



Allergy Relief - Apoquel or Cytopoint

Which is the right option for my dog?

Canine allergies can be frustrating to manage at times, with the scratching, licking, scooting, and chronic infections. Luckily, when it comes to allergy relief for dogs, there are two great options that can provide symptom relief and improve your dog's quality of life. Apoquel is a daily oral medication, while Cytopoint is a long-lasting injection; both are very successful in controlling atopic dermatitis - but how do you choose which product is right for your dog?

Apoquel

Apoquel is an oral tablet (now available in a new chewable version) that is initially given twice daily for 14 days. If irritation returns after the 14 days are finished, Apoquel can be refilled and given once daily for as long as your dog's allergy season lasts. Some dogs are able to stop Apoquel in the Fall/Winter - some dogs require Apoquel year round.

Pros:

- Rapid relief - starts working within the first 24 hours, with owners seeing noticeably reduced scratching in the first couple days.
- Short and long term management of allergic itch - can be safely started and stopped at any time.
- Used to manage flare ups of allergic dermatitis.
- Does not interfere with allergy testing in new users.
 - *For dogs that have been on Apoquel for extended periods of time, it is recommended to discontinue use for 4-12 weeks before allergy testing.*
- Can be used in dogs 12 months of age and older.
- May be effective in dogs who do not respond to Cytopoint.

Cons:

- Poor compliance in dogs that are difficult to pill.
- Cannot be used in dogs younger than 1 year of age.
- Side effects reported:
 - Increase in susceptibility of infections due to immune system involvement
 - Exacerbate neoplastic conditions
 - Diarrhea/Vomiting/Anorexia
 - New cutaneous/subcutaneous masses
 - Lethargy
- Apoquel works by blocking specific pathways at the cellular level. While reducing allergic inflammation and itch, this mechanism also can impact the immune system.

Cytopoint

Cytopoint is an injection that offers long term allergy relief that can last anywhere from 4-8 weeks. This medication can be given as long as a dog's allergy season lasts; some dogs only require a few injections a year, while other dogs may need an injection once a month.

Pros:

- Begins relieving itch in 24 hours, with noticeable results by day 3 - relief can last anywhere from 4-8 weeks.
- A great choice for owners with dogs that are difficult to pill.
- Safe for dogs of all ages.
- No reported side effects on the organs of the body.
- A good option for dogs with comorbidities - multiple health conditions that require treatments.
 - Cytopoint was used safely in a study in combination with other medications, including: Parasiticides, antibiotics, antifungals, corticosteroids, vaccines, immunotherapy, antihistamines and other antipruritics
- Does not suppress any pathway in the immune system, only neutralizes one type of molecule (IL-31). This molecule has been found to have involvement in atopic dermatitis.
- May be effective in dogs that do not respond to Apoquel.

Cons:

- Frequent visits to the vet office required for administration; not recommended in dogs that are difficult to bring to the vet or those that require sedation for procedures.
- Side effects reported:
 - GI upset - vomiting/diarrhea
 - Lethargy for the first 24-48 hours after injection
 - Pain at the injection site
- Once injected, the medication cannot be removed and will last in the body for at least 4 weeks- if the pet were to have negative side effects.