



Things That Cats Do: Feline Allergic Skin Disease

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IDEXX

Conflict of Interest Disclosure:

I have financial interest, arrangement or affiliation with IDEXX Laboratories, Inc:

Full-time employee, Medical Consulting Services Dermatology

The information contained herein is intended to provide general guidance only. As with any diagnosis or treatment you should use clinical discretion with each patient based on a complete evaluation of the patient, including history, physical exam and presentation, and laboratory data. With respect to any drug therapy or monitoring program, you should refer to applicable product insert(s) for complete description of dosage, indications, interactions, and cautions. Diagnosis, treatment, and monitoring should be patient specific and is the responsibility of the veterinarian providing primary care. (2024)

Learning Objectives

Pruritus does not always equal allergies

History is as important as clinical exam and diagnostic findings

Flea Allergy dermatitis is the most common cause of hypersensitivity in cats.

Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome is a diagnosis of rule outs

Feline Allergy Classification



Feline Atopic Syndrome (FAS)

Old terminology: Feline Hypersensitivity Dermatitis

Cutaneous manifestations

- Feline food allergy (skin lesions)
- Feline atopic skin syndrome (FASS)
 - Previously referred to as non-flea, non-food hypersensitivity dermatitis

Non-cutaneous manifestations

- Feline asthma
- Feline food allergy (GI signs)

Sources:

1. Santoro D, Pucheu-Haston CM, Prost C, Mueller RS, Jackson H. Clinical signs and diagnosis of feline atopic syndrome: detailed guidelines for a correct diagnosis. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):26-e6. doi: 10.1111/vde.12935. PMID: 33470017.
2. Hobi, S., Linek, M., Marignac, G., Olivry, T., Beco, L., Nett, C., Fontaine, J., Roosje, P., Bergvall, K., Belova, S., Koebrich, S., Pin, D., Kovalik, M., Meury, S., Wilhelm, S. and Favrot, C. (2011), Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. *Veterinary Dermatology*, 22: 406-413. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x>
3. Vargo C, Banovic F. Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome. *Today's Veterinary Practice*. 2022 Mar/Apr; 78-83. <https://todaysveterinarypractice.com/dermatology/feline-atopic-skin-syndrome/>
4. Update on feline immunoglobulin E (IgE) and diagnostic recommendations for atopy. In *Consultations in Feline Internal Medicine* (pp. 229-238). JAI-Elsevier Science Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-72-160423-4/50028-7>

Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome

Old terminology: Non-flea, non-food hypersensitivity dermatitis

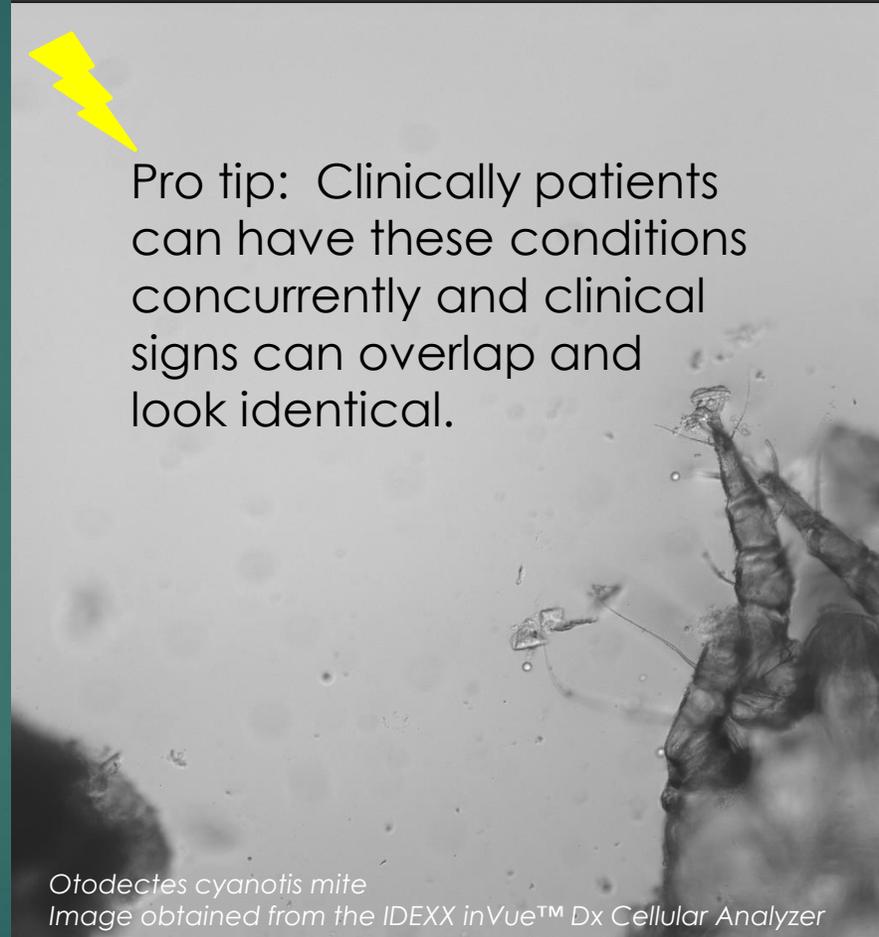
- Allergic skin disease associated with environmental allergies in cats
 - Must rule out contact, insect, flea, and food allergic triggers
 - Non-Flea and Non-Food Hypersensitivities
- Reaction patterns
 - Miliary dermatitis
 - Eosinophilic granuloma complex
 - Self-induced symmetrical alopecia
 - Facial head and neck pruritus

Sources:

1. Halliwell R, Pucheu-Haston CM, Olivry T, Prost C, Jackson H, Banovic F, et al.. Feline allergic diseases: introduction and proposed nomenclature. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):8-e2. doi: 10.1111/vde.12899.
2. Halliwell R, Banovic F, Mueller RS, Olivry T. Immunopathogenesis of the feline atopic syndrome. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):13-e4. doi: 10.1111/vde.12928. PMID: 33470018.
3. Santoro D, Pucheu-Haston CM, Prost C, Mueller RS, Jackson H. Clinical signs and diagnosis of feline atopic syndrome: detailed guidelines for a correct diagnosis. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):26-e6. doi: 10.1111/vde.12935. PMID: 33470017.
4. Vargo C, Banovic F. Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome. *Today's Veterinary Practice*. 2022 Mar/Apr; 78-83. <https://todaysveterinarypractice.com/dermatology/feline-atopic-skin-syndrome>

