



# LA LUCIA VETERINARY CLINIC

23 Oakleigh Avenue  
La Lucia  
031 5628435  
Emergencies: 031 2071300

## May-June 2015 Newsletter

### Skin Problems

How to tell if your bird is sick

Hill's Prescription j/d Free trial bag

Did you know?

Eukanuba Loyalty Programme

### SHOP ONLINE:

Have you had a look at the new **epetstore** veterinary Buy-Online platform?

You can purchase pet foods and accessories online just as if you were right here in our store and have them delivered to your door!

Register once off and save R100 on your first online purchase.

Convenient, time saving and cost effective.

Go to [www.epetstore.co.za](http://www.epetstore.co.za) to start shopping. Our store code is **LAL1** or for Pets Cafe, **PETS2**.

## Skin Problems in Cats and Dogs

Skin problems are one of the most common reasons pet parents seek veterinary care and they affect both cats and dogs. The condition of your pet's skin is an indication of their overall health. A wide range of causes—from external parasites and allergies to seasonal changes and stress, or a combination of these—may be affecting your pet's skin and should be investigated.

### **What Are Some Symptoms of Skin Problems?**

Constant scratching, licking and chewing at the skin

Scabs or round, scaly patches

Redness or inflammation.

Dry, flaky or otherwise irritated skin

Hair loss, bald patches

Rashes

Swellings, lumps or skin discolouration



### **What Might Cause Skin Problems?**

One of the following may be causing an abnormality with your pet's skin and should be investigated:

**Ringworm:** This highly contagious fungal infection can result in inflammation, scaly patches and hair loss. You'll want to have your veterinarian treat it immediately to prevent other pets and people in the household from becoming infected.

**Fleas:** Not only do fleas irritate the skin, cats and dogs can have an allergic response when exposed to them. Symptoms commonly include excessive scratching, thinning of hair above the base of the tail, crusts and red, raised skin lesions.

**Other external parasites:** Ear mites usually cause itching and redness around the ears and a dark, coffee ground-like material can be seen in the ear canals. Lice can produce intense itching, and mange mites can cause severe flaking and scaling.

**Seasonal allergies:** Your pet's constant scratching may be due to sensitivity to common allergens from trees, mould and grasses.

**Food allergies:** Many foods (such as beef, milk, poultry and corn), fillers and colourants can be seen as foreign by your pet's immune system and can lead to itching and rashes.

**Grooming products:** Certain shampoos and grooming products can irritate your pet's skin.

**Seasonal changes:** Many pets, like people, get dry, flaky skin in the winter.

**Environmental factors:** Contact with certain chemicals or fabrics can cause skin irritation, as can exposure to the sun or excessive cold.

**Bacterial or yeast infections:** These infections most commonly follow the onset of another skin disorder.

**Tumours:** A variety of benign and malignant skin growths can develop in dogs and cats.

**Stress:** Anxiety may cause your pet to excessively lick and chew, causing hair loss.

### **How Are Skin Problems Diagnosed?**

After obtaining a history and performing a thorough physical examination of your pet, your vet may perform some of the following diagnostic tests in order to find the cause of your animal's symptoms:

Skin scraping with findings evaluated under a microscope to check for mites

'Tape test' to check for parasites

Individual hair examination under a microscope

Bacterial culture and sensitivity tests

Skin biopsy

Food and other allergy testing

Blood tests to assess your pet's overall health

Microscopic evaluation of cells to establish if bacteria or yeast are present

### **How Can Skin Problems Be Prevented?**

Feed your pet a healthy, balanced diet to help maintain a healthy skin and coat.

Implement a flea/tick and parasite treatment programme to prevent infestations.

### **When is it Time to See the Vet?**

You should visit your vet for an exam as soon as you notice any abnormality in your pet's skin, such as excessive hair loss, flaking and scaling, redness and bald patches, or if your pet begins to excessively scratch, lick and/or bite areas.

