

Parasitic skin diseases of dogs

—understanding the causes and prevention—



agriculture,
forestry & fisheries

Department:
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Skin disease in dogs is a very big problem in the coastal areas. Some of these can even be life-threatening and it is important to treat them early. You can ask an animal health officer, veterinarian or agricultural cooperative for advice on how to control the insects and mites that often cause skin diseases.

The most important skin diseases of dogs are described in this pamphlet:

- ◆ Sarcoptic and demodectic mange
- ◆ Fly strike
- ◆ Fleabite allergies.

Sarcoptic mange

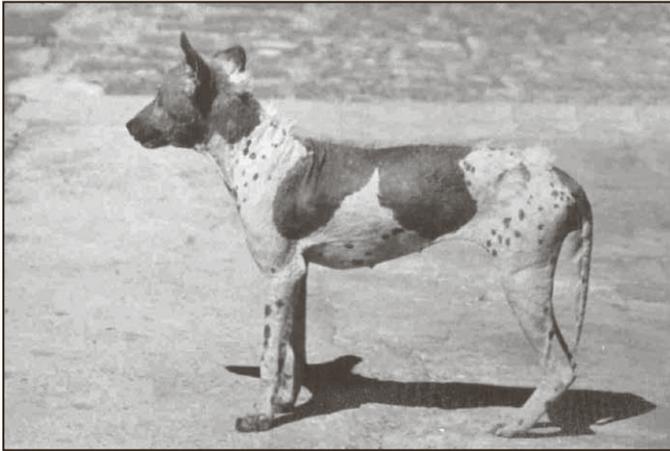
This disease is caused by a tiny mite that you cannot see without a microscope. It is called a *Sarcoptes scabiei*. If your dog has this disease you will see that it will be itching and

scratching itself and there will be a loss of hair around the eyes and over the body. The ear tips will be crusted and the mites will be found on the head, ears, muzzle and roots of the tail. If you think your dog has this disease, please visit a veterinarian as it is also infectious to people.



Demodectic mange

A tiny mite that you cannot see without a microscope, called *Demodex canis*, causes demodectic mange. If your dog has this type of mange, you will see that the face and forelegs are almost bald with small scabs. It is not itchy, usually, which is the difference between this and sarcoptic mange. It is also not infectious to people. However, dogs with this disease often have worms or are not getting enough food. So it is important to deworm them and increase their food as well as dipping them with a dip you can buy from the cooperative or a veterinarian.



You can get further information on the web at:

http://www.marvistavet.com/html/demodectic_mange.html

Itch mite in dogs

A mite called *Cheyletiella* causes this disease. It is larger than the other mites that infect dogs and because it is white it is sometimes called “walking dandruff”. It is very itchy but usually does not cause loss of hair. This disease is also infectious to the owner and is seen as small red itchy areas, usually on the soft skin of the arms or stomach. It is easy to treat with dips from your farmer’s co-op or veterinarian.

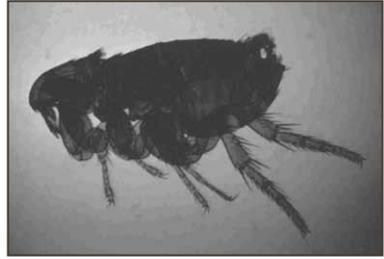
Fly strike in dogs

The dog fly (*Stomoxys calcitrans*) and the black midge bite the ears of dogs, causing crusting and bleeding. This can be prevented by fly control (these flies breed in manure and compost) and by putting Vaseline, or fly repellent on the ears. Do not put these on open sores, just around them.



Fleabite allergies

The flea, *Ctenocephalides felis*, is a common parasite of dogs and cats that can also bite people. Some dogs are very allergic to fleas and become very itchy. Red patches are seen on the rump and along the back, where dogs scratch themselves on furniture or branches. You need to treat the dog and the area it sleeps in with flea control remedies. These can be bought from the veterinarian or an agricultural cooperative or even a large grocery store.



Flea control is very important, otherwise you can find that your entire house is full of fleas and you, as well as your dog, will be itching and scratching!

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