

Derm Digest

Indianapolis IN • Louisville KY • Marietta GA • Pasadena CA
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Animal Dermatology Clinic

Advancing the Art of Veterinary Dermatology

October 2012

Might It Be Mites?

Here are the symptoms: intense itching, scabs or crusting, reddening skin and thinning coat.

Here are (some of) the possibilities:

- Food allergy
- Environmental allergy
- Bacterial infection
- Fleas
- Mites
- Yeast infection



ALL SIX of the diseases above can produce the symptoms listed and there are many more that could be on this list! This patient was itchy and has crusting on this tail. His thin coat and red skin is evident here on his back legs and tail.
Photo: Animal Dermatology Clinic

The symptoms of a pet with Scabies mites can be confusing to pet owners. In an effort to resolve the situation quickly and with little cost, many pet owners consult "Dr. Google". In some fashion, these symptoms can be found on a pet with all of the diseases listed above. How to decide?

Sarcoptes scabiei and *Notoedres cati* mites are microscopic parasites that burrow into the skin of dogs and cats respectively, where they deposit eggs that hatch over the course of a week. After hatching, the larvae make their way to the surface of the skin where they feed on the host (the pet). The larvae then grow into a nymph stage. Think of these nymphs as teen-age eating machines.

The nymph can now travel on the skin to another area on the pet surface continuing to feed as they molt into adults. As adults, they mate and deposit more eggs in the skin, restarting the cycle. This episode is completed in a short three weeks!

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First Aid Kits for Pets: *Be prepared!*

Many have a first aid kit available as a mini-emergency station in their homes. Keeping a kit in your car is especially handy when you are on the road. But what about your pet?

The American Red Cross has maintained a message of preparedness for those unplanned situations that may occur. With the large number of pet owners, it is a good idea to keep basic first aid supplies for your four-legged friend.

Fully assembled pet first aid kits can be purchased at larger pet supply stores or on-line. The American Red Cross website provides an extensive list of items that could be included in a kit that you can assemble yourself. More information is in *Pet First Aid* by Barbara Mammato, DVM, MPH, a handbook sponsored by the American Red Cross and The Humane Society of the United States.

To expand on your preparedness, some chapters of the Red Cross offer classes in First Aid and Animal CPR. From the Animal Kennel Club website: "The Red Cross four hour Pet First Aid Training course utilizes mannequins to learn the correct skills for small-medium and large dog CPR as well as how to perform CPR on cats. The instructor will demonstrate CPR, rescue breathing and how to care for choking emergencies. You will learn how to splint broken bones; control bleeding and emergency care for poisoning and bloat/torsion. How to deal with burns and other common emergencies and illnesses are also covered in this course on Pet First Aid."

There is no substitute for the professional care of a veterinarian, but having a first aid kit and knowledge of basic medical care should an emergency arise could prove to be beneficial. 🐾

Might It Be Mites, *cont.*

Some pet owners attempting to resolve the symptoms on their own usually try the food allergy route because the popular trend on Dr. Google is that grain or corn is the culprit of an itchy dog (although the protein source is usually the allergen, not the carbohydrate). In truth, if a strict and disciplined food elimination diet is followed, the results will help to eliminate or identify a food allergy. A food trial can go as long as 12 weeks, all the while as many as four generations of multiplying mites are now feeding on the canine buffet of Fido or feline smorgasbord of Fluffy!

Most flea treatments are ineffective on mites and whatever over-the-counter products purported for allergies are no benefit.

To prove that mites are the cause, the veterinarian must scrape sample areas on the pet. The skin scrape is performed with the edge of a scalpel and with a fair amount of pressure, so much as to obtain cells from the topmost layer of skin with the goal that mites are captured in the sample. That sample is placed on a glass slide and with the aid of a microscope, the veterinarian looks for evidence of mites. Negative skin scrapes DO NOT eliminate mites as a cause. They are difficult to find in most cases and treatment should be undertaken if suspicion is aroused.

Treatments will vary depending upon the breed type and circumstances surrounding the case therefore, another concerned pet owner who offers advice of successful treatment of their experience with scabies may not be suitable for another pet.

Mites are contagious and can affect other dogs and they can also transiently affect humans as well. Other canids (foxes, coyotes and wolves) can be carriers and your dog can contract mites by frequenting areas where an infected wild animal was present.

Once mites are identified, the pet owner must thoroughly clean the environment where the pet lives including bedding, harnesses and collars. Veterinary clinics will disinfect and temporarily quarantine the examination room after a pet with mites is seen to prevent other patients from exposure to the parasite, although Scabies mites are obligate parasites, meaning they cannot survive long off the host.

Remember, mites cannot be seen with the naked eye and although the veterinarian may strongly believe that the mites are present based upon case history and a physical examination, it is possible that a sample containing mites cannot be found. In many cases, the veterinarian will proceed and begin treatment for eradicating the mites. 🐾

Photo right: Scabies mite. Credit: Kalumet



*Image of Sarcoptes scabiei magnified 100x.
Photo: Joel Mills*

Sarcoptid mites can affect both cats and dogs. But it is two distinctly different mites that are attracted to each species. Felines usually are affected by *Notoedres cati* mites and for canines, it is *Sarcoptes scabiei*.



