

# IVERMECTIN THERAPY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF NOTOEDRIC MANGE IN CATS

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Notoedric mange (Feline Scabies) is rare, highly contagious disease of cats and kittens caused by *Notoedres cati*, which can opportunistically infest other animals, including humans (Griffin *et al.*, 1993). It is clinically characterized by cutaneous lesions on the ears, face or neck and extreme pruritus (Kwochka, 1987 and Griffin *et al.*, 1993). Ivermectin, an endoecticide has a wide range of safety, low dosage requirement and persistent action, especially in mange infestations. The present report describes a series of cases of Notoedric mange in cats and their successful management with Ivermectin therapy.

Five domestic cats (3 female and 2 male) in the age group of six months to one year were presented to the Dermatology Unit of Madras Veterinary College Teaching Hospital with the history of intense pruritus and scabby lesions all over the body. All were indoor cats and reared in cages. One cat was emaciated and others were fair in their body condition. The clinical signs noticed included severe intense pruritus and hair loss. A thick / crusty scabby appearance of the skin, especially along the tip of the ears, face and neck was noticed.

Scratching of the affected areas caused the skin to become raw, red and inflamed. Itoh *et al.*, (2004) observed similar lesions in cats affected with Notoedric mange. *Notoedres* mites are closely related to Sarcoptic mites of dogs and thus the two infestations have some similarity. Both the conditions typically begin with itchy crusts and scales on the ear margins. The Notoedric mange progresses to involve the face and ultimately

covers the entire body, if the skin disease was ignored. (Scott *et al.*, 2001). Three cats in the present study had mange lesions covering the entire body.

The characteristic itching and hair loss pattern was often all that was needed to diagnose Notoedric mange in the cat (Griffin *et al.*, 1993 and Foil, 2003). Scraping of the crusty skin examined, revealed all stages of *Notoedres cati* mite (from ova to adult) in the present study and confirmed the diagnosis. The mites were identified as per the reports of Walker (1994), based on their shape and the presence of dorsal anus, which distinctly differentiated the *Notoedres cati* from *Sarcoptes sp.*

As *Notoedres cati* mange is communicable to human beings, it requires immediate and appropriate treatment and the owners must be cautioned when handling cats. (Chakrabarti, 1986 and Foil, 2003). Treatments commonly practiced included Selamectin @ 4 mg/kg, as a “spot on” and Ivermectin @ 200 µg/kg, subcutaneously at weekly intervals or fortnightly for a month. (Scott *et al.*, 2001). In the present study the cats were treated with Ivermectin as per the recommended doses at weekly intervals for a month along with supportive therapy. No adverse reactions were observed after the treatment. On day 7, the pruritus had resolved. There was a significant clinical improvement after 14 days of treatment. Two weeks post treatment, skin scrapings were examined and found negative. The successful recovery in the present study indicated the benefit of Ivermectin therapy in cats for the management of Feline Scabies.

## REFERENCES

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