

====CHRONIC SKIN ISSUES=====

There is a lot of very profitable testing for allergies, and then biopsies for fungus, bacterial infection and inflammation which practically always lead to the same treatments.

So, even though there are TONS of tests to run, only a few are really important.

Testing should be done to confirm a suspicion, not prove what it isn't.

In chronic skin cases, THYROID testing is the most important test.

If the dog seems to have Cushing's Disease, that's not hard to rule out, either and doesn't necessarily require a lot of expensive testing. Your Vet can advise, but there are many "more than one way to skin a cat".

After all the biopsies of the skin, whether they find mange, ringworm, pyoderma, allergic or atopic inflammation, or not - the dogs with chronic skin problems USUALLY end up on treatments for ALL of them ANYWAY. So what was the point of spending a thousand dollars just to put the dogs on the following ANY WAY?

Hypo-allergenic diets without chicken or grain, or better-still: Made with hydrolyzed proteins.

Administration of Ivermectin or similar products (selamectin, moxidectin) every month at doses sufficient to be parasitocidal. (Mitacidal)

Antihistamine therapy

Oral flea control of the most stringent kind. NexGard for example.

Anti-fungal shampoos which are based on Chlorhexidine (hibiclens) or Sulfur.

Removal of carbon-based micropollution with Aloe baby wipes, or even wet bath towels in the bigger dogs.

Chronic antibiotic therapy (usually very effective) which can look like one-week-on-and-three-weeks-off or even daily for the long term.

Plus: Cytopoint =OR= Apoquel (But not both because the latter cancels the former)

Here are some "various notes" of some import:

If Cytopoint is used in skin WHILE IT STILL HAS INFECTION it has a high probability NOT to work. The key is to 'fix' the skin with a steroid and an antibiotic and when the skin is "verging on perfect" *THEN* hit them with Cytopoint. *THEN* the results will impress. Cytopoint is quite expensive.

If a dog has a recurrent skin infection (plus or minus allergies) the suggestion to test thyroid was also a good one because chronic vulnerability to infection is OFTEN a result of low thyroid: Any dog that has a body condition score of 5 and that may ALSO be related to thyroid.

The "no chicken" thing is a Big Piece as well. Finding a diet without chicken is difficult because EVEN THE SALMON DIETS often use CHICKEN FAT. So "no chicken and grain free" is good advice but you have to scour the label for hidden chicken products.

Sulfur based shampoos and such are good because sulfur is pretty aggressive about ringworms and yeasts in the skin.

Apoquel is associated with a lot of cancer. Cytopoint is not.

Steroids are "okay" for short term control but on the long term, there are other things you can do. In fact, there is a LONG LIST of things you can do, each of which is at least 15% effective at reducing symptoms and the need for "stronger medications" - seriously, doing any three of them will reduce symptoms by 45% - but resolution of symptoms entirely on the long term is the tricky thing.

This is an older video that needs a "pen and paper" for other ideas:

<https://drjohnson.com/chronic-skin-diseases/>