What is NOT included in Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome

- Flea allergy dermatitis
- Mosquito bite hypersensitivity
- Pruritus secondary to ectoparasites
 - *Demodex gatoi*
 - *Notoedres cati*
 - *Cheyletiella*
 - *Otodectes cyanotis*
 - Lice
 - Fur mites



Sources:

1. Halliwell R, Pucheu-Haston CM, Olivry T, Prost C, Jackson H, Banovic F, et al.. Feline allergic diseases: introduction and proposed nomenclature. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):8-e2. doi: 10.1111/vde.12899.
2. Halliwell R, Banovic F, Mueller RS, Olivry T. Immunopathogenesis of the feline atopic syndrome. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):13-e4. doi: 10.1111/vde.12928. PMID: 33470018.
3. Santoro D, Pucheu-Haston CM, Prost C, Mueller RS, Jackson H. Clinical signs and diagnosis of feline atopic syndrome: detailed guidelines for a correct diagnosis. *Vet Dermatol*. 2021 Feb;32(1):26-e6. doi: 10.1111/vde.12935. PMID: 33470017.
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Evaluation of Allergic Skin Disease in Cats

- 1 History and Examination
- 2 Diagnostic Tests
- 3 Clinical Signs
- 4 Cutaneous Reactions Patterns
- 5 Hypersensitivity Diseases

History....History....History

- Origin of pet; Travel History
 - Rescue/shelter, stray, breeder
 - Recent boarding
- Environment (changes?)
 - Indoor or outdoor cat
 - Carpet, bedding, basements
- **Is the pet itchy?**
 - Seasonal or non-seasonal
 - What parts of body
 - Severity of pruritus
 - Scale of 0-10, 0 is normal, 10 is constant, non-distractable itching
 - Itch before lesions or lesions before itch

Source:

1. Hill PB, Lau P, Rybnicek J. Development of an owner-assessed scale to measure the severity of pruritus in dogs. Vet Dermatol. 2007 Oct;18(5):301-8. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2007.00616.x. PMID: 17845617.

History....History....History

- Age of onset of pruritus
 - Duration
 - Distribution
 - Progression
- What is the cat eating
 - Diet, treats
- Treatments and response
 - Preventatives/medications/supplements
 - Topicals
- Single pet or multi-pet household
 - Any people or animals with dermatologic signs



Pro Tip:

Time savers: Use pre-printed forms with check boxes and fill ins, online history forms, or send forms to client prior to the visit

Dermatologic Examination

- Screen Entire Body
- Most important areas to consider:
 - Face
 - Paws (paw pads and interdigital)
 - Ear canals and pinnae
 - Groin
 - Mucocutaneous junctions
- Don't forget:
 - Claws
 - Oral cavity
 - Lymph nodes



Pro Tip:

Check the right areas and collect samples during the exam

Take pictures for comparison



Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Diagnostic Tests

- Fleas and ectoparasites
 - Flea combing
 - Isoxazoline treatment trial
- Ringworm
 - Wood's lamp
 - DTM or Ringworm RealPCR™ Panel
 - Trichogram (oil, hairs, coverslip, 10x objective)
- Mites
 - Otic Mite Prep
 - IDEXX inVue™ Dx Cellular Analyzer
 - Skin Scraping (oil prep, coverslip, 10x objective)
 - Deep and Superficial
 - Fecal examination

Source.

Miller WH, Griffin CE, Campbell KL. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology, 7th Edition. St Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby; 2013

Diagnostic Tests

- Secondary Infection
 - Cytology
 - Skin
 - Impression, tape, fine needle aspirate
 - Otic
 - Ear swab, IDEXX inVue™ Dx Cellular Analyzer
 - Culture & susceptibility
 - Elimination diet trial(s)
 - Lime sulfur trial
 - Skin biopsy (dermatopathology)
 - Allergy testing
 - Intradermal or serologic
 - False positives



Pro Tip: Allergy testing is a therapeutic test **not** a diagnostic

Sources.

1. Miller WH, Griffin CE, Campbell KL. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology, 7th Edition. St Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby; 2013
2. Mueller RS. A systematic review of allergen immunotherapy, a successful therapy for canine atopic dermatitis and feline atopic skin syndrome. J Am Vet Med Assoc. 2023 Mar 24;261(S1):S30-S35. doi: 10.2460/javma.22.12.0576. PMID: 36940185.

Clinical Signs of Feline Allergies

- Pruritus
 - Secretive in behavior
 - Hairballs, hair in stool
 - Over-grooming, nibbling, biting
 - Nail biting and toe licking
- Alopecia
 - Self-induced until proven otherwise
 - Symmetrical alopecia
- Cutaneous Reaction Patterns
 - NOT a diagnosis
 - Clinical presentation to an underlying disease



Eosinophilic granuloma
"Fat chin"

Images courtesy of Ariane Neuber Watts, DrMedVet, DECVD,
IDEXX Dermatology

Cutaneous Reaction Patterns

- Miliary dermatitis
- Eosinophilic granuloma complex
 - Sub-types
 - Indolent/Rodent Ulcer
 - Eosinophilic Granuloma
 - Eosinophilic Plaques
- Symmetrical Alopecia
- Facial/Neck Pruritus



