

## CANINE SCABIES

Scabies (Sarcoptic Mange) is a skin disease of dogs caused by a mite, *Sarcoptes scabiei v. canis*. This mite is very small and cannot be seen with the naked eye.

### **Transmission**

The scabies mite is highly contagious. Dogs become infested with the mite by direct contact with another dog that has the disease.

### **Clinical Signs**

The mite burrows in the skin and makes the dog itch. The itching is very intense and may be worse at night. As the disease progresses, the dog loses hair, becomes crusty and may become very ill.

### **Diagnosis**

The disease is very difficult to diagnose. Severe itching can be caused by just a few mites. These mites are very hard to find. Scabies is diagnosed by scraping the affected areas and observing this material under a microscope for the presence of mites. Sometimes a dog has to be scraped 10-15 times before a single mite can be found. Mites are

found in less than half of the dogs with scabies. Because of this, it is often necessary to treat dogs suspected of being infested with the mite even though the mites cannot be found. If the dog's itching stops after specific therapy for scabies, then the dog most likely had the disease.



### **Infection of People**

The scabies mite can infest people and burrow into their skin. The burrowing of the mite looks like little red bumps (rash). Many times if a dog has scabies, the owner is itchy also. The itching and rash caused by this mite in people usually resolves on its own in about 14 days. If you are itching, please contact your physician.

### **Treatment**

Scabies is easy to treat. Currently we are using Advantage Multi®, which is a topical heartworm and flea control solution which also kills the scabies mite. We recommend 3 doses 2 weeks apart to treat scabies. All dogs in contact with the affected dog should be treated as well. It is possible for reinfection to occur if the dog is re-exposed to the source of infection.