



Comfortable In Their Own Skin

Skin and coat care innovations help ease pets' irritations, resulting in happier, healthier pets.

BY NORA CALEY



There are many reasons for dogs and cats to have itchy skin or unhealthy coats, and pet owners are looking for ways to help their furry loved ones feel more comfortable. New ingredients and formulations are making skin and coat care more varied than ever, and manufacturers say educating consumers about these solutions will help sell the products at retail.

The most common skin and coat issues are hot spots, rashes, itchy/dry skin and other topical issues that repeatedly occur, says Geoff Hamby, director of marketing for Rialto, Calif.-based Vetericyn Animal Wellness.

“These cause a pet to scratch at their sides and ears, or chew and lick their feet constantly,” he says. “In warm weather, hot spots and flea infestation/flea allergy dermatitis are also big problems.”

The abundance of available products can seem overwhelming to pet

owners, Hamby says, and misinformation doesn't help.

“For example, there are wound cleaners out there that will actually harm the healthy tissue surrounding a wound or irritation,” he says. “Most pet owners are not aware of this.”

Education is important, because an unwitting pet owner may use a product that can lead to more complications and discomfort for the animal. Also, Hamby says, some pet owners are simply uncomfortable caring for wounds at home. To remedy this, the Vetericyn Animal Wellness team offers blogs, infographics and video content to entertain and teach both the pet parent

and the retailer. The company has a staff veterinarian available to answer questions, attend events and participate in live videos on Facebook. There are also in-store trainings and events.

The newest product from Vetericyn is FoamCare pet shampoo, a pH balanced, hypoallergenic, spray-on, instant foaming shampoo. The spray-on application can cover the entire animal with product, and the foaming action makes it easy to saturate the animal's coat. The coat-specific formulas enable the user to rinse shampoo out of the coat fast, saving the owner time and reducing stress on the animal. FoamCare comes in three coat-specific and one medicated formulation, all of which are paraben-free, plant-based, skin conditioning and formulated to retain essential oils.

TRYING EVERYTHING

Consumers often try several solutions for skin and coat issues.

“Typically, a pet owner will start with a limited-ingredient diet and look for products that can be applied topically to calm the skin,” says Debra Decker, director of marketing for Westmont Ill.-based Pet King Brands, Inc. “Also, similar to the trends in human health regarding antibiotic resistance, pet owners seek products for their pets that work without antibiotics.”

Itchy skin, allergies and hot spots are conditions that can affect both cats and dogs, Decker says, and the allergic pet can have reactions to multiple things, such as environment, diet, fleas, ticks and other irritants. “Pet owners’ major focus is helping a pet find relief from discomfort and preventing the skin from becoming infected.”

Pet King makes ZYMOX Shampoo and Conditioning Rinse, which Decker says have skin-calming effects and are veterinarian-recommended. The products wash away environmental elements and feature the patented formulation of the LP3 Enzyme System, a combination of enzymes with antibacterial, antifungal and anti-yeast properties. The ZYMOX Topical Cream and Spray works without antibiotics to manage painful, raw hot spots.

One challenge for retailers is educating pet owners on remedy products available in-store. Merchandising can help, and Decker says many retailers have found success by placing ZYMOX products in the pet food aisles where the stores typically have the most traffic, as well as at checkout. Placing a ZYMOX floor display at an end cap can also help boost awareness and trial.

HOTTEST INGREDIENTS

Consumers want to know about ingredients, and manufacturers say there are some effective new ingredients as well as some that have long been considered beneficial for skin and coat care.

Ardley, N.Y.-based Pura Naturals Pet has always used staple ingredients such as lavender, tea tree oil, Shea butter and aloe. Lately, the company has been working more with Calendula Oil and Niaouli Oil.

“Calendula has great healing and antimicrobial properties for skin, and while most people have not heard of Niaouli Oil, it’s one of the most useful essential oils,” says Beth Sommers, president and chief merchandising officer. “Niaouli oil is a natural antiseptic that reduces inflammation caused by allergies, soothes skin irritations and has incredible moisturizing benefits. It’s the perfect skin treatment in our shampoos and conditioners that freshens the coat. It also naturally repels insects, fleas and ticks.”

The company offers shampoos for specific needs that are anti-itch, lock in moisture, reduce shedding or treat fleas and ticks naturally.

“Customers are looking for natural and organic products that not only have their pup looking fluffy and fabulous, but treat other issues that affect the skin and fur,” Sommers says.

New items from Pura Naturals Pet include Sweet Orange & Coconut Shed Control Shampoo, Detangling Conditioning Spray, flushable Flea & Tick Wipes, tear stain removing Under Eye Wipes with special

HEALTHY ON THE OUTSIDE

Glo-Marr Products, Inc. (glomarr.com) offers KENIC Kalaya Emu Oil Shampoo, which has a dilution rate of 8:1. KENIC Kalaya Emu Oil Shampoo will restore, repair and rejuvenate the pet’s skin and coat, and will also help reduce inflammation from flea bites, grass allergies and dry flaky skin. The Shampoo is gentle enough to be used as often as needed. It is designed for use on dogs, cats, ferrets and rabbits.