Indolent ulcer



Symmetrical alopecia



Miliary dermatitis



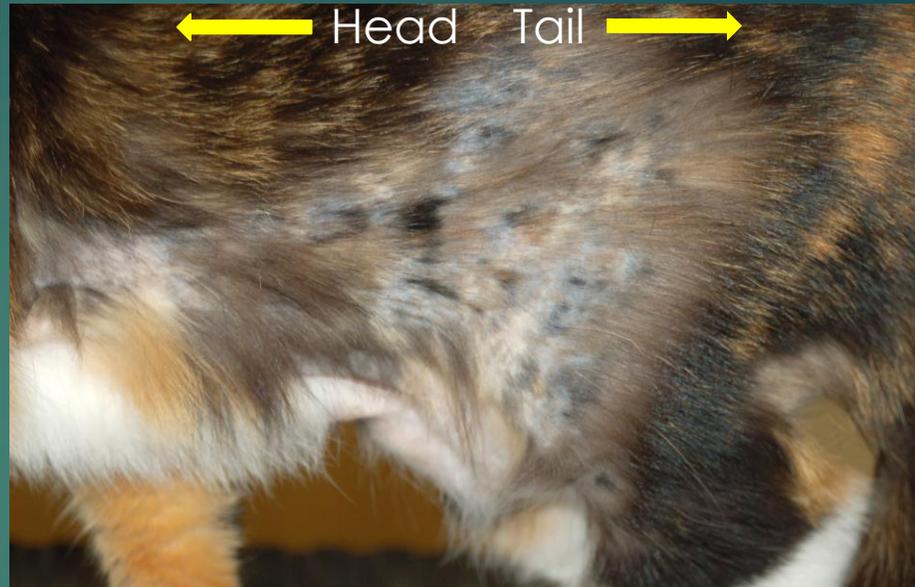
Facial Pruritus

Images courtesy of Ariane Neuber Watts, DrMedVet, DECVD, IDEXX Dermatology

Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Miliary Dermatitis

- ▶ Papular-crusting dermatitis along the dorsal trunk +/- head and neck
- ▶ Differentials
 - ▶ Allergy
 - Flea, atopy, food
 - ▶ Dermatophytosis
 - ▶ Bacterial folliculitis
 - ▶ Parasitic
 - ▶ Pemphigus foliaceus
 - ▶ Mast cell disease
 - Urticaria pigmentosa

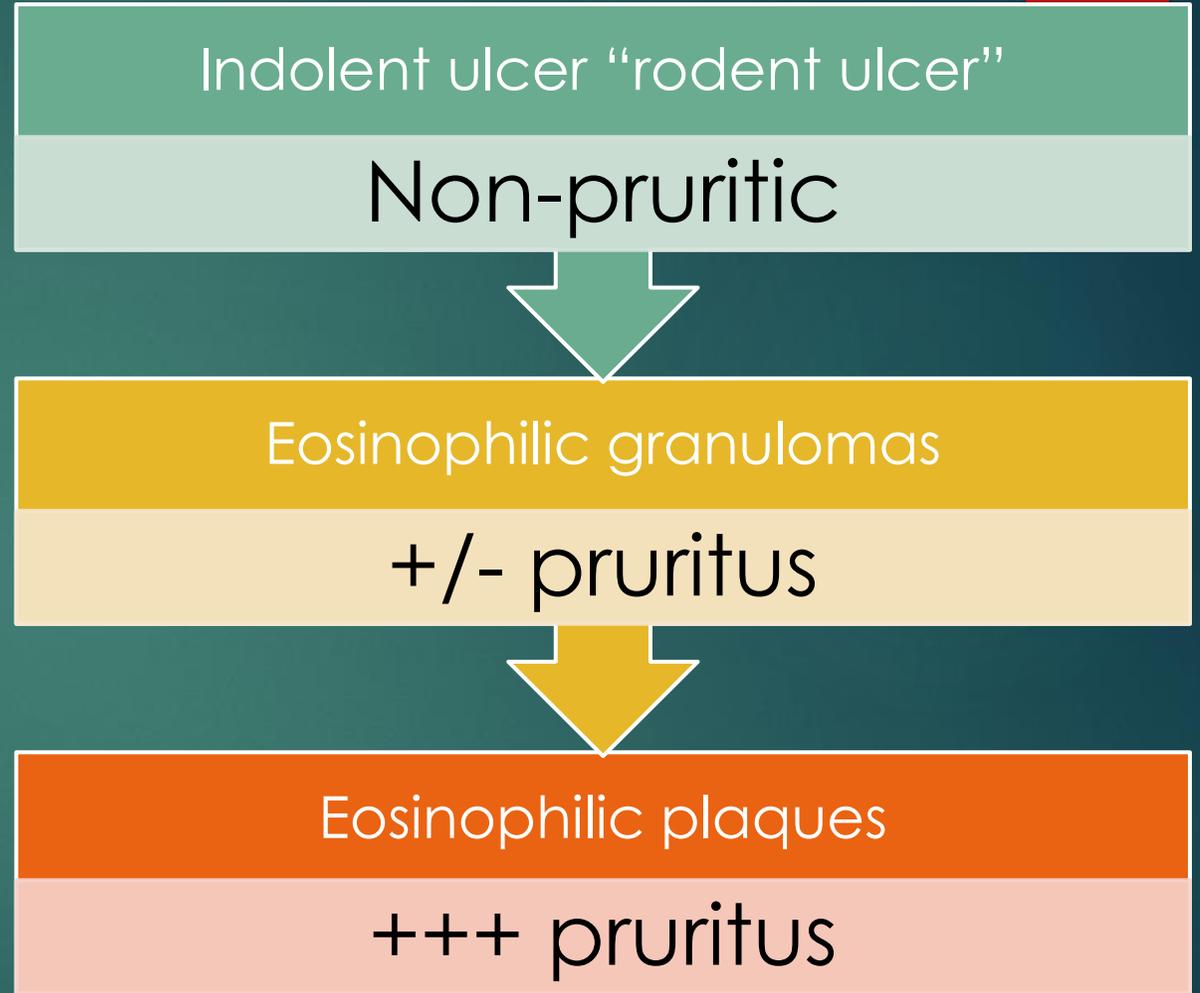


Images courtesy of Ariane Neuber Watts, DrMedVet, DECVD, IDEXX Dermatology

Source:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 1: Aetiology, clinical signs and investigation. *Companion Animal*, 16: 40-45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00086.x>

Eosinophilic Granuloma Complex



Indolent Ulcers

- Focal ulceration along the midline of the upper lip
- Progression to unilateral or bilateral involvement
- +/- the nasal planum
- Ulcerative and thickened when active
- Crateriform appearance
- Thickened and scarred or haired skin when healed
- If not responding to treatment, consider squamous cell carcinoma

Source:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 1: Aetiology, clinical signs and investigation. Companion Animal, 16: 40-45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00086.x>

Indolent Ulcers “Rodent Ulcers”

- Differentials

- Allergy

- Flea, atopy, food

- Infection

- Bacterial, viral, fungal

- Neoplasia

- Squamous cell carcinoma, cutaneous lymphoma, mast cell tumor

- Metabolic

- Idiopathic



Pro tip: chronicity can lead to fibrosis



Pro Tip: Wear gloves if dermatophytosis has been ruled out

Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Source:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 1: Aetiology, clinical signs and investigation. Companion Animal, 16: 40-45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00086.x>

