

# Demodectic Mange

## Diagnosis:

Your dog has been diagnosed with demodicosis. This is an overgrowth of Demodex mites which are normal skin inhabitants, but they are usually so low in number that you cannot tell that they are there. Typically dogs 18 months or younger are the most frequently diagnosed cases, but any dog with compromised immune system or any of the factors listed below can be also be susceptible. The actual mites do not develop on a fetus while in the uterus. However, if a mother dog has Demodex mites in her skin, the mites can invade the new fetus' skin immediately after birth. Depending upon several factors such as nutrition, environmental hygiene, temperature stresses, heat cycle in females or internal disease, most pups can resist mite infestation. Sometimes, no underlying reason can be found. Because the tendency to be susceptible to generalized demodicosis at less than a year of age has been found to be genetically transmitted, affected pups should not be bred and should be spayed/neutered.

Detection of Demodex mites has been done by a "skin scraping" procedure whereas a blade is used to scrape skin cells from the affected area and observe under a microscope. The mites live in hair follicles, and when they over-multiply, they cause hair loss and secondary bacterial infections. Demodicosis is not contagious to other animals or to you. Generally, this is not an itchy disease and the owners simply notice areas of thinned hair or missing hair. Frequently, we will see it first appear around the eyes and ears, but it can occur anywhere on the body. Some pets only get it in a few areas, where others have most of the body affected.

## Treatment:

Our current treatment protocol involves once a week medicated shampoo/medicated dips done here in the clinic. The medicated shampoo is worked into the coat and allowed to stay on the dog for a 30 minute period, then rinsed thoroughly and the Mitaban dip is applied and allowed to dry on the dog. Your pet will need to stay most of the day so that the dip can dry...we cannot towel dry and use a blow dryer. Once home, do not allow your pet to get wet, go swimming or have a bath. The dip is formulated to continuously kill off the mites and any eggs that hatch and produce new mites. The duration of these dips can vary depending on each individual case and the dog's health, but generally expect anywhere from 8-10 weeks (maybe longer).

The dipping fee for your pet's size and coat length can run between \$36.00-\$66.00. During this time period, we will also repeat the above mentioned skin scrapings at different intervals to monitor the reduction in live mites. The fee for each of these skin scraping diagnostics will be \$10.00. Please note that we limit these to the fewest amount we can, but it will be up to our doctors to decide how many will be needed for each individual case.

Please watch your pet closely after each visit. The first few times it is dipped, your pet may experience a lack of appetite, vomiting or extreme sleepiness. These symptoms should gradually subside with each new treatment. **IF YOU NOTICE THIS, PLEASE LET US KNOW BEFORE THE NEXT VISIT SO WE CAN NOTE IT--WE MAY ADJUST THE DOSAGE OF THE MEDICATED DIP AMOUNT.**