

Matting

At OK Canine Corral, we love every pet that walks through our doors, and we always aim to make their grooming experience as pleasant and comfortable as possible. One of the most challenging issues we often encounter is matting, especially in long-haired breeds. We understand that it can be heartbreaking to see your furry friend shaved, so we want to explain why sometimes it's necessary and how it impacts your pet.

What Are Mats?

Mats develop when a dog's fur tangles into a mass of snarls. If left unattended, these knots wrap together, forming a tight pelt against the skin. Typical matting areas can be found where there's a lot of movement, like behind the ears, under the legs, and around the collar. Mats can be as tiny as a pea or large enough to cover significant areas of your dog's body, making their fur feel like it's glued together.

Mats are painful. To better understand this discomfort, take a piece of your own hair, wrap it around your finger until it reaches your scalp, and give a slight tug. Now imagine feeling that pain all over your body — including in its most sensitive areas, such as your armpits and groin.

Many people have had to brush large tangles out of your or your children's hair. Imagine that pulling and pain all over your body. That's what a matted dog experiences.

The Painful Effects of Mats

1. Skin Irritation and Infections:

- Mats trap dirt, debris, and moisture close to the skin, creating the perfect environment for bacteria and parasites.
- The constant pulling of the hair can cause skin inflammation, leading to painful sores and infections.

2. Restricted Movement:

- Severe mats can bind the skin and fur together, making movement uncomfortable, especially around the legs and joints.
- Dogs with heavy matting might change their walk to avoid pain, leading to extra strain on their muscles and joints.

3. Cuts Off Blood Circulation:

- Mats can become so tight that they cut off blood circulation, causing pain, numbness, and even tissue death in extreme cases.

4. Emotional Distress:

- The constant discomfort and pain from mats can lead to stress and anxiety in dogs, affecting their overall happiness and behavior.

Why We Sometimes Have to Shave Severe Mats

1. **Safety and Comfort:**

- When mats are too tight and close to the skin, brushing them out can cause significant pain and potential injury. Shaving is often the safest and least painful option.
- Shaving allows the skin to breathe and heal properly, preventing further complications from hidden sores or infections.

2. **Prevention of Further Issues:**

- Removing mats entirely reduces the risk of skin infections, hot spots, and other health issues that can arise from trapped moisture and bacteria.

3. **Improved Hygiene:**

- A shaved coat is easier to keep clean and free from debris, helping to maintain your dog's overall hygiene and comfort.

4. **Faster Recovery:**

- Shaving allows for quicker and more thorough treatment of any underlying skin conditions, leading to a faster recovery and return to normal activities.

Preventing Matting

1. **Regular Brushing:**

- Regular brushing, especially in high-friction areas, can prevent mats from forming. Use a brush suitable for your dog's coat type and make it a routine part of their grooming.

2. **Professional Grooming:**

- Regular visits to a professional groomer can help keep your dog's coat in good condition. Groomers have the tools and expertise to manage your dog's fur and prevent severe matting.

3. **Proper Bathing:**

- Regular baths with quality shampoos and conditioners can help keep the coat clean and free from dirt that can contribute to fur matting. Ensure the fur is completely dry and brushed out after a bath to prevent new mats from forming.

4. **Detangling Sprays and Conditioners:**

- Using detangling sprays or leave-in conditioners can make brushing easier and help prevent tangles and mats.

Our Commitment to Pet Health

At Ok Canine Corral, we provide compassionate and professional care for every dog we groom. If your pet has mats, we will carefully assess the best course of action to ensure their comfort and health. A common phrase among groomers is "humanity before vanity." Shaving is sometimes necessary, but it is always done with your dog's well-being as our top priority.

If you have any questions or need advice on preventing matting, please reach out to us. We're here to help you keep your furry friend happy and healthy!