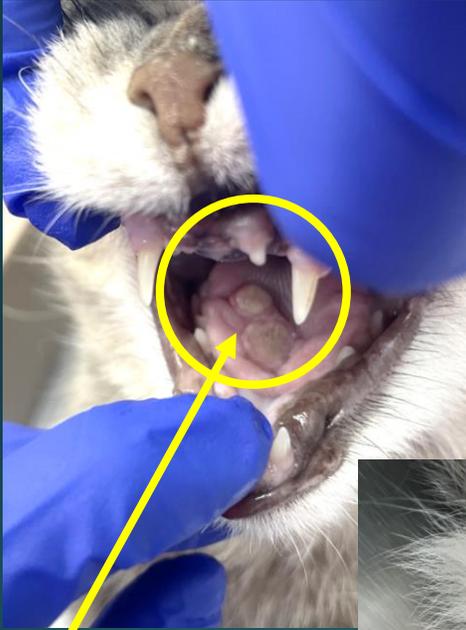
Eosinophilic Granulomas

- Nodular/proliferative lesion on tongue or palate
 - +/- white spots on surface
- “Fat chin”- swollen chin with hypotrichosis
- Linear to ovoid swelling with or without ulceration on the caudal thigh
- Linear granulomas are the most common presentation
- Congenital linear granuloma that presents on the caudal thighs and resolves spontaneously by 18 mo of age
- Usually non-pruritic

Source:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 1: Aetiology, clinical signs and investigation. Companion Animal, 16: 40-45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00086.x>

Eosinophilic Granulomas



Granulomas
on the tongue



“Fat chin”



Linear granuloma

Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD,
TAMU Teaching Collection

- Differentials
 - Allergy
 - Flea, atopy, food
 - Insect bite reaction
 - Dermatophytosis
 - Infection
 - Bacterial, fungal, viral-oral
 - Neoplasia
 - Cutaneous lymphoma, mast cell tumor, squamous cell carcinoma, fibrosarcoma, plasma cell stomatitis
 - Idiopathic
 - Young cats, spontaneous resolution

Source:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 1: Aetiology, clinical signs and investigation. Companion Animal, 16: 40-45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00086.x>

Eosinophilic Plaques

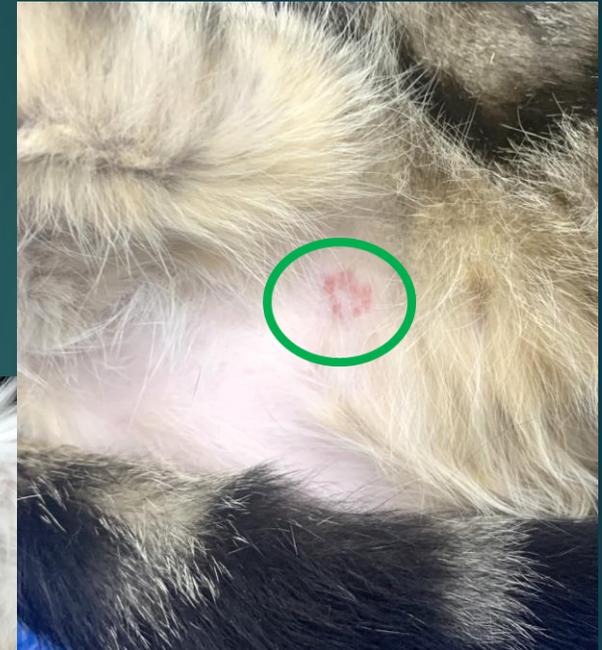
- Well demarcated single, or multiple
- Flat raised surface
- Exudative, eroded, or ulcerative
- May see eosinophils on impression smears
- Abdomen and medial thighs, but can occur anywhere on body
- Occasional regional lymphadenopathy

Source:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 1: Aetiology, clinical signs and investigation. Companion Animal, 16: 40-45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00086.x>

Eosinophilic Plaques

- Differentials
 - Allergy
 - Flea, atopy, food
 - Dermatophytosis
 - Infection
 - Bacterial, fungal, viral
 - Neoplasia
 - Cutaneous lymphoma, mast cell tumor, squamous cell carcinoma, mammary carcinoma
 - Idiopathic



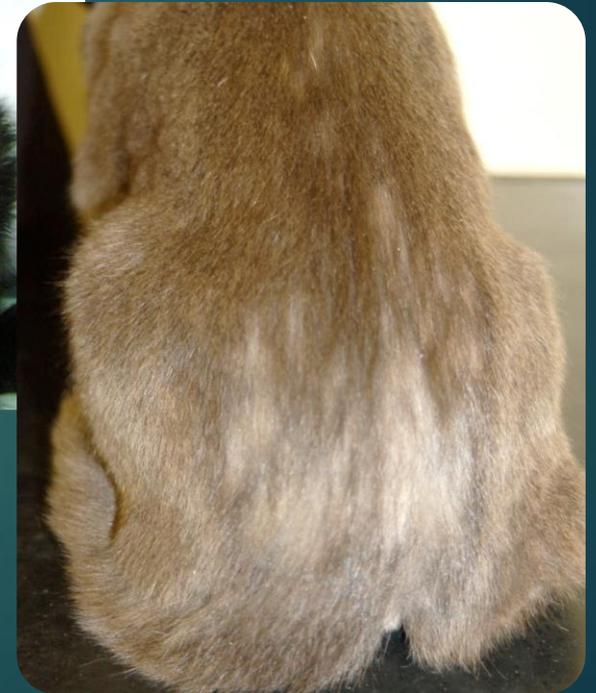
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Symmetrical Alopecia/Bald Belly

- Complaint
 - Over grooming, nibbling, pulling hair, hair balls (vomiting)
 - Owners may not notice
- Clinical signs
 - Barbered/broken hairs
 - May have normal underlying skin
- Trichogram shows split ends



Images courtesy of Ariane Neuber Watts, DrMedVet, DECVD
IDEXX Dermatology

Symmetric Alopecia/Bald Belly

- Differentials
 - Allergy
 - Flea, atopy, food
 - Ectoparasites
 - *Demodex (cati or gatoi)*
 - *Scabies*
 - *Cheyletiella*
 - *Notoedres*
 - *Otodectes*
 - Dermatophytosis
 - Pain (orthopedic, cystitis, nerve)
 - Endocrinopathies
 - Psychogenic alopecia
 - Paraneoplastic alopecia
 - Telogen effluvium



