

Canine Pruritus Scale courtesy of Dr. Peter Hill (just google it!)

Extremely severe itching / almost continuous
Itching doesn't stop whatever is happening, even in the consulting room (needs to be physically rest)


Severe itching / prolonged episodes
Itching might occur at night (if observed) and also when eating, playing, exercising or being distracted

Moderate itching / regular episodes
Itching might occur at night (if observed), but not when eating, playing, exercising or being distracted

Mild itching / a bit more frequent
Wouldn't itch when sleeping, eating, playing, exercising or being distracted


Very mild itching / only occasional episodes
The dog is slightly more itchy than it was before the skin problem started

Normal dog – I don't think itching is a problem



Major Causes of Itch in Dogs

- Parasites
- Infections
- Allergies
- Other Causes



PARASITES

- Easy to See
 - Fleas
 - Lice
 - Ticks
- Need Microscope
 - *Demodex*
 - *Sarcoptes*
 - *Cheyletiella*
 - *Otodectes*

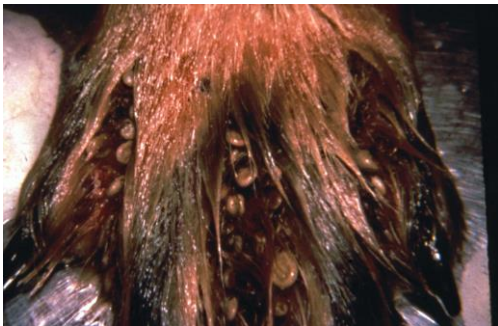
Fleas-the #1 cause of ITCH



Lice-species specific!



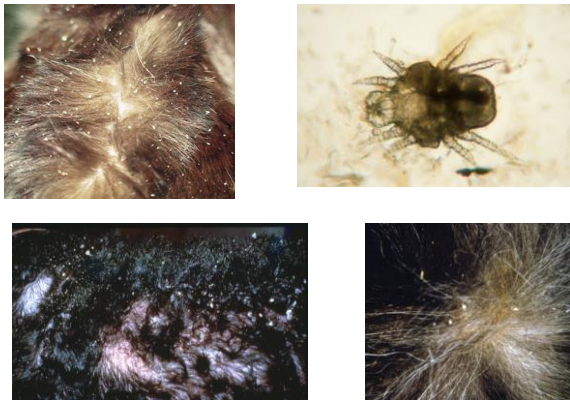
Ticks



Sarcoptes (scabies)-severe itch!



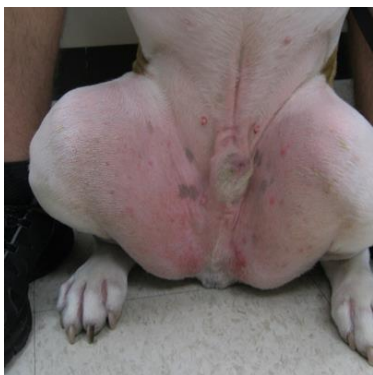
Cheyletiella-scaling on the back, less itchy



Otodectes (ear mites)-head and neck



Bacterial infection 'rash'





Itchy dogs typically have yeast overgrowth



What about ringworm?

- Over diagnosed in dogs
- Bacterial infections commonly misdiagnosed as “ringworm”



Looks like, but is not “ringworm”



Dermatophytosis-consider ‘risk group’



Allergies-After flea control they all look similar!!



Asking the "Right" Questions

- Is the dog ill or does it look unwell?
- Any medication history for any disease?
- Do you have any history about the skin disease?
 - Medical records, receipts
 - Drug history
 - Medication bottles
- Any history of flea or other parasite control?
- Any history of contagion?



Itching after contact?



- Fleas
- Scabies
- Cheyletiella
- Ear Mites
- Chiggers-orange dot
- Contact with short coated dogs

“Does the dog itch?”

- What do you see if you watch the dog for 5 minutes?
- What behaviors do you see?
 - Nibbling, rubbing, rolling, licking, scooting.....
- Does the dog “gag”?
- Is there excessive shedding?



Unraveling Clues from the Dermatological Examination

- Itch trumps all other dermatological problems
- If itch is present, then almost all other clinical signs are somehow related
- Itch almost always leads to secondary infections
- Evidence of “cure it pattern” or evidence of “life long manageable disease”

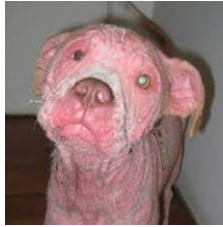


Dermatology TPR

- Hair plucking (trichogram) or skin scraping
- Ear swab cytology in mineral oil
- Ear swab cytology for staining
- Skin cytology (scotch tape or glass slide)



Is there a parasite pattern or suspicion?



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SCABIES!!!!

