

IF YOUR PET HAS HAIRLOSS,
THIS JUST “MITE” BE THE PROBLEM

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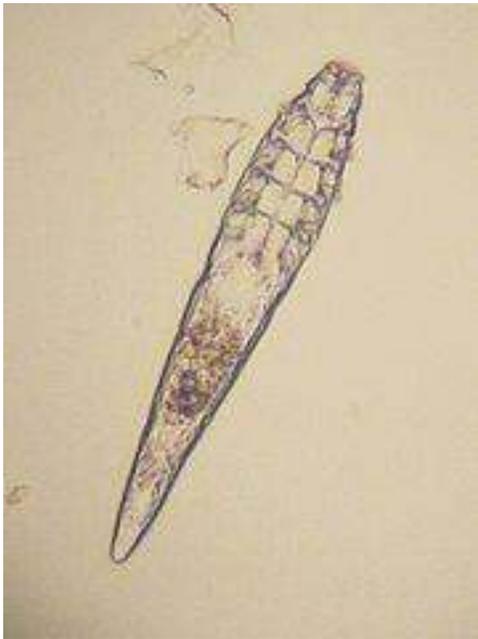
Demodex is a mite that lives deep in the hair follicles of dogs. Dogs with compromised immune systems can suffer from demodicosis, a condition in which there is an excessive proliferation of these mites. This can cause hair loss and inflammation of the skin. Although most commonly found in puppies, older dogs with underlying illnesses can also develop demodicosis. Puppies are predisposed because their immune systems are still immature. If an older dog is diagnosed, further diagnostic testing is recommended to rule out possible underlying diseases.

Starlett (pictured below) is a very sweet 2 .5 year old female pitbull that presented to our practice for red, itchy and inflamed skin and paws. A deep skin scraping was performed to rule out mites. Demodex mites were found on the scraping. She also had a secondary skin infection causing her to be itchy. Starlett was a sweetheart and responded very well to medication for mites as well as antibiotics for her skin infection.





Once Demodex mites or eggs are confirmed under the microscope from skin scrapings or hair plucking, most positive dogs are treated with miticidal therapy and possible topical therapies. Many dogs will also have secondary skin infections which need to be treated with antibiotics. Treatment is long, it is continued for 1 month after 2 consecutive negative skin scrapings. The prognosis for puppies with demodex is good. Older dogs, however, have a more guarded prognosis due to possible underlying disease.



Cats can also get demodicosis, but this is very rarely seen. Unlike dogs, cats are very itchy when they have demodex. Cats can also pass demodex to other cats, which is not possible in dogs. Demodicosis can also be diagnosed with deep skin scrapings in cats.