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Facial/Neck Pruritus

- Complaint
 - Marked pruritus
 - Self-mutilation
- Clinical signs
 - Erythema
 - Alopecia
 - Erosions / Ulcerations
 - Crusts
 - Intermittent bleeding
- Trichogram may show broken hairs
- Cytology may show secondary infection



Image courtesy of Ariane Neuber Watts, DrMedVet, DECVD, IDEXX Dermatology

Facial/Neck Pruritus



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

➤ Differentials

➤ Allergy

- Food, atopy, flea

➤ Parasitic

- *Notoedres cati*
- *Sarcoptes scabiei*
- *Otodectes cynotis*
- *Cheyletiella blakei*
- *Demodex cati* or *gatoi*

➤ Drug Reaction- Methimazole

➤ Dermatophytosis

➤ Neoplasia

- Bowenoid in situ carcinoma
- Squamous cell carcinoma, cutaneous lymphoma, mast cell tumor
- Feline Progressive Histiocytic Disease

Study:

Clinical Characteristics and Causes of Pruritus in Cats: a Multicentric Study of Feline Hypersensitivity-Associated Dermatoses

- 29% flea hypersensitivity
 - Most common cause of chronic pruritus in cats
- 24% non-hypersensitivity diseases
 - 29% parasitic, 12% auto-immune, 11% fungal, 7% neoplastic, 5% psychogenic
- 39% Flea and cutaneous parasites
- 20% Non-flea/non-food = feline atopic dermatitis (now known as Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome)
- 14.7% “non-flea hypersensitivity” (lacked elimination diet trial)

Source:

Hobi S, Linek M, Marignac G, Olivry T, Beco L, Nett C, et al. C. Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. *Vet Dermatol.* 2011 Oct;22(5):406-13. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x.

Flea Allergy Dermatitis

- 29% of hypersensitivity cases
- Most common cause of chronic pruritus
- Miliary dermatitis
- Many do NOT live in flea-infested environments
- ~30% of pruritic cats respond to flea control
- Etiology: protein in flea saliva
- Distribution: Caudal dorsum, face, head/neck
- Pro tip: Itchy cats have flea allergies until proven otherwise



Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Source:

1. Hobi S, Linek M, Marignac G, Olivry T, Beco L, Nett C, et al. C. Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. *Vet Dermatol.* 2011 Oct;22(5):406-13. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x.

Flea Allergy Dermatitis- Treatment

- Prevention
 - Year-round prevention for all pets
 - Rapid acting preventatives
 - Minimize exposure to saliva and bites
 - Isoxazolines
- If the home/yard are infested
 - Treat the environment and pet
 - May need to retreat
 - Flea life cycle lasts weeks to months
- Address secondary infections
- Glucocorticoids for pruritus
- Can take several months to control



Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Cutaneous Adverse Food Reaction

- Etiology not fully understood
- Triggers are often animal-based proteins
 - Chicken, beef, lamb, dairy, fish
- Prolonged consumption increases likelihood of hypersensitivity
- Age of onset
 - < 1 yr (especially < 6 mo) and > 6 yrs
 - Mean 4-5 yrs
- Mostly non-seasonal
- Breeds: Siamese

Sources:

1. Hobi S, Linek M, Marignac G, Olivry T, Beco L, Nett C, et al. C. Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. *Vet Dermatol.* 2011 Oct;22(5):406-13. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.
2. William Miller, Craig Griffin, and Karen Campbell. *Muller and Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology*, 7th edition, p.404
3. Santoro D, Pucheu-Haston CM, Prost C, Mueller RS, Jackson H. Clinical signs and diagnosis of feline atopic syndrome: detailed guidelines for a correct diagnosis. *Vet Dermatol.* 2021 Feb;32(1):26-e6. doi: 10.1111/vde.12935. PMID: 33470017.

Cutaneous Adverse Food Reaction

Study:

Clinical Characteristics and Causes of Pruritus in Cats: a Multicentric Study of Feline Hypersensitivity-Associated Dermatoses

- 12% positive response to diet trial
 - Least common cause of pruritus in cats
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Facial/Neck pruritus most common
- 8 -12 wk diet elimination trial (includes challenge)
 - Novel protein
 - Hydrolyzed
 - Home-cooked
- Control secondary infections pruritus
- Multiple trials may be needed

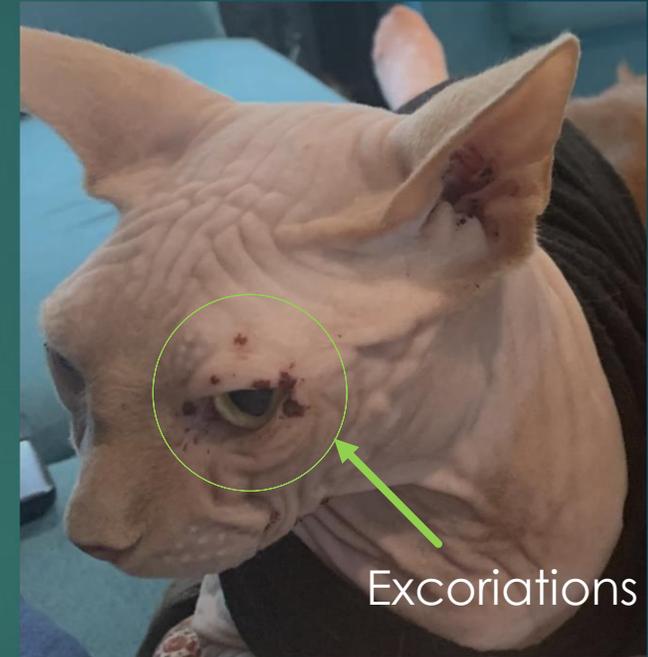


Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Sources:

1. Stefan Hobi, Monika Linek, Genevieve Marignac, Thierry Olivry, Luc Beco, Claudia Nett, Jacques Fontaine, Petra Roosje, Kerstin Bergvall, Sveta Belova, Stefanie Koebrich, Didier Pin, Marcel Kovalik, Sabrina Meury, Sylvie Wilhelm and Claude Favrot. *Vet Dermatol.* 2011;22(5):406-413. doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x
2. Bryan J, Frank LA. Food allergy in the cat: a diagnosis by elimination. *J Feline Med Surg.* 2010 Nov;12(11):861-6. doi: 10.1016/j.jfms.2010.09.005. PMID: 20974403; PMCID: PMC11220937.
3. Jackson HA. Food allergy in dogs and cats; current perspectives on etiology, diagnosis, and management. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2023 Mar 18;261(S1):S23-S29. doi: 10.2460/javma.22.12.0548. PMID: 36917613.
4. Santoro D, Pucheu-Hastou CM, Prost C, Mueller RS, Jackson H. Clinical signs and diagnosis of feline atopic syndrome: detailed guidelines for a correct diagnosis. *Vet Dermatol.* 2021 Feb;32(1):26-e6. doi: 10.1111/vde.12935. PMID: 33470017.

Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome

Study: Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses

- 20% feline atopic dermatitis
- 72% developed clinical signs < 3 yrs
- 12% developed clinical signs > 6 yrs
- Abdomen and extremities more affected than head/neck
- All 4 cutaneous reaction patterns represented
- Otitis externa



Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Source:

1. Hobi S, Linek M, Marignac G, Olivry T, Beco L, Nett C, et al. C. Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. *Vet Dermatol.* 2011 Oct;22(5):406-13. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x

Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome (Atopic Dermatitis)

- Signalment:
 - Age of onset: 6 mo to 8 yrs (most 6 mo - 3 yrs)
 - Predisposition: Persians, Himalayans, Abyssinians
- Multiple cutaneous reaction patterns
 - Symmetrical alopecia, Eosinophilic granulomas
- **Diagnosis of exclusion**
- Lifestyle:
 - May be indoor, outdoor, or both
 - Single or multi pet household
 - City, suburb, rural environment, etc.



Image courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Source.

1. Miller WH, Griffin CE, Campbell KL. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology, 7th Edition. St Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby; 2013
2. Hobi S, Linek M, Marignac G, Olivry T, Beco L, Nett C, et al. C. Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. Vet Dermatol. 2011 Oct;22(5):406-13. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x

Allergen Specific Immunotherapy

- Immunotherapy selection, **not** diagnosis
 - False positives with testing
 - 35% of cats had negative intradermal and serologic testing^{2,3}
- Patient specific allergen selection
- Down regulates inflammatory response
- Treatment success if clinical signs reduce by 50%
- Subcutaneous versus sublingual
 - Up to 12 months to see improvement
 - Life-long treatment

Sources.

1. Miller WH, Griffin CE, Campbell KL. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology, 7th Edition. St Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby; 2013.
2. Hobi S, Linek M, Marignac G, Olivry T, Beco L, Nett C, et al. C. Clinical characteristics and causes of pruritus in cats: a multicentre study on feline hypersensitivity-associated dermatoses. *Vet Dermatol*. 2011 Oct;22(5):406-13. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2011.00962.x
3. Update on feline immunoglobulin E (IgE) and diagnostic recommendations for atopy. In *Consultations in Feline Internal Medicine* (pp. 229-238). JAI-Elsevier Science Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B0-72-160423-4/50028-7>
4. Mueller RS. A systematic review of allergen immunotherapy, a successful therapy for canine atopic dermatitis and feline atopic skin syndrome. *J Am Vet Med Assoc*. 2023 Mar 24;261(S1):S30-S35. doi: 10.2460/javma.22.12.0576. PMID: 36940185.

Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome – Treatment- Corticosteroids

Prednisolone

- 1.0-1.5mg/kg/day (range of 1-4 mg/kg/day)
- Taper to 0.5-1 mg/kg/every other day

Methylprednisolone

- 0.8-3.6 mg/kg/day
- Taper to 0.4-0.8 mg/kg/every other day

Dexamethasone

- 0.1-0.2mg/kg/day
- Taper to 0.05-0.1 mg/kg/every 2-3 days

Methylprednisolone acetate injectable suspension (Depo-Medrol®)

- 10-20mg/cat IM is on label use every 1-3 months,
- Least ideal option for long-term management

Sources:

1. Forsythe, P. (2011), Feline eosinophilic dermatoses Part 2: Further investigation and long-term management. Companion Animal, 16: 31-35. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-3862.2011.00110.x>
2. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology. William Miller Jr, Craig Griffin, Karen Campbell. Saunders-Elsevier, St. Louis; 7th Edition, 2013, Ch. 8 Hypersensitivity Disorders
3. Miller J, Simpson A, Bloom P, Diesel A, Friedeck A, Paterson T, Wisecup M, Yu CM. 2023 AAHA Management of Allergic Skin Diseases in Dogs and Cats Guidelines. J Am Anim Hosp Assoc. 2023 Nov 1;59(6):255-284. doi: 10.5326/JAAHA-MS-7396. PMID: 37883677.

Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome – Treatment- Non- steroidals

Modified cyclosporine

- 7 mg/kg orally daily, liquid
- 1-2 months to see benefit, taper
- GI side effects
- Immunomodulator
- Keep indoors, avoid raw diets
- FIV and FeLV negative

Oclacitinib

- Currently **not** recommended for cats
- Mixed response to therapy
- +/-Leukopenia, anemia, thrombocytopenia, increased renal and liver values
- FIV and FeLV negative

Antihistamines

- Chlorpheniramine, 2-4 mg/cat every 12-24 hours
- Cetirizine, 5 mg/cat every 24 hours
- Minimal pruritus relief

Sources:

1. Vercelli A, Raviri G, Cornegliani L. The use of oral cyclosporin to treat feline dermatoses: a retrospective analysis of 23 cases. *Vet Dermatol.* 2006 Jun;17(3):201-6. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-3164.2006.00514.x. PMID: 16674736.
2. Miller J, Simpson A, Bloom P, Diesel A, Friedeck A, Paterson T, Wisecup M, Yu CM. 2023 AAHA Management of Allergic Skin Diseases in Dogs and Cats Guidelines. *J Am Anim Hosp Assoc.* 2023 Nov 1;59(6):255-284. doi: 10.5326/JAAHA-MS-7396. PMID: 37883677.
3. Mueller RS, Nuttall T, Prost C, Schulz B, Bizikova P. Treatment of the feline atopic syndrome - a systematic review. *Vet Dermatol.* 2021 Feb;32(1):43-e8. doi: 10.1111/vde.12933. PMID: 33470011.
4. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology. William Miller Jr, Craig Griffin, Karen Campbell. Saunders-Elsevier, St. Louis; 7th Edition, 2013, Ch. 8 Hypersensitivity Disorders

Mosquito Bite Hypersensitivity



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD,
TAMU Teaching Collection

- Clinical signs:
 - Miliary dermatitis, alopecia, erythema, scarring over bridge of nose, and pinnae
 - Can also affect eye lids, foot pads, chin, lips
- More common in Southeastern US
- Seasonal
- Outdoor exposure
- Type I hypersensitivity

Source.:

1. Miller WH, Griffin CE, Campbell KL. Muller & Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology, 7th Edition. St Louis, MO: Elsevier Mosby; 2013.

