

## **My Pet Sheds All Over !!!**

The shedding of hair is a normal and ongoing process for most domestic dogs and cats. Excessive shedding generally occurs in the spring and fall with the changing of major seasons. Old hair is released so that new hair of the right consistency and insulation factor may grow in.

In the winter, hair fluffs up to provide insulation from the cold. For this reason, matted hair does not protect a dog or cat from the cold. Many pets (especially the cold weather breeds like Elkhound, Huskies or Samoyeds) also have an undercoat of soft downy hair to protect them from extreme cold. In the summer, hair can also function to protect pets from overheating by insulating against the heat of the sun.

Since most pets spend at least part of their time indoors, and are often exposed to both air conditioning and heating systems, their bodies may begin to start shedding hair year round.

Shedding is best controlled by regular grooming, either by brushing at home or with professional grooming services, or a combination of both. Keep in mind that regardless of how much hair might be removed at a grooming shop, even with special products, nothing will remove all the loose hair and give you back a non-shedding dog.

Hair is also shed whenever a pet is nervous or excited. You have probably noticed that your pet sheds more than normal during a visit to the vet. This is because the pet's nervousness causes the skin to tighten, which forces out any loose hair. When you pick him up from the groomer, the same can thing occur – his excitement loosens up hair that was not able to be removed (or ready to be shed) during the grooming process.

Some diseases can promote poor hair growth and shedding. If your pet experiences unexplained hair loss, or you suspect there may be a medical condition causing the excessive shedding, it is always wise to consult a veterinarian.

Good diet, regular brushing and special attention during spring and fall shedding seasons will help keep extra hair off your clothes and floors.

A good quality oil supplement can be added to your pet's food, such as any fish oil or omega 3, 6 & 9 which can help replenish lost moisture in the skin and reduce shedding. These products are sold in better pet food stores.

Please do not hesitate to ask me if you need suggestions on which tool to use to de-shed and brush your pet's coat.

Last but not least, enjoy every moment with your dog since the shedding is a small price to pay for unconditional love.