

Grass Seeds and Dogs

Grass Seeds and Dogs: What You Need to Know

As summer rolls in, grass seeds become a common concern for dog owners. These tiny, pointy seeds can create some big problems for our furry friends!



What Are Grass Seeds?

Grass seeds are those little, sharp seeds you often see attached to long stems of grass. They're typically found in meadows and woodland areas during the warmer months. When you're out walking your dog, these seeds can easily cling to their fur.

The sharp ends of grass seeds may be small, but they can be quite dangerous. If they get trapped in your dog's fur, they can burrow into their skin and cause painful injuries. Grass seeds can also find their way into your dog's paws, ears, eyes, or nose. In rare cases, if they manage to get under the skin, they can migrate to other areas of your dog's body, making them tough to find and treat.



Is My Dog at Risk?

Any dog can be affected by grass seeds, especially if they love to romp through long grass. However, dogs with long hair around their feet or ears are at a higher risk, as that's where the seeds tend to stick.

Tip: After a walk, especially in grassy areas, take a moment to check your dog's paws and ears for any sneaky grass seeds!

How Can I Tell If My Dog Has Been Affected?

If your dog has a grass seed stuck somewhere, you might notice some telltale signs, such as:

- **Constant licking:** If they're obsessively licking their paw, it could be a sign of a grass seed stuck between their toes.
- **Swelling:** Look for painful swelling, especially between their toes.
- **Limping:** A sudden limp may indicate an injury.
- **Head shaking:** If your dog keeps shaking their head, it could mean there's something bothering them in their ear.
- **Sneezing:** A sudden, violent sneeze might mean a grass seed is irritating their nose.
- **Eye issues:** Watch for redness, swelling, or discharge in their eyes.
- **Chewing or licking:** If they're fixated on a specific spot on their skin, they might be trying to soothe an injury.



Important: If you suspect your dog has a grass seed injury, reach out to your vet for guidance.

What Is the Treatment for a Grass Seed Injury?

If you spot a grass seed in your dog's fur before it pierces the skin, you can gently remove it yourself. But if it seems to be burrowing in, or if you suspect it's in their eye or ear, it's best to consult your vet right away.

Finding grass seeds can be tricky since they don't show up on X-rays. Your vet may use special tweezers to remove the seed, but this can be uncomfortable for your dog, so they might need to be sedated.

The earlier you seek treatment, the better, as grass seeds can migrate once they're



under the skin.

How Can I Protect My Dog?

Here are some tips to help keep your pup safe from grass seeds:

- **Inspect your dog's fur:** After walks, check for any grass seeds and remove them right away. This can help prevent any skin injuries.
- **Keep fur trimmed:** Keeping the hair around your dog's ears and paws short can reduce the chances of seeds getting stuck.
- **Avoid long grass:** If possible, steer clear of areas with tall grass to minimise the risk.

By being vigilant, you can help keep your dog happy and healthy during the summer months!