



## **Cheyletiella**

### **Diagnostic Plan**

History  
Physical examination  
Skin scrapings  
Skin biopsy  
Acetate tape impressions  
Direct visualization of the parasite

### **Therapeutic Plan**

Parasitocidal dips

### **Nutritional Plan**

Nutrition based on individual patient evaluation including body condition and other organ system involvement or disease

## **Cheyletiella**

Your pet has Cheyletiella (walking dandruff) mites. These mites are tiny parasites that live on the skin. They cause Cheyletiella mange, a contagious skin disease. Cheyletiella infestations are treated with products that kill skin parasites. This client education sheet will help you learn more about these infestations and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

### **What You Should Know About Cheyletiella**

Cheyletiella (sha'lě-te-el'lah) mange is transmitted when one pet comes in contact with another pet that already has the mite infestation. Cheyletiella mites are highly contagious, especially between animals less than 12 weeks of age. Therefore, all animals in a household may be affected. Though it is uncommon, people may become infested when they are exposed to pets with Cheyletiella mange.

#### **Signs**

Typically, Cheyletiella mange occurs in kittens and puppies. The most common sign of Cheyletiella mange is moderate to severe dandruff along the animal's back. The pet may scratch a little or a lot. Intense scratching may lead to hair loss. Often, the animal's coat may feel greasy. A few animals, especially older pets, may have Cheyletiella mites but no skin abnormalities. Yet mites from these animals may infest other pets.

#### **Diagnosis**

A history of recent contact with other animals followed by the onset of dandruff, scratching and hair loss suggest a diagnosis of Cheyletiella mange. A diagnosis can be confirmed by your veterinarian when he or she finds Cheyletiella mites on your pet.

Your veterinarian may use a magnifying lens to look for Cheyletiella mites on the surface of your pet's skin. Other commonly used diagnostic techniques include collecting dandruff by scraping the skin, applying acetate tape to the skin or

combing dandruff scales onto a microscope slide. In these situations your veterinarian will use a microscope to look for mites in the dandruff scales. Mites and mite eggs may occasionally be found in a pet's feces. This occurs when animals, particularly cats, ingest mites and eggs when they groom themselves. Unfortunately, mites cannot be demonstrated in all cases of Cheyletiella mange. If mites can't be found, your veterinarian may determine the presence of the clinical signs alone warrants treating your pet for Cheyletiella mange.

### Treatment and Home Care

Cheyletiella mites are susceptible to most insecticides, including powders, sprays, dips and shampoos. Treatment should be continued for several weeks to eliminate the infestation. Because of the highly contagious nature of the parasite, all animals in the household must be treated whether or not they have signs of infection.

Cleaning the household hastens control of the infestation and helps prevent reinfestation. These measures include thorough cleaning and vacuuming. The household should be fogged or sprayed with products used for flea control.

### Nutritional Plan

If your pet has Cheyletiella mange, your veterinarian may suggest a dietary change based on your pet's age and body condition, the degree of infestation and tissue damage, and the presence or absence of disease in other organs and body systems. If your pet has traumatized its skin, your veterinarian may give you special feeding instructions. Nutrition is especially important for optimal growth and proper development of the immune (protective) system in puppies and kittens, such as those presented with Cheyletiella mange. Optimal nutrition should also reduce the health risks associated with feeding excess levels of nutrients such as calcium and phosphorus, which could cause skeletal problems, and excess calories, which could cause obesity. Foods formulated for optimum growth that avoid excess levels of harmful nutrients include Hill's® Science Diet® brand puppy and kitten foods.

### Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). Feed only the recommended food. Be patient but firm with your pet. This is important because the success or failure of treatment depends to a large degree on strict adherence to the new food.

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## Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Medication(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Nutritional Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-Up Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.