



It is also possible for allergies to be **passed on to offspring**, so please take that into consideration, should you intend to breed with an affected dog. The only way to manage an allergy and to improve your dog's quality of life is to identify the causative allergens, try to avoid them as far as possible and use the allergen-specific immunotherapy (ASIT).

The treatment begins with gradually increasing concentrations and dosing intervals over a longer period of time. In most cases, this treatment increases your dog's immune system tolerance to the respective allergens. As a result, your dog feels comfortable in its surroundings again. Improvements are often noticeable within a few weeks of starting treatment. However, in some cases, it can take longer (from several months to a year) before improvement is noticeable. Overall, **this type of therapy is effective in about 70% of cases, either reducing the severity of allergic signs or completely eliminating them.**

An allergy is a disease that cannot be cured, therefore, an ASIT treatment - **if successful - must be administered lifelong.** In rare cases, side effects may be observed, such as a short-lived worsening of clinical signs. In most cases, your veterinarian can adjust the dosage until the side effects disappear.

For targeted treatment, your vet needs accurate, reliable laboratory analysis results, which is precisely why they work with Laboklin. Together with your vet, you will be able to make the correct diagnosis, identify the causative allergens and begin appropriate **treatment**, thereby restoring an **optimal quality of life** for both you and your pet.

Short overview

→ Allergy

= Hypersensitivity reaction



Allergies in dogs can range from harmless to severe clinical conditions which can be seriously detrimental to the animal's quality of life.



→ Most important clinical signs

Mild to severe pruritus, skin lesions and intestinal problems.



→ Onset of clinical signs

Depending on the type of allergen: onset while still a puppy or in senior years, seasonal or perennial, localised on the face, paws, between the digits or on the entire body.



→ Common causes

Fleas, house dust mites, pollen, various food ingredients.



→ Tests

Exclusion of other diseases, detailed history, clinical signs, skin or serological allergy test and elimination diet.



→ Suspected food allergy

Pay attention to diarrhoea, vomiting or frequent defaecation.



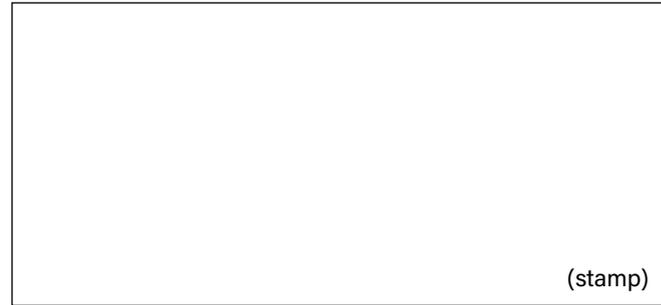
→ Basis of a diagnosis

Precise analysis and laboratory testing in a good, renowned laboratory.

Laboratory profile

Name:	LABOklin Labor für klinische Diagnostik GmbH & Co. KG
Office:	Bad Kissingen
Founded:	1989
Qualifications:	One of the leading laboratories in Europe
Operating in:	Europe, Asia, Arabian Peninsula
Team:	Over one hundred specialists and veterinarians
Specialty:	Research projects at the federal level

Handed out directly from your vet



(stamp)

Service

This info folder and other useful information is provided **on our website www.laboklin.com**. Under the heading "Vetinfo - Folder Help & Advice" you can read and download this information.



