Why a dog’s sensitive skin needs thoughtful grooming, protection and care.



SENSITIVE BY NATURE A dog’s skin protects the internal organs, helps regulate temperature and acts as a barrier against environmental elements. Because it is sensitive, it can also be vulnerable to allergies, infections, irritation and disease.

Why Canine Skin Needs Special Care

Dogs are known for their loyalty, energy and affectionate nature, but they are also known for having sensitive skin. As the largest organ of the body, a dog’s skin plays a critical role in protecting the internal organs, regulating temperature and acting as a barrier against environmental elements. Understanding this sensitivity—and knowing how to care for a dog’s skin—is vital to keeping them healthy and comfortable.

A dog’s epidermis, the outermost layer of the skin, is much thinner than a human’s. While the human epidermis is around 10 to 15 cells thick, a dog’s epidermis is only three to five cells thick. This makes canine skin more susceptible to cuts, bruises and irritants. Dogs also produce less sebum, the natural oil that moisturises and protects the skin. This can contribute to dryness, itching, flaking and irritation.hrough. It opens up **new formulation territories**, giving brands the ability to deliver HA benefits in products where it was previously impossible.

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Regular brushing removes dirt, dead skin cells and loose fur, and helps distribute the coat’s natural oils.

Common Triggers for Irritation

Consumers are increasingly conscious of the environmental impact of the products they buy. Biotech offers a way to meet these expectations without comDogs explore the world with their noses and paws, often coming into contact with environmental elements that can irritate their skin. Pollen, grass, dust and chemicals are just some of the common irritants they encounter every day.

Many dogs also suffer from allergies that appear as skin problems. Food allergies, environmental allergens such as pollen, and contact allergens such as certain fabrics or cleaning products can all trigger reactions that leave the skin red, itchy and inflamed..

Everyday Grooming Measures

Pet owners can take simple preventative grooming measures. Regular brushing removes dirt, dead skin cells and loose fur, reducing the risk of matting and skin irritation. It also helps distribute the coat’s natural oils, keeping the skin moisturised and healthy.

Over-bathing should be avoided because it can strip the skin of its natural oils. When bathing a dog, rinse thoroughly to remove all soap residue, which can irritate the skin. For dogs with dry skin, consider using a moisturising spray or lotion

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specifically designed for pets.



Dog-specific grooming products should be designed with canine skin sensitivity in mind.

Labelling and Dog-Specific Formulation

An INCI ingredient list is required for pet grooming products in South Africa because these products are treated as cosmetics. Cosmetic labelling rules require INCI nomenclature; it is part of South Africa’s cosmetic labelling standards and is supported by CTFA and SANS 98 ingredient-labelling requirements.

Dog-specific shampoos should be free from fragrances, flavours, colourants and harsh chemicals.

Sun Protection Requires Specialist Guidance

Protecting dogs from sunburn is a real concern in South Africa, where the UV index is among the highest in the world. Dogs with light skin, thin coats, pink noses or shaved areas can burn quickly.

A dog sunscreen is likely to be viewed as a borderline veterinary product rather than simply a cosmetic. Manufacturers should therefore have evidence-based veterinary guidance and, ideally, input from a regulatory specialist before finalising a gentle, safe cream base with active ingredients and UV filters.

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HEALTHY SKIN SUPPORTS A HAPPY DOG Regular grooming, proper nutrition and prompt veterinary care are essential in managing and preventing skin problems.

Care that Supports Comfort

A dog’s sensitive skin requires careful attention and proper care. By understanding the factors that contribute to skin sensitivity and taking proactive steps to protect it, pet owners can help dogs remain healthy, happy and comfortable.

Regular grooming, proper nutrition and prompt veterinary care are essential in managing and preventing skin issues, allowing man’s best friend to live a full and joyful life.

Explore our Pet-Care Ingredient Range

Developing products specifically for canine skin and coat care starts with appropriate ingredient selection.

Explore the Cosmetic Ingredients pet-care range and discover ingredients for your next pet grooming product: cosmetic-ingredients.co.za/pet-care/

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