

## Sunburn and Skin Cancers

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Chronic Dogs can be allergic to bees just like people. The reaction to a bee sting can vary from swelling at the site of the bite, to multiple skin hives, through to life threatening collapse (anaphylaxis). Bee sting allergy is considered an emergency and you should seek veterinary attention urgently. As with any other allergy, dogs will not grow out of their allergy and repeated stings may increase the risk of a life threatening reaction.

Bee sting allergy may be suspected if the dog is observed playing with or in the vicinity of bees or if you observe the bee actually stinging the dog or find the "sting" still attached to the skin at the bite site. Many times when dogs react there is no one able to confirm that a bee sting has occurred. In these cases our veterinarian needs to consider not just bee allergy but also other allergies that can mimic bee allergy.

In the case that the reactive allergy cannot be confirmed then a specialist in veterinary dermatology is recommended. A veterinary dermatologist is best suited to differentiate between the different types of allergies and offer the best treatment options. Confirmation of a bee sting allergy is done by skin allergy testing for bee venom. This testing is very safe as the dose of venom is very controlled. Once we have confirmed a bee sting allergy your pet can be placed on bee sting allergy vaccine (desensitisation). The success rate of this in dogs is very good and is supported not just by our own experiences but also by multicenter studies throughout the world. Pets who have had a life threatening bee sting reaction and have subsequently been treated with bee vaccine, if stung again either suffer a very mild localized reaction or do not get any reaction at all.