Please note that treating a skin condition is not as easy as putting your pet onto a course of tablets. What works for some may not work for others and a process of elimination will need to be conducted to help find the exact source of the skin irritation and to help control it.





## How to tell your bird is sick

We are often phoned by bird owners requesting a diagnosis over the phone and medication to be dispensed for their bird. Birds, like other prey animals, hide signs of illness. Predators look for signs of illness or weakness when choosing their prey, so a prey animal needs to appear healthy, or it will be a sure target. By the time they are showing signs of disease, in many instances, the birds have become too weak to be able to disguise it. At this point, small birds, especially, have little reserve, and even handling them can put them into shock. This is why it is extremely important for bird owners to be aware of signs of illness in a bird, and monitor their birds for the presence of these signs.

Please note, if your bird is showing signs of illness you need to make an appointment at a vet who treats birds. Medication cannot be bought without your bird being seen by a veterinarian first.

If you notice any of the signs of illness in the list below, contact your veterinarian. Weakness, laboured breathing, bleeding, injuries, collapse, seizures, or other nervous system signs are especially serious, should be considered emergencies, and need immediate attention.

<p><b>Signs of illness in birds as characterized by changes in general appearance or stance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Huddled</li> <li>Sitting low on the perch</li> <li>Sitting on the bottom of the cage</li> <li>Hanging onto the side of the cage with his beak instead of sitting on a perch</li> <li>Head tucked under wing and standing on two feet</li> <li>Ruffled feathers (consistently)</li> <li>Weakness</li> <li>Losing balance, teetering, or falling off perch</li> <li>Lumps or swelling on any portion of the body</li> <li>Picking at his feathers or body</li> <li>Trembling</li> <li>Not preening</li> <li>Harassed by other birds</li> <li>Eyes dull, sunken, or abnormal colour</li> <li>Walking in circles</li> <li>Drooped or elevated wing(s)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Changes in behaviour and general attitude that may be signs of disease in birds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inactivity</li> <li>Decreased or changes in vocalizations or singing</li> <li>Drooping wings</li> <li>Collapse</li> <li>Seizures</li> <li>Increased sleeping or eyes closed</li> <li>Poor response to stimuli</li> <li>Changes in personality, e.g., more submissive, more aggressive</li> <li>Displaying juvenile behaviour, e.g., begging for food</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<p><b>Changes in colour, volume, consistency and number of droppings indicating illness in birds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in colour of the urates (the normally white portion of the droppings), urine (the normally clear portion), or faeces (normal varies with species)</li> <li>Change in consistency: watery (increased urine), loose faeces (diarrhoea), hard faeces (constipation)</li> <li>Unusual smell to bird or droppings</li> <li>Bloody droppings</li> <li>Undigested food in faeces</li> <li>Decrease in number or size of droppings</li> <li>Increase in urates</li> </ul>	<p><b>Signs of disease in birds characterized by changes in appearance of the head:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discharge around the eyes</li> <li>Squinting or half-closed eyes</li> <li>Overgrown or flaky beak</li> <li>Swelling of an area</li> <li>Redness or loss of feathers around the eye</li> <li>Discoloration of the beak</li> <li>Flicking or twitching of the head</li> </ul>
<p><b>Changes in feathers suggestive of illness:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ruffled or fluffed feathers</li> <li>Lost, misshaped, or broken feathers</li> <li>Decreased preening</li> <li>Wet, stained, or matted feathers on the head, vent, or other area</li> <li>Dull feathers</li> <li>Long or excessive moult, bald spots</li> <li>Pulling or picking at feathers</li> <li>Abnormal colour or barring</li> </ul>	<p><b>Changes in legs or feet associated with disease:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lameness or favouring a leg</li> <li>Flakiness, crusting, or discolouration of feet</li> <li>Abnormal nail growth</li> <li>Shifting feet</li> <li>Swollen feet or joints</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<p><b>Signs of illness in birds associated with changes in breathing:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty breathing</li> <li>Breathing with an open beak</li> <li>Tail bobbing when taking a breath</li> <li>Sneezing</li> <li>Discharge or crusts around the nares</li> <li>Wheezing or clicking sounds</li> <li>Exercise intolerance (heavy breathing after exercise, or inability to exercise)</li> <li>Change in sound of voice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Changes in eating/drinking/digestion indicating disease:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased or decreased appetite</li> <li>Increased or decreased drinking</li> <li>Vomiting or regurgitation</li> <li>Straining to defecate or pass an egg</li> <li>Diarrhoea</li> <li>Swelling in the crop area</li> <li>Weight loss (use a scale) and/or prominent keel (breast bone)</li> <li>Discharge from mouth</li> <li>Inability to pick up food or manipulate it</li> <li>Protrusion from the vent</li> </ul>
<p><b>Injuries:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burns</li> <li>Bite wounds</li> <li>Injury from flying into a window or other object</li> <li>Bleeding</li> <li>Broken legs or wings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weakness, laboured breathing, bleeding, trauma, collapse, seizures, or other nervous system signs are especially serious, should be considered emergencies, and need immediate attention.</b></p>

