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Pemphigus

Pemphigus is a group of skin diseases featuring ulcers and crusting of the skin. Some forms may also affect the gums. The disease causes skin cells to separate and break down. It has four forms:

- Pemphigus Foliaceus, in the outermost layer of the skin
- Pemphigus Erythematosus, the most common form, is similar to folliculitis but less severe
- Pemphigus Vulgaris, the most severe form, affects deep skin tissue
- Pemphigus Vegetans, the most rare and found only in dogs, also affects deep skin tissue but is not as virulent as vulgaris.

Diagnosis is made by microscopic exam of a tissue sample. The disease is treated with Prednisone, a steroid which controls the inflammation.

Pemphigus is a type of autoimmune disease. Autoimmune diseases are genetically predisposed; if a dog has the disease, it has the genes. Dogs affected with pemphigus should not be bred. Their near relatives should not be bred to mates with a family history of any autoimmune disease.