

Grooming Your American Hairless Terrier

By Kari Jepson

You mean I need to groom a hairless dog?! Well.....yes..... there some simple tips that help keep your dog's skin at it's optimum beauty.

Bathing is simple and easy. Find a mild dog shampoo. We use an oatmeal based shampoo. There are many of these on the market. Just wet down the skin and lather up. Rinse thoroughly till the skin rather squeaks. Pat dry and either apply sunscreen or a mild lotion. On sunscreen , those made for children or babies are a good choice. This also applies to the lotions. I have heard from different AHT breeders that Extra Virgin Coconut Oil is moisturizing and seems to also have healing properties,so I have added this to my grooming regimen. For a deeper clean skin we use a scrub of some kind with the shampoo around once a month. This can be done a little more often if needed. Use a mild scrub and I use those made for humans that are not medicated. You can make your own with a mixture of either the coconut oil and sugar or olive oil and sugar. In the summer months, bathing may be needed more often but as a rule , I don't bath my dogs unless they are actually dirty. Their skin is neither oily nor dry if they are in good condition and nutrition is adequate. Bathing once a week is a nice average, but a quick rinse off more frequently is fine. Another quick clean-up idea is to wipe them down with a baby wipe or a wipe made for dogs. (no disinfectant wipes) Just go by your lifestyle and the look of your dog's skin. Always check the ears and if there is dirty buildup , take a cotton swab filled with Otoclens or some other ear cleaner for dogs and just swab out what you can see. Teeth should be checked at least weekly and care of teeth is just like any other canine. Puppies can go through pimply stages as they mature and this is normal; as long as they are not itchy and pus-filled. If a dog seems to be very irritated and itchy, there is an indication that they may have some kind of infection or allergy. They should then be seen by a Veterinarian.

Clothing is necessary for protection from cool weather or sun and I use the rule of thumb that if I need a sweatshirt, then my dog probably does too. AHT's love to cuddle in blankets while resting and this does help to protect bony prominences that are not protected by hair.

Frequent nail trimming is a must. Trim toenails at least every 1 to 2 weeks. If you are uncomfortable with this, most groomers will charge a small fee for trimming nails. Dewclaws may or may not be left on, so just don't forget them. Rear dewclaws should be removed.

One if the many joys of owning a hairless dog is the lack of grooming required, so enjoy!