**Please do not wait** should your bird show signs of any of the above and do not attempt a home remedy or try to bandage your bird on your own. You will do more damage and put your bird through unnecessary pain and suffering.

## **The Prescription Diet j/d FREE trial bag promotion begins!**

Arthritis is a debilitating disease caused by cartilage loss. When this protective cushioning wears away, joints become stiff and painful, and mobility progressively decreases. Arthritis is not curable, so early detection and management is vital to prevent further degradation. The good news is that Prescription Diet j/d is clinically proven to reduce pain, inflammation and more importantly, slow the progression of this disease.

Factors that can make pets more prone to Arthritis and Osteoarthritis include:

**Age:** As dogs get older, cartilage will begin to degenerate. Though arthritis is much more common in senior dogs, young dogs can suffer from arthritis too.

**Breed:** Certain breeds are more prone to arthritis. Dog breeds include Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, German Shepherds and Rottweilers.

**Excess Weight:** Excess weight means excess stress on the joints and cartilage and an increased risk of mobility problems.

**Accidents or Trauma:** Trauma to cartilage caused by accidents can damage cartilage, resulting in arthritis later in life.

**Infection:** Occasionally, infections can lead to the destruction of cartilage and joint tissue.

Common signs:

- Stiffness or limping
- Difficulty rising from rest
- Lagging on walks
- Loss of playfulness
- \* Problems jumping or negotiating stairs
- \* Whimpering, growling or snapping when touched
- \* Difficulty grooming tail area
- \* Trouble squatting or lifting hind legs

Pet arthritis is a painful condition, often misinterpreted as pets "slow down" due to old age. Our pets can't always tell us why they don't want to play any more, or why they're just not their usual selves. It helps to know the signs of osteoarthritis.

Hill's Prescription Diet j/d is formulated to help manage pets' osteoarthritis.

It is the only pet food clinically proven to improve mobility in as little as 21 days in dogs and 28 days in cats. Its effectiveness is attributed to high levels of:

- EPA/DHA-These unique omega 3 fatty acids can help interrupt cartilage degradation when present in sufficient quantities.
- Total omega-3 fatty acids – Apart from EPA / DHA, high levels of total fatty acids helps soothe inflammation and reduce pain.
- Glucosamine & Chondroitin Sulphate – Important building blocks of joint cartilage.

Ways to manage arthritis

- Clinically proven foods designed to support joints
- Anti-inflammatory drugs to reduce pain
- Glucosamine & Chondroitin supplements
- Environmental changes in the home
- Weight control
- Supportive exercise and therapies

How to qualify for a FREE bag of j/d:

Any pet diagnosed with Osteoarthritis, who has not tried Prescription Diet j/d before, will qualify for a free bag.

