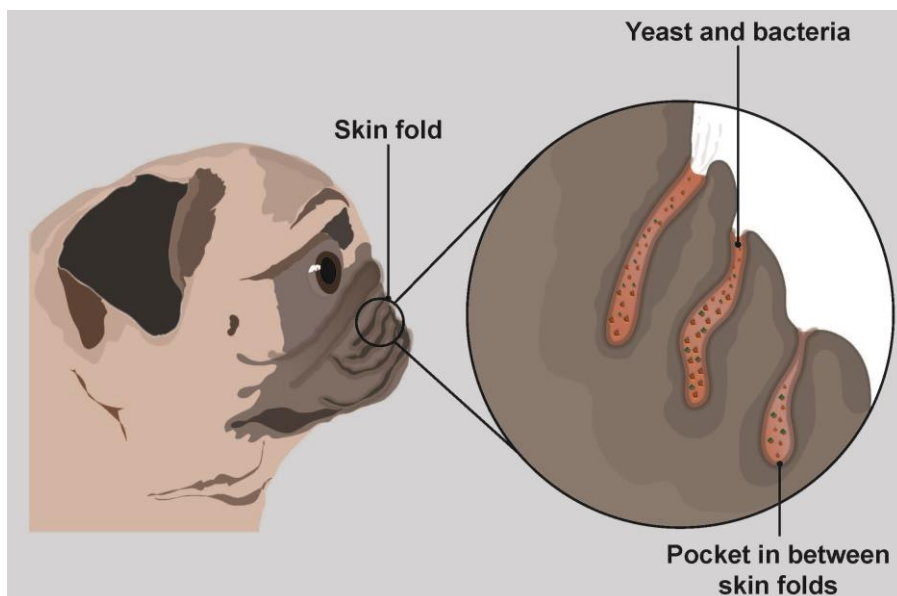


Skin fold dermatitis in dogs

Overview

- Skin fold dermatitis is an infection between two rolls of skin.
- Skin folds get warm and moist and provide a perfect place for bacteria and yeast to grow.
- The condition is common in dogs with wrinkly skin and/or short noses.
- The first sign of skin fold dermatitis tends to be smell.
- The best way to prevent skin fold dermatitis is to regularly clean and dry in between any rolls of skin.
- Contact your vet if you notice any skin problems in your dog.



Skin fold dermatitis is common in flat-faced breeds

Skin fold dermatitis explained

Skin folds get warm and moist, which provides the perfect environment for bacteria and yeast to grow. Skin fold dermatitis is a condition more common in short nosed dogs (British bulldog, Pug, French Bull Dog) and dogs with wrinkly skin (Shar Pei). It is most likely to develop on the nose, above the tail and in the skin fold above the vulva in a female.

Symptoms

- Smelly, damp pockets of skin
- Scratching, licking or biting
- Rubbing face or bottom
- Red, sore skin folds
- Crusty yellow or thick white discharge inside skin folds
- Pain when skin folds are cleaned or moved

When to contact your vet

Contact your vet if you think your dog has a skin fold problem. Infected skin can cause a lot of discomfort and cause serious problems if left untreated.

It is very important to stop your dog (or any other pets!) from licking or scratching the sore patches. Your vet may provide you with a cone (buster collar) or other device to stop them licking or scratching. You can also purchase these yourself at a pet shop or online.

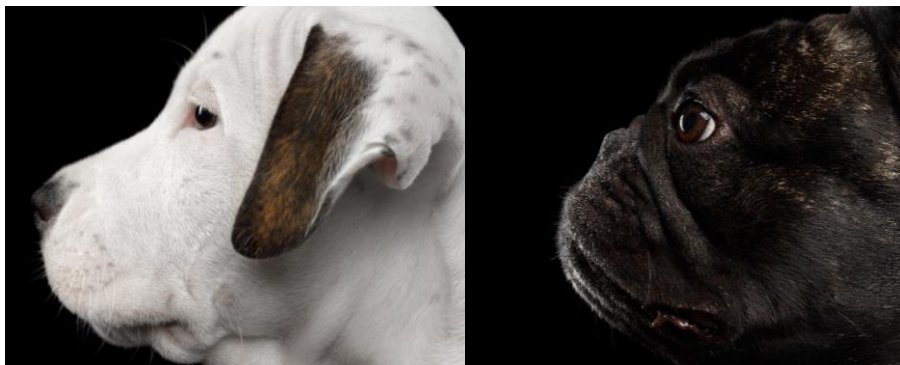
You know your dog best. If they don't have the symptoms listed above but you are still concerned it's always best to book an appointment with your vet.