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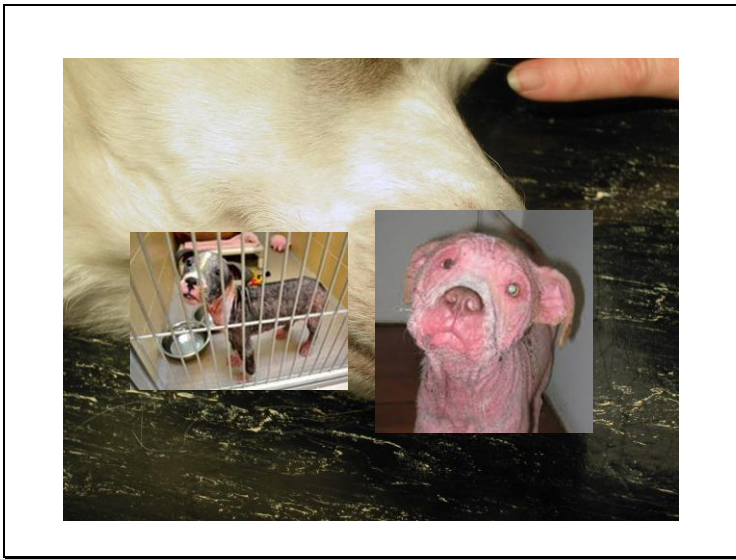
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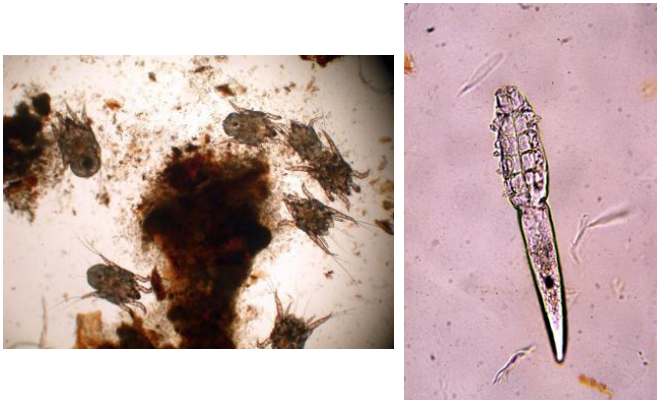
Other Parasites

Hair Trichogram





Ear swab cytology mineral oil



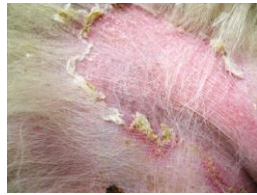
Is there evidence or suspicion of a skin or ear infection?



Exudate and/or Odor

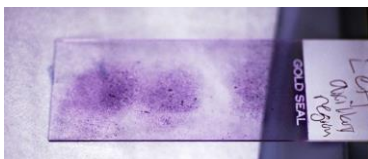


Scales and scales pierced by hairs- hallmark of microbial overgrowth

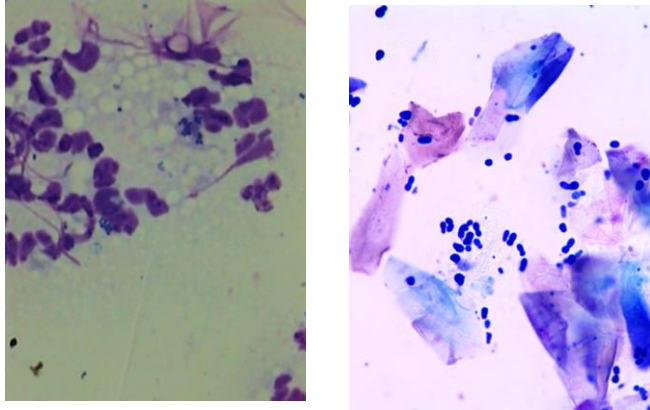


Chronic foot licking?
Ear debris? Ear itch?

Skin cytology



Look Hard For Yeast-100x



Ear swab cytology-staining



Scotch Tape To Find Demodex!



The "ick" factor



The Six Week Plan-Veterinary

- Treat for fleas and contagious mites
 - Selamectin every 2 weeks for 6 weeks
 - Moxidectin/imidacloprid every 2 weeks for 6 weeks
- Treat Skin Infections
 - Topical prescription antibacterial/antifungal shampoo 3x a week for 6 weeks
 - Systemic antifungal (ketoconazole)-4 weeks
 - Systemic antibiotics (based upon culture)-4 weeks



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Bacterial and Yeast Infection

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When Systemic Antibiotics Are Not An Option

- Topical focal therapy with antibiotic ointment
- Whole body treatment
 - 2% chlorhexidine bath/spray
 - Accelerated hydrogen peroxide bath/spray
 - Bathe 2-3 times a week, spray daily



