

Idiopathic Ear Margin Vasculitis (Proliferative Thrombovascular Necrosis of the Pinnae)

Idiopathic ear margin vasculitis is a rare disease in which animals develop ulcerative lesions of the ear margins. The cause of the disease is unknown, however an immune-mediated process has been implicated. All dog breeds can be affected but dachshunds seem to have a hereditary predisposition. Age or sex predisposition has not been determined.

Animals first develop hair loss along the ear tips followed by areas of darkened and thickened skin. Skin death occurs resulting in ulcer formation and notching of the ear margins. Typically, both ear tips are involved and each ear can have one to eight lesions. Occasionally, ulcers will also be found on the inside areas of the ear. If left untreated, the ulcers will gradually enlarge. There are no other skin lesions or clinical signs present in this disease. Animals are not itchy and do not appear to be in pain.



The disease is diagnosed based on history, clinical findings.

Animals can be treated with a various medications including sulfasalazine, tetracycline and niacinamide, pentoxifylline, steroids (prednisone, prednisolone, or methylprednisolone), and dapsone. Initially, most medications are given at a higher dose to control the disease then tapered

to a maintenance dose. Animals may still have notching on the ear tips once the disease has been controlled.

Key Point: In most cases the condition is controlled through maintenance therapy rather than cured.