- Should you suspect your pet is suffering from Arthritis and Osteoarthritis you will need to have him/her positively diagnosed by your veterinarian. (This fee is at your cost and does not form part of the Hill's offer.)
- Free bags will be ordered for the successful applicants and you will be contacted once we receive them.  
The bag sizes are as follows:  
Cats – 2kg j/d.  
Small dogs – 4kg j/d reduced calorie or 5kg j/d mini.  
Large dogs – 12kg j/d reduced calorie or 12kg j/d original.
- This offer is limited to one per household and on one occasion only.
- This offer is available while stocks last.

Look out for Prescription Diet j/d in the Sunday Times, YOU and Huisgenoot and on the popular SABC3 morning show Espresso in May and June. Hill's will be airing a number of segments covering pet arthritis, ways to manage the condition, Prescription Diet j/d and the FREE bag offer.

You can also refer to the Hill's Mobility Website for more information - [www.hopskipjump.co.za](http://www.hopskipjump.co.za).

Hill's Prescription Diet foods are not medication, they are a combination of nutrients precisely balanced to manage your pet's specific condition. Feeding other brands of dry or wet food, treats, snacks and table scraps along with Prescription Diet will actually dilute the power of the food your veterinarian has recommended.

Use this voucher to improve your pet's mobility with a **FREE BAG** of Hill's Prescription Diet j/d in a hop, skip and jump!

Ask your vet for a mobility consultation.

On diagnosis of osteoarthritis your vet will contact us to arrange a FREE bag of Hill's Prescription Diet j/d for you to collect.

**Important terms and conditions**

1. To qualify for a free j/d bag your pet must be positively diagnosed with osteoarthritis by a practicing veterinarian.
2. The cost of the veterinarian consultation does not form part of this offer and is for your own account.
3. Successful applicants will receive bag sizes as follows:  
cats - 2kg j/d | small dogs - 4kg j/d reduced calorie or 5kg j/d mini | larger dogs - 12kg j/d reduced calorie or 12kg j/d original
4. This offer is limited to one per household and on one occasion only.
5. This promotion may not be used in conjunction with any other offer.
6. This offer is available while stocks last.
7. Hill's reserves the right to alter, delay or cancel this promotion without notice.
8. To be eligible for this free bag you must not have tried Prescription Diet j/d before.

**To The Health Care Team:**  
To request a trial bag of Prescription Diet j/d please fill in the trial bag request form and fax it to Hill's head office on 085 545 8724 or 021 790 0262. The free bag will be sent to your practice nearest with your client's name. There will be a scancard and koffer attached to it.

Worth up to **R829!**

RECOMMENDED BY VETERINARIANS

Expiry date: This offer is valid until 30 August 2015 or while stocks last.

© Trademarks owned by Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc. 2015

### **Did you know: A lump can sometimes form at the vaccination site after a vaccination has been given?**

A firm, non-painful lump under the skin can sometimes form at the site of injection after a vaccination has been given.

Generally this lump is under the skin and can be quite mobile. Often somewhere around the size of a pea, right up to the size of a large marble, these vaccine-site-reaction lumps are comprised of a mixture of inflammatory cells and scar tissue. These lumps, over time, generally 2 to 6 weeks reduce in size and disappear. If the lump grows very large, is red and painful or the animal is off colour, I would advise veterinary attention. Not all lumps are typical vaccines site reactions.

You should make a habit of regularly palpating and noting the size of any lump present on a pet.

### **REWARD YOURSELF AND YOUR PET WITH THE EUKANUBA LOYALTY PROGRAMME**

Does your pet love their Eukanuba and Iams food? Why not join the loyalty programme?

You will receive 4 vouchers a year as well as a celebratory Birthday Bonus for your special companion.

It's simple to sign up

1. Online: [www.eukanuba.co.za](http://www.eukanuba.co.za)
2. Email: [eukanuba@cuberoute.co.za](mailto:eukanuba@cuberoute.co.za)
3. SMS: Pets2, name, cell number to 32545

