

SCABIES MITES/MANGE

ZONOSSES FACTSHEET

Diseases that spread from animals to people

WHAT ARE THEY?



Mites are very small, they cannot be seen without a microscope. They burrow under the skin and live on eating dead skin cells. Dog scabies is caused by a mite called *Sarcoptes scabiei*. Human scabies is caused a different mite. Although dog scabies cannot live or reproduce on humans, they can still bite humans and cause itching - this is often called a **transient infection**. Dog scabies often infest dogs, dingoes and foxes. They rarely infest cats.

HOW DO THEY SPREAD?

Dog scabies is spread by close contact between dogs. Scabies can also infest bedding and clothes, especially mattresses. Scabies often spread between animals and humans when sharing bed to sleep on.

WHAT DO THEY DO?

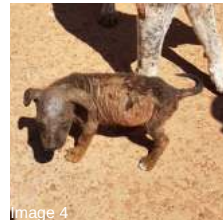
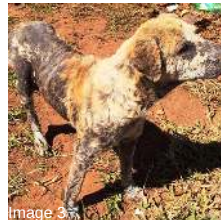
Mites make animals and humans very **itchy**.

Scabies infestations can also be called **mange**.

Dogs with serious scabies infestations may have no hair left on their backs. The skin is also usually thickened and smooth. These dogs are often called **leatherbacks**.

Scabies mites cause skin disease in animals. Mites moving and burrowing under skin causes intense itching. There is also an allergic reaction to the mites in the skin, meaning that only a small infestation can make animals very, very itchy. Lots of scratching causes hair loss, skin dryness and thickening. Skin that is damaged can easily become infected.

Dog scabies can cause skin disease in humans. Dog scabies can make humans itchy, causing people to scratch their skin and make sores. Sores can become infected with bacteria (such as *Streptococcus spp.*) leading to other diseases such as rheumatic heart disease and kidney disease.



HOW DO YOU TREAT THEM?



Treat the animal. The most effective mange treatments are registered tablet/chews or spot-ons (such as Nexgard, Bravecto). These stay in the animal's blood for 1 month or longer. The vets may bring some Ivermectin sandwiches which can treat mange. The vet may also recommend some treatments such as antibiotics or soothing creams or washes to help the skin.

Treat the environment. Mites will keep coming back as long as they are still around in the environment. Make sure all animals in the household are treated. Wash all bedding, toys and other materials that may be housing fleas/flea eggs.

Practice good hygiene. Wash hands often. Keep sores clean to prevent infection. Visit the health clinic to check any of your sores.



For more information: please contact AMRRIC on (08) 8948 1768, email us at info@amrric.org or visit our website: www.amrric.org

REFERENCES

Nett, C., Vitale, C., 2018, Scabies (zoonotic), VINcyclopedia of diseases, Veterinary Information Network. <https://www.vin.com/Members/Associate/Associate.plx?DiseaseId=273>.
Phelan, S., 2010, Dog Health Programs in Indigenous Communities – an Environmental Health Practitioner's Guide, AMRRIC. <https://www.amrric.org/resources/ehp-manual/>.

Image 1: A dog with crusted mange on its face, courtesy of AMRRIC; Image 2: A dog showing skin changes on its neck and back, likely from mange, courtesy of AMRRIC; Image 3: A dog showing skin changes on its face, back and legs, likely from mange, courtesy of AMRRIC; Image 4: A puppy with skin changes on its side, likely from mange, courtesy of AMRRIC Image 5: Washed blanket drying on washing line, courtesy of AMRRIC. Other images are stock images.