

ATOPIC DERMATITIS IN FRENCH BULL DOGS



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TANO is a 3-year old French bulldog diagnosed with atopic dermatitis since he was a puppy.

The symptoms present since a young age: intense itching all over the body, on the nose and around the eyes, which improves when taking steroids.

Allergy tests were performed and the result was negative for food and environmental allergens.

He has been taking anti-inflammatory doses of prednisone for three years but when the treatment was discontinued the pruritus reappeared again. Three weeks before the allergy tests were performed, when he received steroids, his skin became very red and the itching was very intense.

The owners are seeking an alternative to steroids and that is why they came to me.

At the time of the 1st consultation in November 2013, he barely presented any skin symptoms because he was under the effects of prednisone. You could only see slight blepharitis and redness on the nose.

While the allergy tests were negative for food, and therefore were not conclusive, I proposed a homemade elimination diet based exclusively on turkey and potatoes at first.

The majority of commercial foods contain grains and although theoretically Tano is not allergic to them, they can inflame the gut and alter its permeability, resulting in intestinal hyperpermeability or a leaky gut, allowing absorption and the circulatory stream of toxins and partially digested food, especially high molecular weight proteins which may lead to a hypersensitivity reaction by the immune system, leading to symptoms of allergic dermatitis, otitis, conjunctivitis and gastrointestinal symptoms etc. Other factors that may alter intestinal permeability are the taking of antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, food additives, intestinal dysbiosis etc.

At the first appointment, in addition to the homemade diet, he was given both nutritional supplements:

HISTAMINE CONTROL: 1.5 tablets every 12 hours between meals.

KRILLVET: 1 capsule daily.

Histamine Control is a nutritional supplement whose ingredients are intended to control the body's production of histamine therefore it has an antiallergic and antipruritic effect.

Krill Vet: this is a supplement based on Krill, rich in Omega 3, with an anti-inflammatory effect at various levels, notably at the level of the skin and mucous membranes.

At the same time, while taking these two supplements I recommended they continue with prednisone for at least one more week but to gradually reduce the dose.

I saw Tano again after 15 days and the result was spectacular. Off their own back, the owners withdrew the corticosteroids within a few days of starting treatment and they saw no worsening of the pruritus as before. From the moment they started the homemade diet and administration of these supplements, they saw an improvement in the animal's skin.

On the second visit, the treatment prescribed was:

GLUTAVET: 1.5 tablets twice daily.

HISTAMIN CONTROL: 1.5 tablets twice daily between meals.

KRILLVET: 1 capsule daily.

Glutavet is a nutritional supplement for repairing the intestinal mucosa, reducing its permeability, thus preventing leaky gut syndrome. L-Glutamine is present in its composition; it is an amino acid essential for the intestinal mucosa cells and helps repair damaged intestinal microvilli.

One month later I saw Tano again and his skin and hair had improved dramatically. His hair was brighter and barely fell out. The gases, which are typical of this breed, had also decreased. They have been introducing new foods into his diet, notably other sources of animal protein and different vegetables and have not seen the reappearance of the pruritus at any time. So far no grains have been introduced into his diet. The Glutavet and Histamine Control were continued at half-dose, that is, one tablet of each once a day. Krill Vet is maintained at the same dose as before.

In February 2014, three months after the first visit, the improvement is maintained. The pruritis has not reappeared. He follows a grain-free homemade diet. Histamine Control is suspended and remains suspended for another month with Glutavet and Krillvet.



TRUCO is a four-year old French bulldog brought to the office three months ago for euthanasia, due to presenting generalised pruritus

since he was a puppy and other associated problems. At the time of consultation he had bilateral oto-hematoma (of highest intensity in the right ear) caused by continuous and intense scratching, as well as bilateral otitis externa and some skin lesions, notably on both sides and in the interdigital area of all four limbs, which he was biting down on intensely until he drew blood. He has been on prednisone treatment for three years. The ear canals present hyperacute inflammation and abundant dark discharge. The owners say they have changed feed several times but to no avail. I proposed allergy tests, cultures and sensitivity tests on both ears, a homemade elimination diet or hypoallergenic feed and an operation on the oto-hematoma, but the owners insisted on euthanasia. At that time I decided to adopt the dog.

Other symptoms presented by Truco were being too thin, bloating, dry hair, excessive hair loss, stools with a soft consistency and even the occasional bout of diarrhoea.

I stopped the prednisone from the start and changed his feed for a homemade diet based on turkey, potatoes and vegetables, whilst waiting to perform the allergy tests.

During the first days of his stay at the clinic, the oto-hematoma of the right ear (the left ear is reabsorbed) was operated on and ear swabs and samples taken from both ears for cultures and an antibiogram. Two different bacteria were isolated and antibiotic treatment started with amoxicillin-clavulanate for fifteen days.

At the same time, treatment was started with the following nutritional supplements:

HISTAMIN CONTROL: 1 tablet twice a day between meals.

GLUTAVET: 1 tablet twice a day.

KRILLVET: 1 capsule per day.

The first three supplements have already been discussed in the previous clinical case.

A few days of treatment established with these supplements and a change of diet saw a decrease in the pruritus. Although the dog is still scratching slightly on his sides, there is no redness or injury on his skin. He has stopped biting his legs, the inflammation of the ear canals has decreased considerably and he barely scratches his ears.

After a month his mood has improved remarkably. His hair has more shine and the hair loss has declined significantly. His ears have healed completely and although there is continued discharge in both ears, there is no itching or inflammation at this level. Occasionally he experiences slight itching on the sides but there is no redness, no spots and no scratch injuries. He has not returned to biting his legs.

Supplementation remained the same for two months and as the itching is not as intense, the allergy testing is postponed. Other protein sources are added to his feed.

After two months, and even taking the above supplements daily, Truco began scratching his sides intensely and also returned to biting his interdigital areas. Allergy tests were performed and these were positive for different animal proteins (lamb, beef), grains (soybeans, wheat and especially rice) and environmental allergens such as *Dermatophagoides farinae* (dust mites) and other types of mites.

We continued with the homemade diet of turkey, potatoes and vegetables and the above supplements, to which we added ENZIVET, which is based on digestive enzymes, since the animal periodically presents gas and loose stools and this product helps to digest food better.

This latter supplement improved both stool consistency and gas production.

CONCLUSIONS

If we compare the results obtained in these two bulldogs who were both diagnosed with allergic dermatitis, we can see that in the first case the itching disappeared completely in the first week of treatment and in the second case this didn't happen. Both used the same home treatment regimen and diet. The difference between these two dogs is that in the first the allergy tests were negative for dietary and environmental allergens and in the second case the result was positive for both types of allergens and this slowed down the improvement as environmental allergens are impossible to remove. Likewise, the second dog also has digestive problems and certainly altered intestinal permeability and malabsorption and poor absorption of nutrients, which also contribute to the itching and the slower improvement, and therefore treatment is required over a longer period.