

FLEAS & MITES IN DOGS

FLEAS AND MITES CAN CAUSE ITCHING, SKIN IRRITATION, AND DISCOMFORT IN DOGS.

Understanding Common External Parasites

Fleas and mites are among the most common parasites affecting dogs. They can cause itching, skin irritation, hair loss, ear disease, secondary infections, and significant discomfort. Fortunately, most infestations can be successfully treated and prevented with appropriate veterinary care.

Regular parasite prevention is the best way to keep your dog healthy and comfortable.



1 WHAT ARE FLEAS & MITES?

Fleas and mites are external parasites that live on or within the skin.

Common parasites affecting dogs include:

- ✓ Fleas
- ✓ Ear mites
- ✓ Sarcoptic mange mites (Scabies)
- ✓ Demodex mites (Demodectic mange)

These parasites can cause irritation, inflammation, skin damage, and secondary infections.



2 DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ A single flea can lay dozens of eggs every day.
- ✓ Most of the flea population lives in the environment, not on your dog.
- ✓ Some mites are microscopic and cannot be seen with the naked eye.
- ✓ Flea allergy dermatitis is one of the most common skin conditions in dogs.



3 RECOGNISE THE SIGNS

Common signs include:

- ✓ Scratching and itching
- ✓ Excessive licking or chewing
- ✓ Hair loss
- ✓ Red or inflamed skin
- ✓ Scabs or crusting
- ✓ Flea dirt (small black specks)
- ✓ Ear scratching or head shaking
- ✓ Thickened skin
- ✓ Skin infections
- ✓ Restlessness

Some dogs develop severe reactions from only a few flea bites.



4 HOW DO DOGS GET FLEAS & MITES?

Dogs can become infected through:

- ✓ Contact with other animals
- ✓ Contaminated environments
- ✓ Wildlife exposure
- ✓ Shared bedding
- ✓ Dog parks
- ✓ Boarding kennels
- ✓ Grooming facilities
- ✓ Outdoor roaming

Even indoor dogs can become infected.



5 WHICH DOGS ARE MOST AT RISK?

Higher-risk dogs include:

- ✓ Outdoor dogs
- ✓ Hunting dogs
- ✓ Working dogs
- ✓ Dogs attending boarding kennels
- ✓ Dogs attending daycare
- ✓ Puppies
- ✓ Dogs with weakened immune systems
- ✓ Dogs without regular parasite prevention

Any dog can develop fleas or mites.



6 HOW ARE THEY DIAGNOSED?

Your veterinarian may:

- ✓ Examine your dog's skin and coat
- ✓ Check for flea dirt
- ✓ Examine ear debris
- ✓ Perform skin scrapings
- ✓ Use microscopic examination
- ✓ Assess areas of hair loss or irritation
- ✓ Investigate secondary infections

Accurate diagnosis helps determine the most effective treatment.



7 TREATMENT

Treatment may include:

- ✓ Prescription flea treatments
- ✓ Prescription mite treatments
- ✓ Ear medications
- ✓ Anti-itch medications
- ✓ Antibiotics for skin infections
- ✓ Medicated shampoos
- ✓ Environmental control measures

Always use products specifically recommended for dogs.



8 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

Successful treatment often requires:

- ✓ Washing bedding regularly
- ✓ Vacuuming carpets and furniture
- ✓ Treating other pets in the household
- ✓ Cleaning resting areas
- ✓ Ongoing parasite prevention

Environmental treatment helps prevent reinfestation.



9 PREVENTION

You can reduce the risk by:

- ✓ Using year-round parasite prevention
- ✓ Routine veterinary health checks
- ✓ Prompt treatment of skin problems
- ✓ Maintaining good hygiene
- ✓ Monitoring for scratching or ear irritation
- ✓ Following your veterinarian's prevention recommendations

Prevention is easier than treating established infestations.



10 COMMON TYPES OF FLEAS & MITES

FLEAS



Cause itching and flea allergy dermatitis.
Can transmit tapeworms.

EAR MITES

(Otodectes cynotis)



Cause ear irritation.
Lead to dark waxy discharge.
Common in puppies.

SARCOPTIC MANGE (SCABIES)



Extremely itchy and contagious.
Causes crusting and hair loss.

DEMODICTIC MANGE



Associated with Demodex mites.
More common in young or immunocompromised dogs.
Causes patchy hair loss.

11 ADDITIONAL TIPS

- ✓ Flea allergy is common in dogs.
- ✓ Ear mites can cause significant discomfort.
- ✓ Some mites are contagious to other animals.
- ✓ Regular parasite prevention offers the best protection.
- ✓ Early treatment prevents skin damage and secondary infections.

12 EVERY DOG COUNTS

If your dog is scratching excessively, losing hair, shaking its head, or developing skin irritation, arrange a veterinary examination.

Early diagnosis, treatment, and parasite prevention help keep your dog comfortable, healthy, and protected year-round.

