not suffer too much from the discomfort of a hot spot. As noted above they can grow size very quickly due to self trauma so if your dog is biting or grabbing at an area of their body, it may well be a Hot Spot.

#### So what do we do at We Love Dogs Kennel Resort for all our visits who arrive with, or have a Hot Spot while with us?

As our guests arrive they are all given what we call a lumps and bumps check. This is a body check to see if there are any lumps and or bumps that you may not have told us about. At this body check we are also checking for Hot Spots. Dogs that are prone to Hot Spots (either because of their breed, hair type or as notified to us by the owners) are checked on a regular basis while on their holiday. During the warmer months when we do water play then these dogs are checked thoroughly daily. Any guests presenting with a Hot Spot are attended to by our Vet and you will be updated as to the treatment plan. If a guest has chronic Hot Spots then we do work with our clients to help work out what may be the cause of the Hot Spot. For those dogs having treatment for Hot Spots while with us we do use a Comfy Cone which is an innovation in Elizabethan Collars – made from a soft, flexible material that still stops the dog from chewing the affected area but is more comfortable for them to wear.

*We would like to thank the following contributors for the Veterinarian information provided in this brochure:*

Dr Katrina Warren – [www.drkatrina.com](http://www.drkatrina.com)

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff – [www.peteducation.com](http://www.peteducation.com)

Please feel free to share this information with your fellow dog loving friends, it can also be downloaded from our website at [www.WeLoveDogs.com.au](http://www.WeLoveDogs.com.au)

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we love  
**DOGS**  
Kennel Resort



# HOT SPOTS

## Customer Information Sheet

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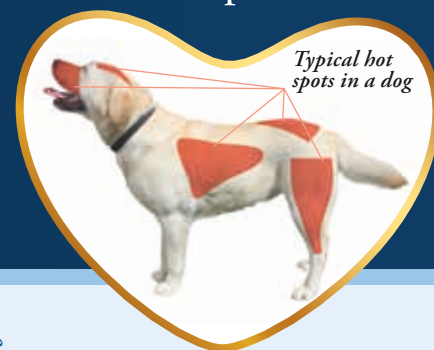
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At We Love Dogs your dog's health & safety is our number 1 priority. The following information has been provided to help you better understand Hot Spots.

*What are Hot Spots?*  
*How do Dogs get Hot Spots?*  
*How are they treated?*



At We Love Dogs we are fortunate to care for thousands of dogs every year, from the very small to the very tall, the very young to the very old and every dog in between.

Over many years of caring for dogs we have come to understand that there are a number of health issues that owners, even the most responsible ones (like all our clients), are unaware of when it comes to their beloved pooches.

To help you be the very best pack leader you can be we have developed a number of health information fliers to inform you about some common but misunderstood health issues.

This flier is specifically about Hot Spots or pyotraumatic dermatitis. While not immediately life threatening, Hot Spots are quite uncomfortable for the dog and can develop rapidly, going from something the size of 10 cent piece to the size of a small dinner plate in a matter of hours. Early intervention is the best way to help your dog if they ever have a Hot Spot.

#### **What are Hot Spots?**

Hot spots are a common skin condition that affects thousands of dogs in Australia every year. A hot spot is a focal area of skin infection, called superficial pyoderma or pyotraumatic dermatitis. It is a bacterial infection that develops and rapidly spreads in the skin.

They can appear very quickly (within a couple of hours) and are intensely irritant to the animal.

In appearance, it is red, moist and usually roughly circular.

Hot spots will be warm to the touch, and painfully itchy for a dog. Hot spots can ooze pus and have a bad odour. Hair loss from around the infected area is also common but doesn't occur in all cases. Because dog hot spots are so painful and irritating many dogs will bite and scratch the area causing the infection to spread and the wound to become larger in size.

#### **What causes Hot Spots?**

**Moisture** – A common cause for hot spots is moisture getting caught next to the dog's skin, making an ideal spot for an infection to start. Moisture can become trapped by matted fur, a dog collar, or simply thick fur.

**Irritation** – Hot Spots can also start from any other issue that cause the dog to scratch including ear infections, eye problems, skin parasites such as fleas, dental disease or allergies to food or environment. Once the itching starts, it becomes a self-reinforcing cycle so that even if the initial stimulus is removed, the skin irritation remains. Through self-trauma a dog can create a raw wound the size of a bread and butter plate within an afternoon.

Many times chronic dog hot spots stem from an allergic condition. Though some dogs are simply more prone to hot spots than others due to their coats and their love of water.

#### **Where are Hot Spots most likely to occur?**

They are often found around the head – usually under the ears and on the neck, but they can be anywhere on your pet. Another prevalent area is under the tail and where the leg joins the torso, both places that can remain moist if the dog gets wet.

#### **What breeds of dogs are most likely to get Hot Spots?**

Hot spots are most common in dogs with thick coats such as Golden Retrievers, Cocker Spaniels and German Shepherds. However, hot spots can occur in any breed.

#### **How do you treat a Hot Spot?**

If you think that your dog has a hotspot, a visit to your vet is advised. The most important part of treatment is to stop the cycle of scratching as quickly as possible. This involves identifying and treating the underlying cause as well as treating the skin infection that has resulted.