Hotspots and Berners

Your dog may get an occasional hotspot, and here’s some advice to help diagnose and treat. Common causes can be:

* Flea allergies—it only takes one bite to cause a flare up!
* Dirty dog, or too long between baths
* Constant moisture, such as swimming a lot and not getting dry enough. Staph infections love moisture!
* Environmental allergies, most often caused by dust, dust mites and dander. Vaccuum frequently and wash those dog beds.
* Food allergies, is actually only 20% of all allergies for dogs. Usually is environmental, not food related.

So you see your dog chewing or scratching more than a few times, check it out right away. Especially if you see a moist spot. If caught early, you can sometimes turn it around with treatment, before it becomes an open sore. If you find a red, moist skin area, here’s the game plan:

* Get to the vet to confirm diagnosis and get treatment supplies. Those would include:
	+ Virbac epi-soothe shampoo. Giving a bath right away with this shampoo will reduce bacteria on the surface of the skin and possible additional hotspots. Will also wash out any bugs/fleas. Can get it at Chewy.com. Good to have a bottle on hand.
	+ Skin issues will usually coincide with ear yeast issues. Be sure to flush the ears with Virbac Epi-Otic solution before the bath. (see articles on my website, under ‘links, grooming’ here: <https://www.ravenridgebernese.com/links>). Another thing to keep in stock, and can buy on the internet.
	+ After the bath, to continue with cleaning the infected area, use Nolvasan surgical scrub, a blue cleansing solution with chlorhexidine. Get this from your vet, and keep in stock at home. Cleanse the area, gently removing dirt, and scabbing, then dry, and apply the topical spray (see below)
	+ Get a topical spray from your vet—this is antibiotic and cortisone, and is fastest way to healing and make your dog more comfortable. Once again, keep a bottle on hand so can treat quickly next time. Common brands are Betagen or GenOne spray.
	+ If the infection persists or worsens, oral antiobics, like Cephalexin, may be needed from your vet.