LABOKLIN

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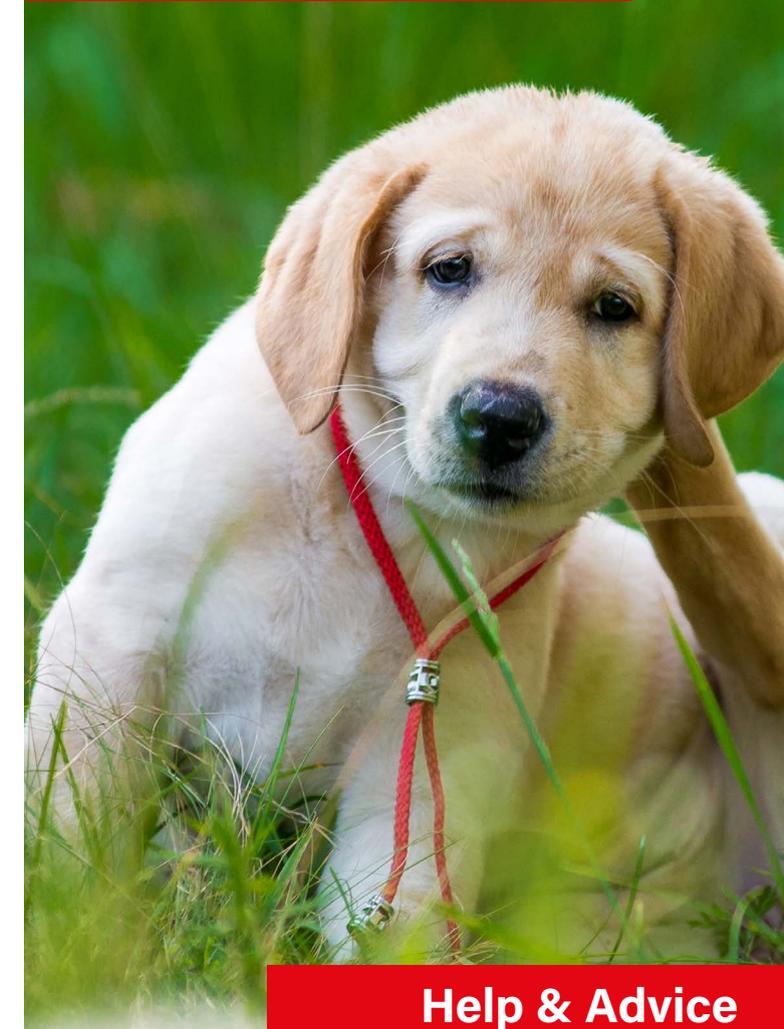
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Dr. Regina Wagner, Laboklin

LABOKLIN

Allergies in Dogs



Help & Advice

The modern information series provided
by your vet and Laboklin

Help & Advice



Early signs of an allergy

Flea allergy

Time point/onset and location of signs offer valuable clues to the identification of an allergy. The onset of illness during the warm season is suggestive of an allergy to flea saliva.

Atopic dermatitis (environmental allergens)

Allergies to house dust mites or storage mites cause symptoms throughout the year which can become more severe when the animal spends more time indoors, particularly in the rooms with carpets. Signs associated with pollen allergies increase during the spring, summer and early autumn time.

Food allergy

Allergies against food ingredients can be directly related to food intake. However, this is not always the case and sometimes allergic signs associated with food can occur even days after ingestion of the allergen. This often makes it much more difficult to identify a direct correlation. Just swapping one food source or company will not result in a decrease in clinical signs. A thorough analysis of the animal's living conditions by your vet is the right way to begin allergy diagnostics.

Clinical signs

The first clinical signs appear at the **age** of 6 months to 3 years. An exception is food hypersensitivity,



which may also become apparent in puppies or very old dogs. Dogs of **all breeds** can be affected.

However, there seems to be an increased susceptibility to the development of allergies in dogs of certain breeds such as West Highland White Terrier, Boxer, Retriever, French Bulldog, and German Shepherd. The first obvious sign will be an increased itchiness of the skin. **Red spots, baldness (alopecia), scales and crusts** become evident after the initial period of itching and are a consequence of self-trauma (scratching, licking) and secondary infections caused by yeast or bacteria.

The areas most commonly affected are the face and paws (e.g., interdigital space). Chronic, recurring **ear infections** are quite common. Some animals develop **conjunctivitis** or **respiratory disease**. In cases of flea allergies, the caudal part of the dog and the area around the **base of the tail** are usually affected. Food hypersensitivities may present with **diarrhoea and/or vomiting and frequent defaecation** in addition to pruritus and rash, or also as the sole symptoms.