Mosquito Bite Hypersensitivity

Diagnosis

- Clinical signs and history may be diagnostic
- Cytology
 - Neutrophils, eosinophils
 - Secondary bacteria infection
- Biopsy severe cases
 - Ulcerative herpes dermatosis
 - Pemphigus foliaceus
 - Fungal infections

Treatment

- Avoidance
 - Indoor cats from dusk to dawn
- Glucocorticoids
- Antihistamines
- Topical antiseptic for infection if localized
- Systemic antibiotic for deep or extensive infection

Sources:

1. Zajac AM, Conboy GA, Little SE, Reichard MV. Veterinary Clinical Parasitology . 9th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell; 2021: 322– 345.
2. Sykes, Jane E.. Greene's Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat - E-Book (Kindle Locations 93310-93311). Elsevier Health Sciences. Kindle Edition.
3. Mason K.V, Evans A.F. Mosquito bite-caused eosinophilic dermatitis in cats. J Am Vet Med Assoc . 1991;198: 2086– 2088.
4. Sykes, Jane E.. Greene's Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat - E-Book (Kindle Locations 93311-93312). Elsevier Health Sciences. Kindle Edition.

Demodex gatoi

- Clinical signs
 - Symmetrical alopecia
 - Pruritus
 - +/- excoriations and crusting
- Diagnosis
 - Superficial skin scrapings
 - Fecal flotations
 - PCR DNA test for *Demodex* (low sensitivity, use as adjunct diagnostic)
 - Treatment trials



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Sources:

1. Baiz S, Frank LA, Drake ER, Kania S. Prevalence of *Demodex gatoi* in shelter and feral cats in a southeastern region of the United States. *Vet Dermatol*. 2022 Dec;33(6):572-575. doi: 10.1111/vde.13116. Epub 2022 Aug 24. PMID: 36000585
2. Companion Animal Parasite Council. (2019). *Demodex* spp. for cat. <https://capcvet.org/guidelines/demodex/> Accessed October 14, 2025
3. Short J, Gram D. Successful Treatment of *Demodex gatoi* with 10% Imidacloprid/1% Moxidectin. *J Am Anim Hosp Assoc*. 2016 Jan-Feb;52(1):68-72. doi: 10.5326/JAAHA-MS-6259. Epub 2015 Nov 25. PMID: 26606209.
4. Beale K. Feline demodicosis: a consideration in the itchy or overgrooming cat. *J Feline Med Surg*. 2012 Mar;14(3):209-13. doi: 10.1177/1098612X12439268. PMID: 22370863; PMCID: PMC10822434.
5. Mueller R.S., Rosenkrantz W., Bensignor E., et al. Diagnosis and treatment of demodicosis in dogs and cats: clinical consensus guidelines of the World Association for Veterinary Dermatology. *Vet Dermatol*. 2020;31: 5– 27
6. Sykes, Jane E.. *Greene's Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat - E-Book* (Kindle Locations 96843-96845). Elsevier Health Sciences. Kindle Edition.

Demodex gatoii

- Contagious
 - Treat all cats in household, can be asymptomatic
 - Species specific and lives in the stratum corneum
 - Higher prevalence in Southeastern US
- Treatment- 6-8 weeks duration
 - Isoxazolines
 - 2-3.1% lime sulfur dips weekly
 - Topical imidacloprid (10%)/ moxidectin (1%) weekly



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Sources:

1. Baiz S, Frank LA, Drake ER, Kania S. Prevalence of Demodex gatoii in shelter and feral cats in a southeastern region of the United States. Vet Dermatol. 2022 Dec;33(6):572-575. doi: 10.1111/vde.13116. Epub 2022 Aug 24. PMID: 36000585
2. Companion Animal Parasite Council. (2019). Demodex spp. for cat. <https://capcvet.org/guidelines/demodex/> Accessed October 14, 2025
3. Short J, Gram D. Successful Treatment of Demodex gatoii with 10% Imidacloprid/1% Moxidectin. J Am Anim Hosp Assoc. 2016 Jan-Feb;52(1):68-72. doi: 10.5326/JAAHA-MS-6259. Epub 2015 Nov 25. PMID: 26606209.
4. Beale K. Feline demodicosis: a consideration in the itchy or overgrooming cat. J Feline Med Surg. 2012 Mar;14(3):209-13. doi: 10.1177/1098612X12439268. PMID: 22370863; PMCID: PMC10822434.
5. Mueller R.S., Rosenkrantz W., Bensignor E., et al. Diagnosis and treatment of demodicosis in dogs and cats: clinical consensus guidelines of the World Association for Veterinary Dermatology. Vet Dermatol. 2020;31: 5– 27
6. Sykes, Jane E.. Greene's Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat - E-Book (Kindle Locations 96843-96845). Elsevier Health Sciences. Kindle Edition.

