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Sarcoptic Mange in Dogs (Scabies)

General Information

Sarcoptic mange is a skin disease caused by a parasitic mite. It is highly contagious and produces intense itching, reddening of the skin, thinning of the hair, and development of crusts and scabs. Bacterial skin infections commonly occur in the inflamed, irritated skin.

Sarcoptic mites burrow directly into the skin, where they deposit eggs that hatch in 3 to 10 days. The larvae burrow up to the skin surface to feed and molt into a nymph stage. The nymphs travel about the skin surface to feed. They molt into adults, which then mate and deposit more eggs in the skin. The entire life cycle is complete within 3 weeks. Sarcoptic mites prefer skin with little hair, so they are most numerous on the ears, elbows, abdomen and hocks. As the disease spreads, hair is lost and eventually the mites occupy large areas of skin.

Sarcoptic mites may also infest people in close contact with infested dogs. If anyone who has contact with your dog develops skin problems, a physician should be consulted.

Important Points in Treatment

1. Other dogs should not be allowed to contact your pet or its bedding until recovery is complete.
2. The mites can infest cats and people.
3. *Environment:* Although the mites do not survive off the host animal for more than a few days, you should thoroughly clean the environment and use insecticidal sprays on kennels, shipping crates, harnesses, collars and grooming tools.
4. Follow the treatment schedule exactly. Call the doctor if you cannot complete any treatments or believe your treatment has been inadequate.
5. *Treatment instructions:* _____

Notify the Doctor if Any of the Following Occur

- Your dog's scratching becomes more intense.
- Your dog develops new sores.
- Your dog's general health worsens.