

Color Mutant Alopecia (Blue Doberman Syndrome)

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Color mutant alopecia is a condition of the coat associated with blue (dilute black) or fawn (dilute brown) coat colors. It affects blue, and occasionally red, Doberman Pinschers. Despite the name, other breeds can have a hair loss linked to coat color. Most notable are blue Chow Chows, Dachshunds, Whippets, Standard Poodles, and Great Danes.

What are the symptoms?

Most dogs who develop this condition are born with (except for color) normal appearing coats. Symptoms generally develop in dogs 4 months to 3 years of age. As they grow and mature, they develop brittle hair, followed by patchy hair loss sometimes referred to as a 'moth-eaten' coat. Only the blue portions of the coat are affected. Other colored areas remain normal. Secondary infection and inflammation of the hair follicles is also seen.



What are the risks?

Initially, the dog will appear quite normal, but with a thin coat in the blue areas. As the condition advances, the skin also becomes involved and can become infected.

What is the management?

The condition is incurable. Treatment, however, may help alleviate some of the symptoms. Medicated shampoos such as benzoyl peroxide may help reduce scaling and itching.