

Sarcoptic Mange (Scabies)

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Sarcoptic mange is a highly contagious skin condition caused by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. Sarcoptic mange is common in dogs and rare in cats. The mites can be spread via animal to animal contact or contact with mite infested fur or crusts in the environment. The mites will infect a variety of canine species such as fox, wolves, and coyotes which are the major source of infection. The mites may produce mosquito bite type of lesions in humans, but they do not propagate in people and die in about 10 days. The mites tunnel into the skin to lay their eggs that hatch into larvae. The mite life cycle is approximately 14-21 days. Mites are only on the animal and rugs, carpeting, and bedding are not infested.

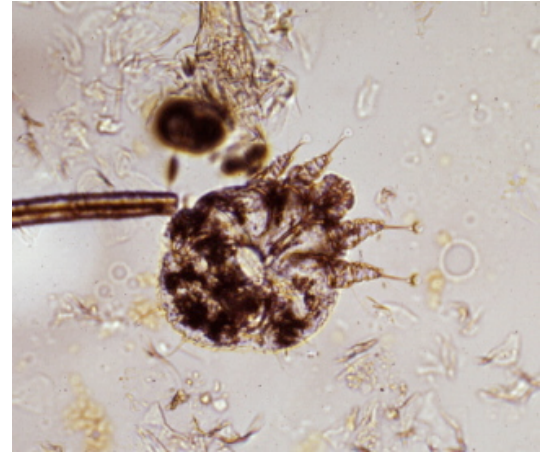
Intense itching and red bumps on the skin are the predominant clinical signs first observed in the animal. Hair loss and scaling on the ear tips and margins, elbows, hocks, and abdomen are also common findings. As the disease progresses the lesions tend to become generalized throughout the body. Animals will try to relieve



the intense itching by scratching, licking, and biting that often results in hair loss, sores, and thickening of the skin



A tentative diagnosis can be made by a thorough history and observation of clinical signs. Confirmation of the diagnosis is achieved through skin scrapings revealing the mites, eggs, or fecal pellets. However, it is very difficult to find the mites on skin scrapings. Therefore negative skin scrapings does not rule out infestation with the mites. In these cases, animals presenting clinical signs and history are treated to rule out infestation.



Treatment typically involves administration of three doses of the drug Ivermectin by injection under the skin at 2-week intervals. All contact dogs in the household should be treated. Ivermectin is contraindicated in Collies, Collie crosses, and other herding breeds. Other insecticidal drugs such as oral Interceptor[®] may be used in sensitive breeds. Also, Mitaban[®] dips can be given three times at two week intervals but this is usually more time consuming and expensive. A spot on product called Revolution[®] may be applied monthly to prevent re-infection.

Key Point: If Sarcoptic mange is suspected, treatment must be instituted. All contact dogs must be treated.