

5 Possible Causes of Dandruff (from [petful.com](https://www.petful.com) website)

As with humans, dandruff can be a result of many factors in your dog's health. Here are a few possibilities:

1. **Allergies:** Common allergens range from dust and pollens to household cleaners to certain foods. Sometimes an allergen will cause a topical reaction — that is, a reaction only where the allergen directly touches your dog. Sometimes an allergen can affect areas it doesn't even touch.
2. **[Chyleriella](#) mites:** Also referred to as “walking dandruff,” these white mites make themselves comfortable in a dog's skin and coat while they lay eggs. They make life miserable for your dog.
3. **Fungal skin infections/bacteria:** If your dog has an underlying skin condition, it could affect his whole body instead of a localized area.
4. **Low humidity:** If you live in an especially dry area, the air in your home might be stripping your dog's skin of moisture, which means he will scratch frequently. This scratching will only worsen existing skin conditions.
5. **Poor diet:** If your dog isn't getting enough water to drink or enough vitamins, minerals and fat from his food, his coat will probably suffer.

Treatment

- **Bathing:** Regular [baths](#) will help wash away the dandruff before it can accumulate in the coat. During the winter, 1 bath a month will suffice. During the summer, 2 baths a month should keep the coat healthy and clean. Use warm water and a mild shampoo, and thoroughly rinse and dry your dog.
- **Dandruff shampoo for dogs:** Certain pet shampoos are designed to prevent and eliminate dandruff. The active ingredient will be either **sulfur** or **salicylic acid**. Keep in mind that a dandruff shampoo designed for humans will be too harsh for your dog, so using Head & Shoulders is a bad idea.
- **Improve the diet:** Switch to a [high-quality brand of pet food](#) that contains enough fat (the good kind, not just bacon grease), and consider investing in a good nutritional supplement. Put *several* water dishes throughout the house so your dog will always have access to fresh water.
- **Oatmeal magic:** People with dry skin often use an oatmeal bath or oatmeal soap to help relieve itching and get rid of dandruff. The same thing will work for your dog. The easiest way to do this is to use an oatmeal shampoo, which is “particularly effective on dry skin,” according to Bud Stuart, DVM.
- **Brushing:** Treat your dog to a good brushing session once a day. This helps distribute the natural oils from the coat and massage the skin, which promotes oil production.
- **See your vet:** Your veterinarian will be able to properly diagnose your dog and advise on treatment and prevention. If your [dog has allergies](#), for example, your vet might prescribe a topical ointment, antihistamines or fish oil capsules. If the allergen can be avoided or eliminated, that's probably the best option.