

Canine Diseases and Parasites

The following is a list of canine diseases and parasites mostly commonly observed in shelter animals. Please take the time to review them. It is extremely important that you monitor the animal that you work with. Notify a shelter supervisor or the volunteer coordinator if the animal displays any signs that may indicate an illness or injury.

***Zoonotic diseases** – Zoonotic diseases are disease caused by infectious agents that can be transmitted between animals and humans.*

Kennel Cough

A.K.A Infectious Tracheobronchitis

Spread through respiratory secretions, acquired through inhalation

Signs and Symptoms – Hacking cough, moderate to extensive discharge from the eyes and nose.

Video available at <http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=600>

Parovirus

Highly contagious and serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the gastrointestinal tract. It is spread through the direct dog-to-dog contact and contact with contaminated feces (stool), environments or people. The virus can also contaminate kennel surfaces, food and water bowls, collars and leashes, and the hand and clothing of people who handle infected dogs.

Signs and Symptoms – Diarrhea (sometimes bloody,) vomiting, lethargy, weakness, fever, depression, accompanied by a very distinct smell.

Canine Distemper

Highly contagious viral disease

Most often transmitted through contact with respiratory secretions. Contact with the urine and fecal material of infected dogs can also result in infection.

Signs and Symptoms – Weight loss, coughing, vomiting, nasal discharge, and diarrhea

Demodex Mange

Caused by a microscopic mite. Demodex is not considered a contagious disease. Mites live inside the hair follicles. All dogs raised normally by their mothers possess this mite as mites are transferred from mother to pup via cuddling during the first few days of life.

It is when immune related – or nutritional or environmental – stresses impact the dog that visible skin lesions from mite infestations become noticeable.

Signs and Symptoms-

Localized demodex – causes isolated scaly bald patches



Generalized Demodex – the entire dog is affected with patchy fur, skin infections, bald and scaly skin. Secondary bacterial infections make this a very itchy and often smelly skin disease.



Sarcoptic Mange – ZONOTIC DISEASE

Sarcoptic mange, also referred to as scabies, is a contagious parasite that can be transmitted to both people and other animals. Scabies is an infestation by the *Sarcoptes Scabiei*. Mites are small eight legged parasites. The mites which cause scabies are not visible with the naked eye but can be seen with a magnifying glass or microscope. The mite burrows just beneath the surface of the skin. It may also crawl around on the skin surface. This mite feeds on material in and on the skin.

Signs and Symptoms in DOGS/CATS – Causes severe itching. The dog will chew and scratch his skin constantly. This leads to the loss of large amounts of hair, especially on the legs and belly. Eventually, the skin will become thickened and will darken due to pigmentation.



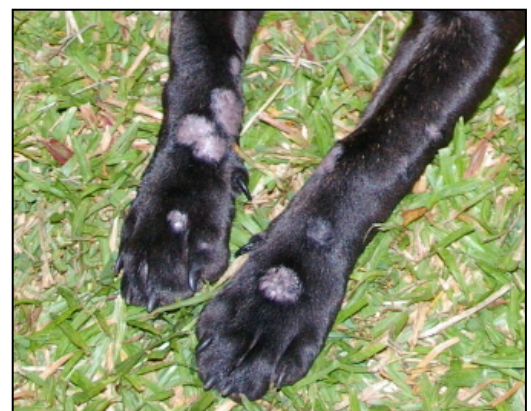
Signs and Symptoms in PEOPLE – When canine or feline mites land on human skin, they fail to thrive and produce only a mild itch that may go away on its own. Scabies can produce small red bumps and blisters and affects specific areas of the body. Itching is the most common symptom of scabies. Medical attention may be needed.



Ringworm – ZONOTIC DISEASE

Ringworm is not a worm at all but a fungus. The fungi live on the surface of the skin and in the skin follicles feeding on dead skin tissues and hair. Ringworm can be highly contagious and easily spread to both people and other animals.

Signs and Symptoms – ANIMALS. The usual symptom is a round hairless lesion. This lesion will grow in size and often become irregular in shape. Commonly found on the face, ears, tail and paws. The lesions are scaly and may or may not be itchy and often the skin is reddened and inflamed.



Signs and Symptoms – PEOPLE. Most ringworm infections cause a rash that may be peeling, cracking, scaling, itching, and red. The edges may be red and scaly or moist and crusted. The rash also may have small bumps that look like blisters. The center of the rash may be clear, giving it a ring-shaped appearance, or there may be a cluster of red bumps.



Rabies – ZONOTIC DISEASE

A potentially fatal viral infection that attacks the central nervous system. Carried primarily by wild animals, especially bats and raccoons. **NOT COMMONLY SEEN IN DOMESTIC ANIMALS IN THIS AREA.** Spread through direct contact with an infected wild animal or by contact with domestic animals that have contracted the virus. **ALL ANIMAL BITES MUST LEGALLY BE REPORTED FOR PROPER ANIMAL QUARANTING PROCEDURES.**

Signs and Symptoms - PEOPLE – Fever, myalgia (aching muscles), and headache, which can progress to inflammation of the brain, confusion, seizures, paralysis, coma, and death.

Parasites

Tapeworm

Tapeworms are flat intestinal worms that are made up of many small segments. The tapeworm is spread through the ingestion of a flea carrying the tapeworm egg. The segments are passed in the feces

Signs and Symptoms – Tapeworms look like grains of rice. They can be seen moving on the hairs around the anus or on the surface of freshly passed feces.



Roundworm

Roundworms are parasites that live freely in the intestine, feeding off of partially digested intestinal contents. Infected dogs shed the roundworm egg in their feces. Other dogs may become infected by sniffing or licking infected feces. Commonly passed from mom to pup.

Signs and Symptoms – Potbelly, diarrhea, vomiting long worms resembling spaghetti noodles.



Fleas

Fleas are parasites that thrive in warm, humid environments and feed on the blood of their host. The flea is tiny measuring one to three millimeters in length and usually dark brown or black in color. The flea can jump 10,000 times in a row.

Signs and Symptoms – Droppings or “flea dirt” in an animal’s coat or environment, excessive scratching, licking or biting at skin, hair loss, allergic dermatitis, scabs and hot spots, tapeworms



Tick

A tick is a parasite that feeds on the blood of their host. They are attracted to warmth and motion. Ticks tend to hide in tall grass or plants in wooded areas. Once a host is found, the tick climbs on and attaches its mouthparts into the skin and begins sucking.

Signs and Symptoms – DOGS. The tick most often will attach themselves in crevices and/or areas with little to no hair, typically in and around the ears, inside of the legs, skin folds. Attached and engorged ticks often resemble and feel like small growths.

