



### ABOUT THE DISEASE

*Pyoderma* is an infection of the skin with one or more types of bacteria.

Several types of bacteria normally live on the hair and skin surface of healthy animals without causing any symptoms. However, if the skin's natural defense mechanisms are compromised, bacteria can penetrate and cause a deeper skin infection.

*Pyodermas* are generally classified as superficial or deep.

- Superficial – An infection affecting the upper layers of skin and hair follicles.
  - More common
  - Typically easier to treat and eliminate
- Deep – An infection affecting the deeper layers of skin, and sometimes subcutaneous tissues.
  - Can be associated with fever and generalized illness
  - Typically more serious, requiring a longer duration of treatment to eliminate the infection
    - Most cases are associated with an underlying cause such as skin parasites, food allergies, atopic dermatitis, autoimmune disease, etc.

### OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

An examination by a veterinarian can often diagnose *pyoderma* based on symptoms, which is enhanced by a microscopic evaluation of bacteria from an infected area.

In more difficult cases, a swab may be taken to grow the skin's bacteria and determine an effective treatment regimen. This is referred to as a culture and sensitivity test.

### TREATMENT

Proper site management is the cornerstone of success that often includes clipping hair and cleaning infectious debris away from affected areas.

Treatment requires several different medications to achieve success:

- Antibiotics may require continuous administration for several weeks to months.
- Medicated baths or shampoos will help topically clean and treat the skin.
- Topical sprays and ointments will help topically treat the skin and prevent ongoing bacterial growth.
- Antiinflammation and pain control medications will increase patient comfort and reduce self-trauma.
- Placement of an e-collar can help prevent chewing and self-trauma of sites.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Treatment may take several weeks and require multiple rechecks to ensure resolution.
- Determine underlying diseases to quicken recovery and prevent recurrence.
- Always give medications, including baths, as directed.