

# SHEDDING

## Telogen Effluvium, Anagen Defluxion, Wave Shedding, Diffuse Shedding and Excessive Continuous Shedding

### AETIOLOGY AND PATHOGENESIS

These conditions result from a disruption of the normal mosaic hair replacement of dogs and cats. Normal replacement is governed primarily by photoperiod and, to a lesser extent, ambient temperature, but is largely unaffected by season under normal household conditions.

Telogen defluxion occurs when a condition, such as whelping and lactation, pregnancy, high fever, severe illness, shock, surgery, or anaesthesia, results in the cessation of hair growth in many growing follicles. This results in synchronization of these follicles to resting stage in which, typically after 1-3 months, large amounts of hair is shed out.

Anagen defluxion occurs when a more severe condition, such as metabolic disease, endocrine disorders, infectious diseases, or treatment with antimetabolic drugs, interferes with the growth stage of the hair, resulting in acute hair loss within days.

The pathogenesis of wave shedding, diffuse shedding, and excessive continuous shedding is unclear.

### CLINICAL FEATURES

Telogen effluvium and anagen defluxion result in diffuse, partial to complete alopecia, especially of the trunk. Telogen effluvium may also be particularly marked in areas prone to wear and trauma. The underlying skin is usually normal.

Wave shedding can cause either a localised thinning of the coat, shedding of hair from a particular area, difference in coat colour that is spreading, or differences in hair length between one region and another. It is characterised by a diffuse shedding that generally starts on the dorsum of the animal and descends ventrally. The coat is almost completely shed at the edge of the wave with new hair re-growth behind the wave. This often creates a contrast in coat length, coat



colour (new hair tends to be darker), coat density (new coat tends to be less dense), and texture (the new coat has a higher ratio of primary hairs). Diffuse shedding occurs when an animal does not shed in a mosaic pattern but sheds the majority of its coat at one time, in the absence of a systemic insult, with transient diffuse, partial alopecia preceding normal re-growth. In animals with excessive continuous shedding there is no thinning of the coat or alopecia.

#### DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSES

- Systemic disease, metabolic stress, long-standing pyrexia
- Post-clipping alopecia
- Endocrine diseases
- Drug therapy

#### DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

Diagnosis is based on history and clinical findings. Appropriate diagnostics to rule in or out a particular systemic insult should be performed as indicated. Histopathologic examination of biopsy samples is helpful in ruling in or out endocrinopathies.

#### MANAGEMENT

Wave and diffuse shedding self-cure in 3-6 months. Anagen and telogen defluxion self-cure 3-6 months after the insult has been resolved. Removal of telogen hairs with a brush or comb to prevent accumulation on household furnishings is all that can be done for excessive continuous shedding.

#### Key points

- Another poorly defined group of diseases.
- The prognosis is generally good.