

## Post Clipping Alopecia

This is a condition that is very common in the fur bearing breeds. The fur bearers such as Alaskan Malamutes, Keeshonds, Siberian Huskies, Samoyeds, Pomeranians, Chows, Labradors, Golden Retrievers, Shepherds, Shetland Sheepdogs, Newfoundlands etc. all have undercoat that needs to be brushed on a regular basis to keep shedding to a minimum and to keep the dog from getting matted. Post Clipping Alopecia comes into play when a fur bearer is shaved down. The hair will NOT grow back to the way it was. It can come close, but it will never be as beautiful as the original coat.

As seen in the picture below, this is a dog that had been shaved previously. This is what Post Clipping Alopecia looks like. The hair grows back thin and in patches. It changes the texture and thus completely messes with the dog's heating and cooling system.



A lot of people will shave their dog because they shed, or they think the dog is hot. The fur actually protects the dog from sun burn and keeps the body cool. Cool air is trapped down on the skin because of the hair. If you remove it, the dog will actually be hotter. Dogs "sweat" by panting. They also release a small amount of sweat from between the paw pads as well. This is their natural cooling system.

So while shaving your fur bearing dog might seem like a good idea at first, it can have long term complications. Instead, keep your pet brushed so that the undercoat is removed and the skin can breathe. Make sure to have your pet professionally groomed every 6-8 weeks (or more if needed). If you keep up a regular routine you may not have to get a deshedding package each time. A basic bath and dry (if done between 2-4 weeks) will release any undercoat growing in before it gets impacted and matted.

If you have already started shaving your pet here are some facts and tips to help you manage the hair growth:

- If fed a good quality food the chances of your pet's coat growing back to a normal texture will increase.
- If fed a good quality food then your pet will be receiving the nutrients it needs, thus will shed less. And poop less. Always a good thing.

- If started young, some dogs will grow back almost to natural texture. However, as the dog ages, the chances of it developing Post Clipping Alopecia with each shave are increased.
- In some dogs, to get the coat back to its natural state, it can take up to 3 years of proper care, nutrition, and grooming. Until then, your dog will look like it has mange.
- Most owners whose dogs do develop Post Clipping Alopecia tend to keep the pet clipped short for the rest of the dogs life.
- The chance of an older pet growing back its hair are slim to none.
- If a pet develops Post Clipping Alopecia, you might also want to have your vet do some blood work. If the pet is on a nutritional diet then there could be something medically wrong on the inside that only blood work test results will find. Common ailments are enlarged heart, obesity, thyroid, cushions disease, diabetes, kidney failure, and tumors (fatty and cancerous).