How to rule out other differential diagnoses?

Due to the fact that **other diseases** can also be responsible for pruritus or skin lesions, your veterinarian will try **to rule these out systematically** using various clinical or laboratory tests. Depending on the clinical signs and their location, your veterinarian will decide which tests are necessary. Swabs or smears are often taken to detect bacteria or yeasts. Skin scrapings are used to identify ectoparasites. Skin biopsies which are submitted to a specialised laboratory can also be collected for further testing. Some diseases can be diagnosed using serological blood tests. If all other differential diagnoses have been ruled out, your veterinarian will take further steps for **allergy diagnostics**.

Which allergy test should be chosen?

There are essentially two types of test procedures:

Intradermal test/skin test

Several different allergens (e.g., pollen or house dust mites) are injected directly into your dog's skin. The reaction of the skin



(wheal) is evaluated and is indicative for hypersensitivity to the respective substance.

Serological test/blood test

Some allergies induce allergen-specific **antibodies** that can be detected through a serological blood test. These antibodies can be detected in the dog's blood, therefore, for this type of test, your veterinarian will take a blood sample and submit it to a specialised laboratory for analysis. Not every test is feasible for every case, and your veterinarian will have to decide which test is suitable for your dog.

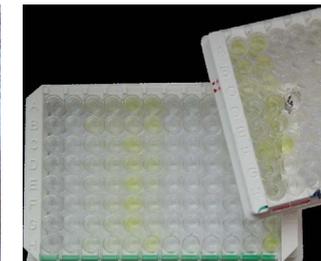
Special case Food hypersensitivity

Diagnosis of food hypersensitivity can be **challenging**, because the gut-associated immune system



has many different ways to respond to allergens. The "gold standard" for diagnosis is a rigorous **elimination diet**. This requires **100% compliance and discipline on the part of the dog's owner** and is especially difficult to implement in households with several dogs, small children or elderly people who may not always be disciplined enough to stick to the diet.

To diagnose and treat food hypersensitivity, it is crucial that the feeding plan determined by your veterinarian is strictly followed for up to three months and that the dog has no access to other food sources. Your veterinarian may advise you to either use a commercially available diet or prepare the food yourself (home-cooked diet). If the clinical signs disappear during the elimination diet, it can be assumed that one (or some) of the ingredients in the previous food was causing the symptoms. After completing the elimination diet, the original food must be reintroduced (**provocation**). If the signs reappear, an allergy to one or more ingredients of this food is confirmed. It is also possible to detect allergen-specific antibodies (IgE and IgG) against food ingredients in a



blood sample. This **serological food allergy test** is very helpful, especially when you and your veterinarian are trying to **compose a new diet** for your dog that contains all essential nutrients but no allergens. However, there are also adverse reactions to food that are not based on antibody reaction; therefore, blood tests are not suitable to determine these types of food intolerance. In such cases, only an elimination diet – based on ingredients that have never been fed before – can lead to a correct diagnosis.

Allergens have been identified: what now?

The best treatment is complete **avoidance** of the allergens. In case of **flea or food allergies**, avoidance of the causative allergens is generally easy and is also the only effective form of treatment. A suitable diet or appropriate flea control products will usually lead to success. But if the dog is suffering from a **pollen or house dust mite allergy**, it is nearly impossible to

selectively avoid the triggering allergens. In cases of **short lasting seasonal allergies (< 4 months)**, certain **medications or precautions** can be taken to alleviate the severity of clinical signs. In cases of **prolonged or year-round symptoms**, however, the side effects of long-term drug therapy are often too significant. An **allergen-specific immunotherapy (ASIT, hyposensitization)** should be considered for a long-term treatment.

This kind of therapy is only available for environmental allergens (house dust mites, moulds, insects, pollen). An allergen-specific immunotherapy is based on the results of your dog's allergy test. **Individualised treatment solutions** containing the relevant allergens, to which your dog has shown positive reactions in previous allergy testing, are prepared and administered subcutaneously (under the skin).