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Notes From The Exam Table



Welcome to the season of Ragweed and Goldenrod

When fall rolls around, as we enjoy the changing of the seasons and the beginning of college football, many companion animals begin to feel the effects of the allergens associated with the blooming of the fall 'weeds.'

The symptoms can include a small discharge from the eyes, redness in the ears, an odor from the skin, rubbing their face on furnishings or carpets, and/or chewing and scratching until they bleed. Let's look at some of the things that you can do to help prevent these allergies from progressing to the extreme phase.

One of the best things that you can do at home to help alleviate your pet's symptoms is to bathe them on a regular basis. Bathing strips away the natural oils but also strips away the bacteria that they have placed on their skin while chewing. This prevents a secondary skin infection and also decreases the chance of progressing to seborrhea (an over production of oil by the skin's oil glands due to the constant irritation from the allergens). When bathing, use a moisturizing shampoo and allow the shampoo to remain in contact with your pet's skin for 10 minutes before rinsing it off thoroughly. This 10 minute soak allows the skin to absorb the moisture and prevents the skin from drying out. Bathing may be done daily if your pet is scratching aggressively or excessively.

If the bathing is not helping, please call or email us and make an appointment so that we can assess your pet's needs and can chart a plan of action to decrease the severity of your pet's reaction to the allergens. This plan may include antihistamines, omega fatty acid supplements, allergy testing or cortisone. Each of these is chosen after careful consideration of your pet's health condition and level of allergic reaction.

Fall is always a wonderful time of year to enjoy the great outdoors, but don't forget to watch your pet for signs of discomfort associated with allergies.

Dr. Watts