Employee Spotlight: Anne Mercado



Anne is a member of our front office team in Tustin, CA. Her educational background was focused on a pharmacy related position and now she uses that education at Animal Dermatology Clinic.

“The basic knowledge that I learned about drugs and medication in school has really helped me understand what and why the doctors prescribe to our patients,” she says.

“I almost took a job at a (human) hospital but decided to stay at Animal Dermatology Clinic. I think I would be doing similar duties, but it’s much more fun here seeing all the pets that come in everyday. And it’s amazing to see them improve from when they first come in.”

Anne spends her spare time with family, friends and her Chihuahua, Chico. She enjoys hiking, snowboarding, and traveling.

Cats Flipping their Wigs



Photos courtesy of Jill Johnson

If your cat needs a fashion update, there’s a wig for that. Yes, a wig.

Kitty Wigs® is an on-line site (www.kittywigs.com) that currently offers four choices of feline wigs (\$65) to get your kitty to be, well, the cat’s meow.

If you love the look, but your Miss Kitty is not so thrilled about it, not to worry, because you can get a peek of some of the feline fashionistas collected in a book also available for purchase. In addition, they offer a video of models presumably on the catwalk (where else?), gift cards and more. 🐾



Pet pictures needed! Have you submitted a picture of your pet? Go to our site at www.animaldermatology.com and upload a picture into our Pet Gallery. We would love to have your pet included in the gallery! Problems uploading? Send a message via the Contact Page and we’ll help you out.

Pet Events in Your Area

The following events are listed for informational purposes only. Please contact the organization prior to attending as schedules may change without notice. Animal Dermatology Clinic has no affiliation with these events.

Huntington Beach, CA

Sunday, October 7

Take your dogs on a lovely morning stroll along Huntington Beach for a cause! Anyone is welcome to register! Bring your families, significant others, and friends to participate in our **first annual Paws for a Cause 2-mile dog walk**. Don't miss out on this opportunity to meet other owners and their dogs in the area. Proceeds will be donated to OC Animal Care, which provides shelter, care, and medical treatment to abandoned and abused animals. All pre-registered participants will receive a free T-shirt and a bag packed with all different sorts of goodies and giveaways. We look forward to seeing you! More info at: www.paws-for-a-cause.net

Pasadena, CA

Sunday, October 7

Race for the Rescues

October 7, 2012 8 a.m. to Noon

Admission: \$30 to register

Benefiting: AngelDogs Foundation

Do you love to walk? Do you love helping animals? Then join Team AngelDogs Foundation at Race for the Rescues, Sunday, Oct. 7, at the Pasadena Rose Bowl. Dogs are welcome to walk, too! This fun event costs \$30 per walker to register. Additional funds raised by Team AngelDogs Foundation will help us provide low-income spay/neuter to low-income pet owners across Southern California. Every pet we fix means dozens, hundreds, even thousands more that will not become a stray or sad shelter statistic. Email Michelle@AngelDogsFoundation.org for more information. Thank you!

For more information, please call (661) 803-2909 or email michelle@angeldogsfoundation.org.

San Diego, CA

Sunday, October 21 11:30am – 2pm

Cruise and Brunch with your Dog!

Hornblower 4th Annual Bow Wow Brunch Cruise

Cost: \$69 per person. One dog per person.

Wow! A champagne brunch for you and a special pet buffet for your dog. The 4th Annual Bow Wow Brunch Cruise and Halloween Dog Costume Contest is offered to help raise money and awareness about orphaned pets at Helen Woodward Animal Center.

Leaves from San Diego Grape St. Pier 1800 N. Harbor Dr at noon, boarding time at 11:30am.

Lots of information and details at the Hornblower website:

www.hornblower.com/hce/port/overview/sd+bowwowbrunch

Louisville, KY

Sunday, October 21 12N – 6:00PM

Collie Club of Kentucky Dog Show

Enjoy a Family FUN day at an all Collie Show! Admission is FREE! See Junior competition, puppy sweepstakes, adult collie classes, learn about Collies, Dog Showing, and about joining our Collie Club.

Highland Hall- Post 201 American Legion

2919 Bardstown Road

Louisville, KY

More info at: collieclubky.com

Marietta, GA

October 20, 2012 12PM to 4PM

Admission: \$60

Benefiting: GSD Rescue of GA

Dog School 101

2171 Kingston Court

Marietta, GA

Join us to learn the basics of dog first aid. Learn what to do in case of accident or injury to your pet, and when to go right to the vet. Space is limited, please reserve a spot by e-mailing info@ashepherd.org. Portion of ticket sales benefits GSD Rescue of GA.

For more information, please email info@gashepherd.org.

Indianapolis, IN

Saturday, November 10 10:00am-6:00pm

& Sunday, November 11; 10:00am-4:00pm

Great Indy Pet Expo

Indiana State Fairgrounds - Expo Hall

Adults: \$7

Seniors: \$6

Children (6 – 12yrs): \$4

Children (5yrs & under): Free

Website: www.greatindypetexpo.com

Calling all pet lovers – this is the event for you! More than 150 booths with the latest in pet products and services, dock diving dogs (and yes, your dog can give it a try!), Purina Incredible Dog Team, tips on training your dog, Indiana Wild with Alligator Aaron and his scaled, finned, feathered and furry friends, door prize giveaways every 30 minutes, and so much more bow-wow-riific stuff! Check out our website for more information!