

## Alabama Rot in dogs

### Overview

- Alabama rot is a rare but potentially deadly disease that affects dogs by damaging the blood vessels in their skin and kidneys.
- Skin sores are the most common symptom of Alabama rot, but in severe cases it can cause kidney failure and even death.
- At present, we don't know exactly what causes Alabama rot, but we do know that most cases occur between November and May, and it's often reported in dogs that have been walking in muddy or woodland areas.
- Dogs with Alabama rot can recover well if they are treated quickly, and only develop skin symptoms, but the outlook is much poorer if they also develop kidney problems.
- If you think your dog is showing signs of Alabama rot, speak to your vet immediately.

### What is Alabama rot?



Alabama rot (also known as Cutaneous and Renal Glomerular Vasculopathy/ CRGV) is an extremely rare, but potentially deadly disease that affects dogs. It causes damage to the blood vessels in the skin, leading to skin sores. In severe cases it can affect vessels in the kidneys which can lead to kidney failure.

At the moment, we aren't sure what causes Alabama rot, mostly because it's so rare that it's very tricky to study. However, we do know that nearly all cases occur during winter and spring (between November and May), and it's often reported in dogs that have walked in muddy or woodland areas. Alabama rot can affect dogs of any age, and any breed.

## Symptoms

Symptoms of Alabama rot can include:

- Skin ulcers/sores
  - Most commonly on the leg, foot, nose or tongue
  - Usually painful, red, raised and circular
  - Sometimes have a dark or black centre
  - Often surrounded by swelling and/ or bruising
- [Limping or stiffness](#)
- [Loss of appetite](#)
- [Low energy](#)
- [Vomiting/ Diarrhoea](#) (sometimes bloody)
- [Drinking/ peeing more](#)
- Red dots/ blood blisters on the skin

## When to contact your vet

It's always best to contact your vet if you see any wounds on your dog, especially if they've been walking somewhere known for Alabama Rot, or if they seem unwell. Alabama rot is very rare so it's unlikely to be the cause of your dog's symptoms, but it's always safe to have them checked if you're worried.

[Am I eligible for PDSA veterinary treatment?](#)

## Diagnosis

If your vet suspects Alabama rot from the symptoms your dog is showing, they may want to run some tests to confirm. These can include blood tests, urine tests or biopsies of your dog's skin or kidney.

## Treatment

Treatment for Alabama rot depends on your dog's symptoms.

**Treatment for skin wounds:** Your dog is likely to need pain relief while their wounds heal. They may also need [antibiotics](#) if their wound becomes infected. If your dog is licking or nibbling their wounds, they may need to wear a [buster collar](#).

**Kidney disease:** If the disease starts to affect your dog's kidneys, they will need intensive care, involving a hospital stay and a fluid drip.

## Outlook

If your dog has a mild case of Alabama rot (that doesn't affect their kidneys), they are likely to make a full recovery. However, if it spreads to the kidneys, unfortunately their outlook is much poorer.

## Prevention

There's been lots of research into Alabama Rot but vets still aren't sure what causes it, which makes it very difficult to prevent. However, there are some sensible steps you can take if you are concerned for your dog, or you know of cases in your area:

- Check your dog regularly for wounds, and contact your vet for an appointment if you are concerned – it's easier to treat Alabama rot if the signs are spotted early.
- Wash your dog's feet after they come home from walking, especially if they have been in a very muddy area (it's been suggested that cases of Alabama rot are more common after a dog has walked in a wet, muddy places).
- Avoid walking in [areas known for Alabama rot](#).

## Cost

Treatment for emergency conditions such as Alabama rot can become very expensive, especially if your dog needs hospitalisation and intensive care. It's important to speak openly to your vet about your finances, the cost of treatment, as well as what you think is right for your pet. There is often more than one treatment option, so if one doesn't work for you and your pet then the vet may be able to offer another. Consider [insuring your dog](#) as soon as you get them, before any signs of illness start. This will make sure you have all the support you need to care for them.

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