



Vitiligo in Dogs; Symptoms, Treatment and Diagnosis

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Introduction

This is an auto immune disorder, which is rare in dogs, cats, horses. It is an uncommon skin condition that can cause the skin to lose its pigmentation this process called as depigmentation. Vitiligo is a condition that skin turns into white. Even for humans also face this situation. Although this condition is painless and need not to be worry. In this condition the dog looks like white patchy under skin.

Causes of Vitiligo

Skin contains melanocytes that can produce melanin, where the pigment that gives you the color to skin, in this disease condition this melanocytes will destroy or die off. In some cases pets also have hereditary diseases. Some breeds of dogs have the more risk of this disease condition such as; Golden retrievers, German shepherds, Doberman, Siberian huskies.

As already discussed in the first part this is an auto immune disease, it can occur through immune system by attacking some foreign particles into the body and destroys the melanocytes which gives melanin and pigmentation to the body. One more reason for this disease is over stress and more exposure to the toxins can also cause the neurological diseases.

Types of Vitiligo

It can categorized into two different types

Focal vitiligo

This can occur only on certain parts of the body (specific region) especially on the nose that term called as "Snow Nose"

Generalized vitiligo

This causes in different areas of the body like a random patches or asymmetric way. Even in cats also this generalized Vitiligo is occurred. It looks like more sensitive and produces more "Cobweb" (like a spider web) or "Snowflake" (like symmetry, delicate and crystal shaped).

Symptoms

During at young age dogs, cats this Vitiligo may start and slowly

it will destroy the melanocytes as melanocytes destroys or die off once this pigmentation will go off and turns into white or pale pink color, whichever the area is covered with this pigmentation that skin will effect with this disease.

This disease firstly occurs on the face region and mainly on the nose. Even the other areas of the skin also lose the pigmentation that includes the lips and around the eyes and neck. This disease will occur within the 3 to 6 months. After the affected areas of skin turns white then it may stay re-pigmented and it may even wax and vanished more. Some common symptoms are: Inflammation, skin lesions (skin look different when this happened), dander (flakes on the skin for animal) and rarely will it affect to the whole body.

Diagnosis

It is very important to observe it in the first stage of the disease because it may affect severely or it may have some risk to the skin and body. During the treatment and diagnosing the disease veterinarian may observe where this diseases occurred and how long the disease is going on and where it transmitted in the skin. If the dog is having more stress then it may have vitiligo.

After observing the pet doctor may suggest some tests like blood sample test to check whether the dog is suffering from any blood type disorder or it may occur in the whole body. They may test by using the skin patch test and skin scrapping test they may take skin biopsy test. Which would show the how lack the melanocytes are and how far it affected to the skin.

Treatment

As of now there are no further treatment steps for this disease. Because this disease can cause no discomfort to the dog. Sometimes it can live the whole lifetime with this disease. For different dogs they will suggest some different treatment options based on the age, and body. Some recommend need to expose the dog in sunlight and some may not suggest that and making dog less stressful they will suggest some treatment underlines. Some may suggest more intakes of omega 3 fatty acids and vitamin c that may help the dog to improve more melanin.

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