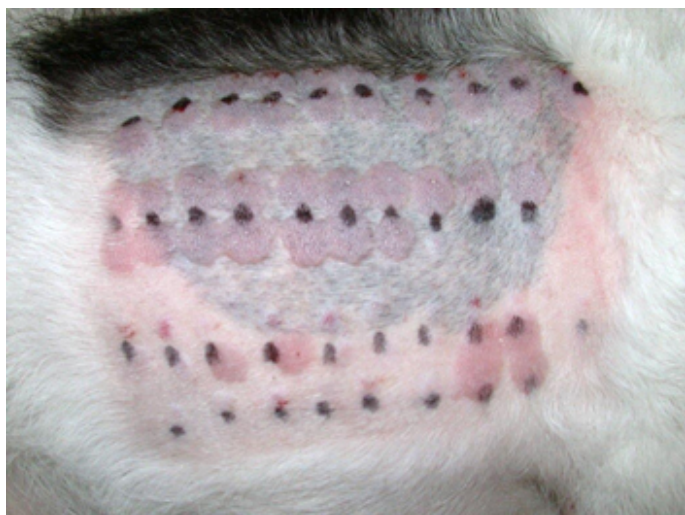


# Allergy Testing

Allergy testing is performed on animals with itchy skin and/or recurrent skin and ear infections, after other possible underlying diseases such as skin parasites and food allergy have been ruled out. Intradermal or skin allergy testing is considered the “gold standard” for the diagnosis and treatment of environmental allergies (atopy) such as pollen, grass, dust and molds. After a mild sedative is administered to the pet, 70 different allergens are injected under the skin and observed for a red, raised reaction. Small amounts of the allergens that the pet reacts to are then formulated into a desensitization vaccine, which is administered by injections under the skin (easily given by the owner at home) once every 1-4 weeks. The goal of desensitization is to adjust the abnormal immune response to environmental allergens, in order to decrease symptoms and need for other medications, and in approximately 75% of allergic animals, symptoms are improved by 50% or more. Lifelong treatment is usually required. The expertise of a board certified veterinary dermatologist enables more successful individualized management of allergy immunotherapy, by adjusting therapy, allergen dose, and frequency depending on the individual animal’s response to treatment.



Intradermal allergy testing showing numerous red, raised positive reactions.



Intradermal allergy testing can be more difficult to interpret in a darkly coated dog...



However use of backlighting makes the positive reactions stand out.



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