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## **FENWOLD DERMATOLOGY CLINIC**

# **Canine Acne**

A particularly severe looking condition, Canine Acne is a deep bacterial infection of the skin of the face seen almost exclusively in large short coated breeds of dog such as:

**MASTIFFS, DOBERMANS, GREAT DANES, BOXERS, ROTTWEILLERS  
and  
GERMAN SHORT HAISED POINTERS.**

Technically described as Muzzle and Chin Folliculitis and Furunculosis, it usually appears in young adolescent dogs and as a result is given the colloquial name "Canine Acne".

Initially it appears as small hairless plaques seen on the lips and chin, which progress, to a suppurative infection of the hair follicles. These can ulcerate and may discharge a seropurulent exudate leaving an oozing inflamed skin as seen with the Old English Mastiff pictured.



The true underlying cause is still not known although sex hormones were thought to play a part. However if this were the case only individuals of a certain sex would be affected and there would be no breed predisposition. In reality the condition is seen in entire and neutered male and female individuals which tends to refute this and is almost never seen in long coated breeds.

Other theories speculate that complex genetics may be responsible but many short-coated individuals do not have it, even if their underlying cause such as an allergy or ectoparasitic infestation. Once this has been addressed and appropriate antibiotics administered, the condition has dramatically cleared up, as did this mastiff



Another theory is that the short coat affords little protection of the muzzle and chin from friction. As a result excessive rubbing or trauma from hard rough surfaces during play or from an itchy skin damages the underlying skin and hair follicles allowing secondary infection. This itself irritates the skin stimulating more damage from rubbing and starting a vicious cycle.

Treatment depends on the severity of the condition and some cases may resolve spontaneously. However in those cases which do not, milder conditions may respond to frequent cleansing but if deep infection occurs anti-inflammatory medication and long courses of antibiotics

(4-6 weeks plus) will be required. Even then a few cases may still persist and prove very hard to treat.

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