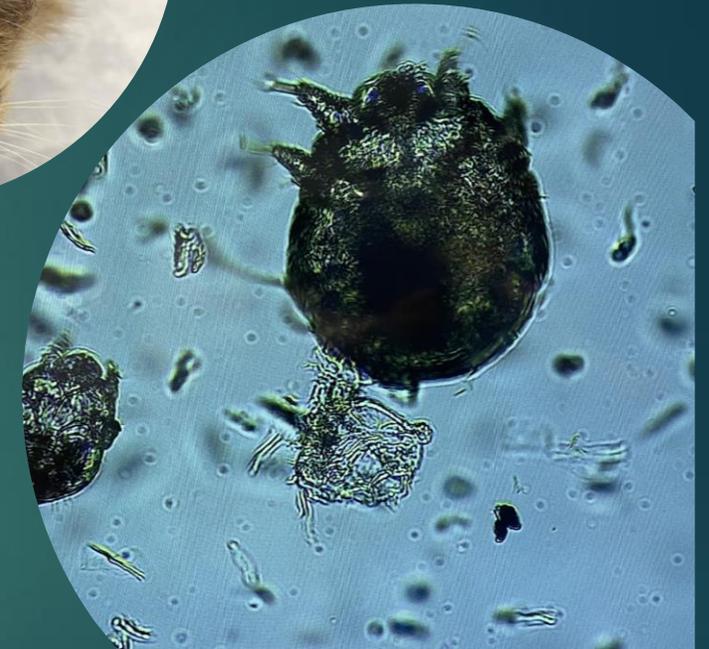
Notoedres cati

➤ Clinical signs

- Severe pruritus of the head, neck, and paws
- Pinnal crusting first
- +/- excoriations and crusting

➤ Diagnosis

- Superficial skin scrapings
- Cytologic tape preparations
- Treatment trials



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Sources:

1. Hellmann K, Petry G, Capari B, Cvejic D, Krämer F. Treatment of naturally *Notoedres cati*-infested cats with a combination of imidacloprid 10 % / moxidectin 1 % Spot-on (Advocate® / Advantage® Multi, Bayer). *Parasitol Res.* 2013 Aug;112 Suppl 1:57-66. doi: 10.1007/s00436-013-3281-y. PMID: 23760872.
2. Borowski S, Berlamont H, Geurden T, D'Hanis L, Rapti D, Cvejic D, Suckstorff O, Simovic N, King VL. Efficacy of a spot-on combination product containing selamectin and sarolaner (Stronghold® Plus) in the treatment of naturally occurring *Notoedres cati* infestations in cats. *Front Vet Sci.* 2025 Aug 21;12:1652148. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2025.1652148. PMID: 40919032; PMCID: PMC12410138.
3. Itoh N, Muraoka N, Aoki M, Itagaki T. Treatment of *Notoedres cati* infestation in cats with selamectin. *Vet Rec.* 2004 Mar 27;154(13):409. PMID: 15083980.
4. Miller W.H, Griffin C.E, Campbell K.L. Parasitic skin disease. In: Muller and Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology. Elsevier Mosby; 2012: 284– 342.
5. Sykes, Jane E.. Greene's Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat - E-Book (Kindle Locations 96802-96803). Elsevier Health Sciences. Kindle Edition.

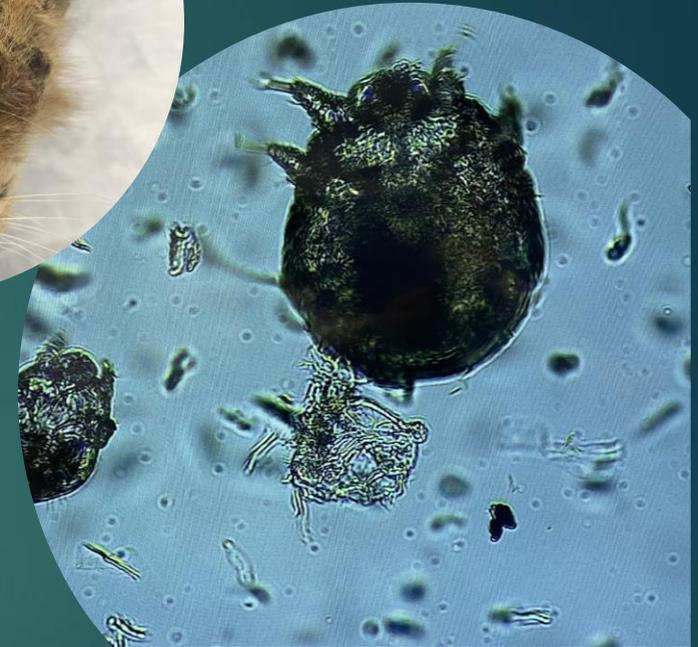
Notoedres cati

➤ Contagious

- Treat all cats in household
- Species specific and lives in the stratum corneum
- Worse in young and immunosuppressed individuals

➤ Treatment- 6-8 weeks duration

- Isoxazolines
- 2-3% lime sulfur dips weekly
- Topical selamectin
- Imidacloprid 10%/moxidectin 1%



Images courtesy of Christina Gentry, DVM, DACVD, TAMU Teaching Collection

Sources:

1. Hellmann K, Petry G, Capari B, Cvejic D, Krämer F. Treatment of naturally *Notoedres cati*-infested cats with a combination of imidacloprid 10 % / moxidectin 1 % Spot-on (Advocate® / Advantage® Multi, Bayer). *Parasitol Res.* 2013 Aug;112 Suppl 1:57-66. doi: 10.1007/s00436-013-3281-y. PMID: 23760872.
2. Borowski S, Berlamont H, Geurden T, D'Hanis L, Rapti D, Cvejic D, Suckstorff O, Simovic N, King VL. Efficacy of a spot-on combination product containing selamectin and sarolaner (Stronghold® Plus) in the treatment of naturally occurring *Notoedres cati* infestations in cats. *Front Vet Sci.* 2025 Aug 21;12:1652148. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2025.1652148. PMID: 40919032; PMCID: PMC12410138.
3. Itoh N, Muraoka N, Aoki M, Itagaki T. Treatment of *Notoedres cati* infestation in cats with selamectin. *Vet Rec.* 2004 Mar 27;154(13):409. PMID: 15083980.
4. Miller W.H, Griffin C.E, Campbell K.L. Parasitic skin disease. In: Muller and Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology . Elsevier Mosby; 2012: 284– 342.
5. Sykes, Jane E.. *Greene's Infectious Diseases of the Dog and Cat - E-Book* (Kindle Locations 96802-96803). Elsevier Health Sciences. Kindle Edition.

Working with Frustrated Owners

- Determine the URGENCY
 - Medical perspective
 - Client perspective
- ⚡ ➤ Flow chart of the PLAN
 - Visual aid to chart progress and response
 - Help client understand step-by-step process
 - Reminder for veterinarian(s) managing case
- ⚡ ➤ Keep a photo diary
- Diagnostics should answer a question
 - Remind the client
- Response to Treatment Trials



Disclosure:

Catherine Metry is a
full-time employee of
IDEXX*



IDEXX