

Sarcoptic Mange

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Overview

Sarcoptic mange (also known as scabies) is a highly contagious parasitic disease caused by a microscopic mite called *Sarcoptes scabiei* that affects animals and people. These mites invade the skin of healthy dogs and puppies and create a variety of skin problems. The hallmark of the disease is intense itchiness. There may also be small red bumps located on the margins of the ears, elbows, hocks (ankles), chest and abdomen. These lesions may become generalized. Other symptoms may include patchy hair loss, and crusty sores.

Dogs of all ages may be affected, but sarcoptic mange is more common in young animals. Cats living in close contact with affected dogs may develop the disease.

If left untreated, chronic skin lesions develop including increased pigmentation, thickening and wrinkling of the skin, ulcerations and draining tracts. Secondary bacterial infections are common due to self-trauma.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Sarcoptic mange is generally diagnosed by physical examination, history and skin scraping. Sometimes the mite is difficult to find on skin scrapings. If there is a high index of suspicion, some animals are diagnosed with sarcoptic mange if they have a positive response to treatment for mange.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. The majority of dogs with sarcoptic mange are treated with medications to eradicate the mite such as ivermectin, lime sulfur dips, or Revolution. In some cases, antibiotics are necessary to treat the skin lesions. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Intense itching
- Presence of papules
- Patchy hair loss
- Crusty sores

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*