In my life I try and be conscious of others financial situations, so I spend others people’s money like I spend my own—intelligently. I understand you have a business to run, however by starting off with the simple tools first and keeping pet parents informed about the process as a whole (starting with topicals, etc. before resorting to the expensive and sometimes necessary allergy testing), that will nurture the relationship between you and the pet parent. This in many cases makes for a longer term relationship that will positively effect your bottom line as well as create an advocate for your practice that will sing your praises to their friends and colleagues.

As you know, there is no single way that will successfully manage every allergy case. When dealing with an allergic pet prescribing some type of suppression therapy may make sense, however for the purposes of this article, we’d also like to explore other options (i.e. supplements, topicals, frequent bathing, etc.) that can help to reduce or ideally eliminate some of the discomfort.

**TOPICAL THERAPY:**
Topical therapy can be used as one of the initial tools for all types of pyoderma. The benefits often include decreases in bacteria along with a reduction in the recolonization of surface bacteria, helping to prevent recurrences.

**Bathing:**
This is the most widely utilized and effective practice due to the fact that it doesn’t require any special equipment or tools and is something that can be easily done in the comfort of the home.

The benefits of bathing include the removal of inflammatory and bacterial by-products, removal of offending allergen from the surface of the skin (the body’s largest organ), and removal of calloused skin, resulting for some, in immediate results.

Following bathing, another suggestion is to cut back any overlying hair prior to bathing, which may increase response rate and time commitment.

**Sprays, Gels, Creams & Ointments:**
This type of treatment is ideal for spot treating and has limited use in some pyoderma cases. Ideal situations for these products would be pyotraumatic dermatitis, skin fold pyoderma, and localized folliculitis and furunculosis. Many companies that make chlorhexidine shampoos also have towelettes and wipes available to supplement between bathings or to be included in a bathing routine.

Common antibacterial ingredients in sprays, gels, creams and ointments include benzoyl peroxide, chlorhexidine, and mupirocin. Gels with peroxide may occasionally be irritating and should be discontinued if inflammation develops. Mupirocin is found to work well for deep folliculitis and furunculosis cases that are localized. (Mupirocin is effective as it inhibits bacterial protein synthesis and has the ability to penetrate extremely well into the effected tissue.) It is important to note however that because of the risk of nephrotoxicity, mupirocin should not be used in areas where large amounts of polyethylene glycol can be absorbed or on mucosal surfaces.

**SUPPLEMENTS:**
Just as they do in their human counterparts, supplements help pets overcome nutritional deficiencies. We need all the nutrients in their
proper amounts for optimum health. Since most pet foods contain questionable ingredients at best, and given the high cost of premium pet foods, supplements can fill in those gaps.

Nutritional supplements are also useful in getting rid of the toxins which pets take in everyday. The environmental stresses our patients/pets, go through, chemicals they are in contact with, as well as our lifestyle - all subject them to harmful toxins which can lead to serious health problems. Supplements, most especially antioxidants, can help their bodies keep toxins to a minimum.

There are many more benefits that nutritional supplements can provide. The main point is that these supplements help you give your patient/pet the optimum health they deserve and minimize the risk of diseases.

**OMEGA 3-GEL CAPS:** Dogs & cats have strict dietary requirements for certain polyunsaturated fatty acids that are important for maintaining skin and hair coat conditions, reproductive function & tissue repair. Current research shows that Omega-3 fatty acids also play an important role in mediating and regulating inflammatory, immune & aggregatory responses within the body. EPA is believed by experts to have a sparing effect on COX inhibitors/NSAIDS.

Dr. L. Phillips Brown, DVM of Nutri-Vet reminds us that skin/coat supplements provide essential fatty acids, minerals and vitamins that may often be missing in a pet’s diet. These additional supplements can help promote a soft, shiny, and healthy coat and reduce unwanted shedding.

A supplement they often recommend from their line is the Nutri-Vet Wild Alaskan Salmon Oil which is full of Omega-3 fatty acids (helps promote healthy coat; control allergies and inflammation). He also reminds us of the benefits of brewer’s yeast (a great source of vitamin B and amino acids; promotes immune health) and antioxidants (for healthy skin and coat).

Each unique Nutri-Vet product is veterinary formulated to taste great & help dogs feel and look great.

**ANTIOXIDANTS:** Research has found that dogs and cats that are given antioxidant supplements—such as vitamins A, C and E, selenium and alpha lipoic acid—have a stronger immune system and are able to fight disease and infection more easily than animals who eat a highly processed diet deficient in these nutrients.

Antioxidant supplementation is especially important for animals that are being treated for cancer or have other diseases that compromise their immune systems. The appropriate management of allergies is not a one and done approach and relies heavily on the right tools, the right steps and the right partners. If you wish to discuss a particular case, whether on treatment elsewhere or just in the beginning stages of managing a new case, Spectrum Labs is here to help. Our goal, whether it comes to allergy testing and treatment or can be managed by the aforementioned techniques, is a better quality of life for our 4-legged allergy sufferers.

**REFERENCES**


2. Rerke PH. Bacterial skin disease in the dog: A guide to canine pyoderma. Bayer, AG, 1996


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We have many exciting things going on behind the scenes here at Spectrum. We are putting the finishing touches on our new website full of new interactive tools, have launched our social media efforts and have started development on some new tools for pet parents and educational tools for you and your staff.

We are also putting together industry blasts periodically to keep you informed about food recalls, USDA alerts, etc.

To make sure you are included in these please email your clinic name (city, state) and preferred email to:

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lkelver@vetallergy.com or fill this out above and fax back to (480) 898.0611.
DO YOU OR YOUR EMPLOYEES HAVE ALLERGIES?

Spectrum Labs, Inc. has been performing human allergy testing through our sister affiliate, Spectrum Health Care, Inc. for the last several years. We are pleased to announce that we are making these services available to all of our veterinary division clients* at a professional courtesy discount. You will now be able to provide our world famous SPOT Test to your office staff and members of their families at the discounted price of $115.00. The human SPOT Test includes 45 inhalant allergens consisting of local grasses, weeds, trees, molds and animal dander as well as 46 food allergens consisting of meats poultry, dairy, seafood, grains, fruits, vegetables and spices.

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