Gatorland Animal Services SOPs

Treatment of Feline Demodex Mange

Effective Date: 10/15/2021 **Revised:**

Responsible Staff:

- Vet techs

Purpose: This SOP provides vet techs with a step-by-step procedure for diagnosis and treatment of cats with demodex mange. Treatment consists of the extralabel use of a parasite product shown by clinical studies to be effective in eliminating feline Demodex mites and resolving skin lesions in 2 months.

Feline Notoedric Mange Facts

- Feline demodex mange = skin disease caused by infection of hair follicles with Demodex cati mites or the epidermal skin layer by Demodex gatoi mites.
- Clinical signs include alopecia, erythema, scales, crusts and waxy discharges in the ear canals. The lesions can be localized to the head, ears, and neck or generalized to the entire body.
- Generalized Demodex cati mange is associated with an underlying medical condition such FeLV/FIV infection or diabetes mellitus. These cats should be screened for these diseases as the prognosis for cure of the mange is guarded if underlying medical conditions are identified.
- Demodex gatoi causes intense pruritis and skin trauma from constant scratching causes secondary bacterial skin infections and bleeding wounds.
- Demodex gatoi mange is **CONTAGIOUS** to other cats.
- Demodex cati mange **is NOT CONTAGIOUS** to other cats

Supplies Needed

- Disposable exam gloves
- Size 10 scalpel blade with dulled edge
- Mineral oil
- Glass microscope slides with cover slips
- Microscope with 10X objective
- Revolution Plus for cats
- Sharps box for scalpel blade disposal

Procedures

1. Wear clean exam gloves.
2. Open the animal's medical record in Chameleon.
3. Ensure that the animal's ID neckband and description match the medical record.
4. Weigh cat
5. Perform superficial skin scrapes of the ear margins and head using the size 10 scalpel blade.
6. Transfer the skin scrapings from the scalpel blade to a drop of mineral oil on a glass microscope slide. Place a cover slip on top of the oil.
7. Apply mineral oil to 2 to 3 areas with skin lesions to suffocate mites and bring them to the skin surface. Gently squeeze the skin in these areas to force the mites out of hair follicles.

8. Perform deep skin scrapes in the sites using the size 10 scalpel blade. Scrape deep enough to cause some bleeding.
9. Transfer the skin scrapings from the scalpel blade to a drop of mineral oil on a glass microscope slide. Place a cover slip on top of the oil.
10. Examine the scrapings under the coverslips with a microscope with the 10X objective.
11. Look for adult and immature mites in the superficial and deep scrapings. Refer to pictures posted by the microscope. The mites are typically present in low numbers.
12. Record the skin scrape results in the medical record.
13. A negative skin scrape does not rule out Demodex cati or gatoi infection. If Demodex is suspected based on clinical signs, then treat.
14. Administer Revolution Plus onto the skin between the shoulder blades according to package instructions. Record in the medical record. ***NOTE* All cats receive Revolution Plus at intake and every month while in the shelter - check the medical record to verify this treatment and when it was given. Do not re-apply unless it is has been a month.**
15. Start the cat on oral Clavamox according to instructions for the body weight and give twice daily for 14 days. Record in the medical record.
16. Consult with the veterinarian about prescribing the following additional medications
    a. Meloxicam for inflammation
    b. Gabapentin for pain
    c. Triple antibiotic ophthalmic ointment for purulent ocular discharge and eye discomfort
17. **Cats with Demodex gatoi mange**: should stay in the shelter for 2 to 4 weeks since the infection is contagious to other cats.
    - Most if not all Demodex gatoi mites are eliminated by 4 weeks after Resolution Plus treatment but it may take another month for resolution of the skin disease.
    - Ensure that a sign indicating “Demodex mange - do not place near other cats” is placed on the cat’s run.
18. **Cats with Demodex cati mange**: can stay in a foster home until recovery. These cats likely have other medical conditions such as FeLV or FIV or diabetes that must be treated and monitored for best opportunity to recover from the mange infection.
19. Recheck progress at 2 weeks, 4 weeks, and 8 weeks post treatment. Repeat the skin scrapes at 4 weeks and 8 weeks.
20. Revolution Plus should be re-applied monthly until resolution of the infection.