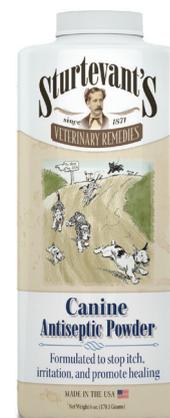
HealthyCoat (healthycoat.net) is an all-natural, high-quality, omega-3 and -6 essential fatty acid supplement. The nutrients in HealthyCoat products are preserved in their highest quality due to the company’s unique, patented, mechanical extraction process. HealthyCoat has a bacon flavor, contains niacin, biotin, vitamin B12, vitamin E and lecithin, and no artificial preservatives. HealthyCoat for Cats for Hairball Relief helps prevent excessive shedding and hairballs and helps poor hair and coat and dry, flaky skin.



Ultra Oil For Pets (ultraoilforpets.com) Skin & Coat Supplement is designed to alleviate the flaky skin, itching and excessive scratching that can result from deficiencies in a pet’s diet. This special formula of nutritional oils from hempseed, flaxseed, grapeseed and fish oil provides the omega-3, -6 and -9 fatty acids pets need for healthy skin and shining coat. The supplement does not have a fish odor and is non GMO, all natural, 100 percent human-grade, and herbicide- and pesticide-free.



F.C. Sturtevant’s (sturtevantsvetremedies.com) Canine Remedy is an advanced topical skin care product for the treatment of the most common skin irritations. It will stop itching and help promote healing. The powder was developed specifically to treat Canine Atopic Dermatitis, Sarcoptic Canine Scabies, Staphylococcus Intermedius Pyoderma and Seborrheic Dermatitis. All Sturtevant’s veterinary products are manufactured in the USA using the highest quality pharmaceutical ingredients and produced under FDA approved cGMP protocols.





HEALTHY ON THE OUTSIDE



Nature's Pet Herbals (naturespetherbals.com), which specializes in natural CBD products, launched CBD Topical Cream. It provides relief for itching, pain, hair growth disorders, allergy dermatitis, hot spots, inflammation, dry skin and arthritis.

The latest innovation from **Bio-Groom** (biogroom.com) is The Indulge line, with three products that consist of 100 percent pure organic Argan Oil from the hills of Morocco. Argan Oil is a natural source of Vitamin E, linoleic acid and omega-6 fatty acids. It penetrates the hair shaft and hair follicles to help nourish skin and coat. The antioxidants are beneficial for healing skin that is irritated, cracked, damaged and dry.



Hot Spot Relief from **Healers PetCare** (healerspetcare.com) aids in the treatment of acral lick granulomas, hot spots, flea and insect bites, abrasions, foot sores and numerous other dermatological conditions that may have a bacterial, fungal or inflammatory basis. Healers Hot Spot Relief is formulated with 1 percent hydrocortisone, a topical steroid that helps reduce inflammation and irritation. This product is also available with CBD.

Cardinal Pet Care (cardinalpet.com) **EcoBath Manuka Honey Anti-Itch Spray** provides a sweeter way to heal dogs' skin and relieve itching due to fleas, insect bites, allergies, dry skin, scrapes and other irritants. The central ingredient in the spray is natural Manuka honey from New Zealand, known for its exceptional healing and antimicrobial properties. The Manuka honey is combined with other high-quality organic and botanical ingredients, including pure aloe vera to soothe itching and organic hempseed oil for conditioning, to create EcoBath's exclusive Honey Hygiene.



enzymes that break down tear stains, and Between-Bath Fresheners in Lavender and Fresh Cotton. Also new is the Pro-Coat GROOMING line with nearly 20 SKUs, developed for the needs of groomers and rigorously tested by them. The line includes shed control, whitening and degreasing shampoos that rinse clean without clogging drains, and sprays that wick away moisture and reduce drying time by 50 percent.

Coconut is another hot ingredient, according to James Brandy, associate trade marketing manager for Wentzville, Mo.-based TropiClean. "TropiClean's mild coconut cleanser is a key component in our shampoos

for its ability to cleanse gently and thoroughly, leaving the pet looking and smelling great," he says.

The brand's newest product is TropiClean Papaya and Coconut Waterless Shampoo and TropiClean Tear Stain Remover. Brandy says the Papaya and Coconut Waterless Shampoo's no-rinse formula easily cleans the dirtiest pet, leaving them smelling great, and TropiClean Tear Stain Remover helps keep pets' beards and wrinkles clean and odor-free.

No matter what the ingredients, the goal is the same. "Improving the skin and coat of our dogs is one of the top grooming needs among pet parents," Brandy says. **PB**

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