The Six Week Plan-Shelter Staff

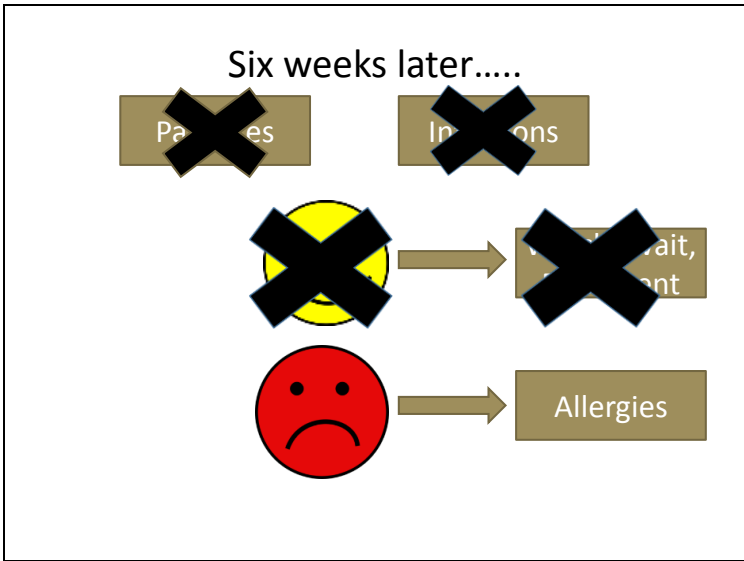
- Groom the hair coat
 - Easier to assess the skin changes
 - Improves dog's appearance
 - Easier to bathe
- Bathing at least once a week
 - Start with cleansing shampoo
 - Use medicated shampoo
 - Pre-dilute shampoo 1:4 before applying
 - Massage, massage, massage.....



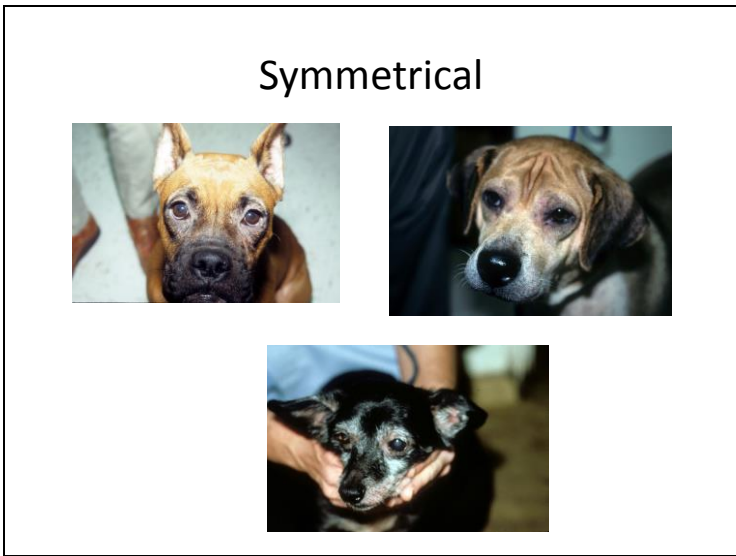
The Six Week Plan-Foster Family

- **Flea control for all dogs and cats.**
- Groom the hair coat! Clip it, comb/brush it.
- Plan to bathe, bathe, bathe... no you will NOT dry out the skin....
- Follow the parasite control plan
- Follow the infection control plan
- Keep "Itch Scale" notes
- **DO NOT CHANGE THE DIET**









Itchy butt? It's not anal sacs it's allergies!



Recurrent Skin Infections!



Recurrent Ear Infections!!!!



Role of Foster Family Post Triage

- Determine what the immediate plan is
 - Symptomatic care and stabilize until a family is found
 - Further diagnostic testing
- **Important: Must CONFIRM itch is year round before pursuing a food trial or allergy testing!**

Foster Family Care For All Allergy Dogs

- Maintain year round flea and tick control
- Maintain good coat hygiene
- Use good topical therapy
 - Control infections and relapses
 - Relieve itch
 - Control odor



How To Bathe An Allergic Dog

- Recipe
 - One itchy dog
 - Two bottles of shampoo (grooming and medicated)
 - Small container and measuring cup
 - Loofa gloves
 - Lots of towels
 - Bath tub
- Instructions
 - Prewash with prediluted shampoo
 - Lather and massage, massage, massage
 - Rinse well
 - **Forget the timer**
 - **Frequency is more important than time**



Bathing Products

- Good cleansing shampoo for the pre-wash!
- Benzoyl peroxide shampoo with moisturizer
- Chlorhexidine
- Chlorhexidine and miconazole
- Chlorhexidine and ketoconazole



Controlling the Itch

- Ears and eyes-focal topical steroids
- Bathing for comfort and to control bacterial and yeast overgrowth
- Careful use of topical spray steroids
- Essential fatty acids-long term, slow onset
- Antihistamines?-controversy about efficacy
- Cyclosporine-effective but expensive
- Oral glucocorticoids-as little as possible



The foster family and the flea allergic dog

- Relapses
 - Flea control?
 - What is the behavior?
 - Increase bathing to control infections
 - May need a few days of oral steroids if flare is acute and severe
- Relapse in face of good parasite and infection control suggests another allergy



Foster Family and the Suspect Food Allergic Dog

- Year round problem: How do we know the diagnosis?
- Blood allergy test results-not valid diagnostic test
- Feed a complete and balanced commercial diet
- **Avoid food trials unless the dog has concurrent gastro-intestinal disease**



The foster family and the dog with environmental allergies

- Medical management of the itch
- What about allergy testing?
- **Don't allergy test unless immunotherapy is an option**



What everyone needs to know

- Life long skin disease
- Controlled but not cured
- Dog will always require some type of topical and/or systemic treatment
- As much as is needed, but as little as possible
- Goal is quality of life