

# Acute Moist Dermatitis (AMD) or Hot Spot

## What is it?

AMD, also known as a “hot spot”, is a rapidly growing skin sore, which often occurs in thick-coated and/or long-haired dogs like the Newfoundland. Body sites commonly affected by AMD include the back, base of tail, sides of the thighs, neck, and face. Even though it can be quite painful, the dog will often scratch and chew at the area, causing further inflammation.



## What causes it?

It is thought that the spot begins with a superficial skin injury, which causes some moisture to collect due to discharge onto the skin, under the coat. The inciting precursor lesion can result from any skin injury, including fleas, tick, mange mites atopic dermatitis, allergies, hair mats, foreign material, etc. Bacteria is thought to grow in the moist environment at the site, eliciting further inflammation. Scratching and chewing can lead to additional inflammation and moisture. This vicious cycle can result in a large and painful lesion in just a few hours.

## Signs & Symptoms

The skin at the site is often moist and red, and there is often a discharge onto the coat and skin. AMD often occurs in hot, humid weather.

## Treatment

Treatment often begins with clipping the hair at the site, extending the clipped area to 1 inch further than the margin of the sore. An electric clipper is recommended, since it is thought that scissors may even cause more damage and inflammation to the skin.

Since the area may be exquisitely tender, the dog may need sedation by a veterinary office. After clipping, the area is cleaned with a mild antiseptic. An astringent drying agent can also be considered to reduce moisture at the site. Additionally, a topical preparation which contains an antiseptic or antibiotic is applied to the area. This may also contain an analgesic for pain, and a corticosteroid to reduce inflammation. Spray on products are preferred.

The healing process takes some days. There are rare instances where the infection is deep, with satellite lesions in the surrounding healthy skin. A veterinarian should be consulted for these (and any which have trouble healing), since an oral antibiotic may also be necessary. When properly treated, the lesion is less red in 48 hours, and there is complete healing of skin in 7-10 days.

## Prevention:

Prevention regimens include keeping the dog free of parasites such as fleas, grooming regularly to remove mats and any foreign plant material from the coat, treating skin allergies aggressively, and when a lesion begins, to treat it immediately.

*This information is not meant to be a substitute for veterinary care.*

*Always follow the instructions provided by your veterinarian.*

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