Causes

Yeast and bacteria live naturally on your dog's skin in small numbers. They only cause a problem if they are given the chance to overgrow, i.e. inside warm, moist pockets of skin.

Dogs with skin folds require lifetime care from their owners to keep their skin healthy.

Breeds prone to skin fold dermatitis



It's clear to see which of these two dogs are most likely to suffer with skin fold dermatitis

Flat-faced and wrinkly breeds tend to be prone to skin fold dermatitis. Examples include:

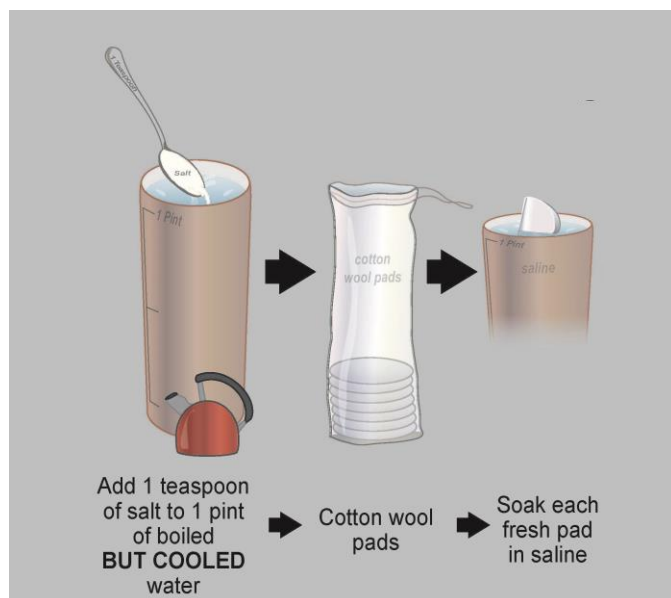
- Shar Pei
- British bulldog
- French bulldog
- Pug
- Basset hound
- Pekingese
- Boxer
- Cocker spaniel

Treatment

You vet may suggest the following treatment:

Skin fold cleaning

- Cleaning and drying infected pockets is essential.
- Your vet may prescribe a special anti-yeast shampoo or ask you to use salt water (see illustration below). They can show you how to clean and dry your dog's skin folds so you can keep them clean at home.



Use fresh cotton wool pads and saline to clean infected skin pockets

Steroids

- If necessary, your vet may prescribe an anti-inflammatory medication (usually steroids). This can be a tablet, spray or a cream.

Antibiotics

- Antibiotics aren't always necessary because some skin fold infections are caused by yeasts, which need a different treatment, usually a medicated shampoo or cream.

- If your vet prescribes antibiotics, they may be provided as tablets or cream.

Outlook

Dogs with skin fold dermatitis usually get better quickly with the correct treatment and care.

Keeping your dog's skin folds clean and dry is usually enough to prevent problems recurring. In rare cases, surgery is needed to remove the folds of skin and stop infection coming back. Speak to your vet if your dog is suffering from skin fold dermatitis regularly.

Prevention

It's important to clean and dry in between your dog's skin folds regularly. Use cotton wool pads soaked in salt water (see instructions above) and ensure their skin is thoroughly dried afterwards. Don't use anything else to clean your dog's skin unless it's something your vet has advised.

Breeding dogs without excessive skin or skin folds is the best way to prevent skin fold dermatitis.

If you are thinking of getting a pedigree dog make sure you research the breed thoroughly to ensure you get the healthiest dog possible.

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