

Cheyletiellosis (Walking Dandruff)

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Cheyletiellosis is a skin condition of dogs, cats, and rabbits caused by infestation with mites. The mites live on the skin surface and attach their eggs to the hair shafts. The skin condition is commonly referred to as “walking dandruff” due to scales that seem to move. Infected dogs exhibit generalized scaling or crusting of the skin especially over the back. Cats develop small red bumps or crusts over the back. Animals infested with the mites can have mild to severe itching while others may be asymptomatic carriers.

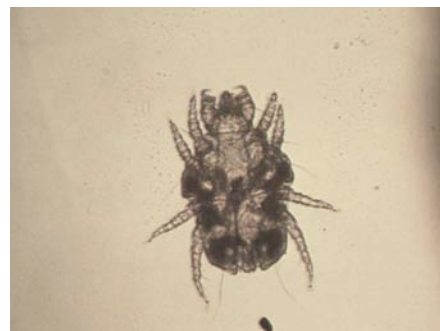


Cheyletiellosis is contagious and easily transmitted from one animal to another through direct contact. Humans coming in contact with infected animals may also exhibit red itchy bumps in areas of skin the contact affected animals.



A diagnosis can be achieved through skin scrapings or tape strips taken from scaling and crusting skin lesions.

These tests are usually more definitive in dogs than cats so a microscopic examination of hair collected with a fine-toothed comb may also be performed in cats. In some cases, these tests won't reveal any mites and a trial therapy may be necessary for a definitive diagnosis.



Many treatment options exist to cure a *Cheyle-*

tiella infestation although the majority of treatments are usually accomplished with the drug Ivermectin. The drug is given as injections under the skin at 2-week intervals for a total of 3 dosages. Unfortunately, there are some dog breeds in which the drug Ivermectin is contraindicated such as the Collie, Collie mixes, and other herding breeds. In these instances, the dogs can be bathed with a amitraz dip three times at 2-week intervals. Dogs, cats, and rabbits can be treated with lime sulfur or pyrethrin dips given weekly for 6 weeks. All animals in the household or those that have had contact with infected animals should be treated simultaneously.

Key Point: A contagious disease that causes dandruff in dogs and red bumps or crusts over the backs of cats. All contact animals will need to be treated.