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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Itchy Pet Awareness Month**

*by*

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August is Itchy Pet Awareness Month. Itching is a very common problem in pets and can drastically affect their quality of life. Itchy pets is one of the top reason that people seek medical care for their beloved furry family member.

There are a myriad of reasons that a pet can be itchy—both acute and chronic reasons—and it can be very irritating and painful for that pet. Fortunately, your veterinarian can help identify what the reason is and come up with a treatment plan to address the itchiness and discomfort.

Common signs of itchy pets include irritated or red skin, malodor to the skin or in ears, and dryness of the coat. Sometimes you may notice moist dermatitis under the neck or under the arms—you may have heard these referred to as hot spots.

The most common causes of itchiness are seasonal allergies, food allergies, and skin infection. If your pet is itchy your veterinarian can help determine what is causing the itch and how best to treat it. There are many different treatments for itchy pets available. The first line of defense usually starts with topical treatments, such as medicated sprays, mousses, and shampoos. However, typically itchy pets need more to help suppress the itch and there are multiple medications that help by suppressing the itch—these includes both pills and injections. If there is a reason to suspect food allergies, you typically will start your pet on a diet trial and use a novel protein or hydrolyzed protein diet to see if the protein causing the allergy can be identified.

Sometimes allergy testing may be recommended. Depending upon what type of testing is pursued this may be done by your regular vet or you may be referred to a dermatologist.

If your pet is itching, reach out to your veterinarian for help and guidance on how best to treat them. There are many treatment options available, and your veterinarian should be able to find the right one for your furry friend.

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*The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA) is a professional organization of 380 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine.*