DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC APPROACH TO PRURITUS IN DOGS

PRURITIC ITCHY DOG

Acute
- Days to a few weeks

Chronic
- > 6 weeks
- 3 or more episodes/vet visits annually

Consider (most commonly)
- Infection (Staphylococcus and/or Malassezia yeast)
- Allergy (flea allergy, food allergy, atopic dermatitis, contact allergy)
- Ectoparasites (Sarcoptes, Cheyletiella)
- Trauma, irritants, bite wounds etc. (acute pruritus only)

NOTE: Many skin diseases not typically characterized as “itchy” may uncommonly be associated with pruritus, such as dermatophytosis, demodicosis

History and PE
- What body areas affected
- Age of onset
- Response to previous therapy
- Seasonality
- Intensity of pruritus

Diagnostics if indicated

Flea comb for fleas/flea feces
- Note: Treat for fleas if high index suspicion for flea allergy even if fleas/feces not detected on flea comb

Superficial skin scrapings
- Note: Treat with parasiticide if high index suspicion for scabies even if mites not detected on scraping

Skin cytology

Treatment for immediate relief of pruritus at any time
- Apoquel q 12 hrs up to 14 days
- Topical corticosteroids or pramoxine if mild + localized
- Temaril P or prednisone if <12 months old

Alesional itchy dog

Resolution of pruritus Consider as underlying cause:
- Hypothyroidism
- Demodicosis
- Conformation/folds
- Immune-mediated dz.
- Idiopathic pruritic pyoderma

Resolution of pruritus
- Flea allergy

Treat for mites

Treat for mites

Treat for Staphylococcal pyoderma +/or Malassezia dermatitis

Flea comb for fleas
- Treat for fleas

Superficial skin scrapings
- Treat for mites

Superficial skin scrapings
- Treat for mites
Atopic Dermatitis Treatment Options for ATOPIC DERMATITIS

(variable based on patient, owner and disease state)

Apoquel q 12 hrs up to 14 days then q 24 hrs

and/or

Allergen immunotherapy (subcutaneous or sublingual)

and/or

Atopica q 24 hrs then q 24-48 hrs

or

Referral to dermatologist

or

(Treatment Options for ATOPIC DERMATITIS)

No evidence to support fleas/scabies/infection

OR

Pruritus persists after resolution of fleas/scabies/infection

Seasonal pruritus

Nonseasonal pruritus

Consider food allergy

4-12 week food trial

➢ Atopic Dermatitis

➢ Pruritus persists

➢ Resolution of pruritus

➢ Food allergy

Resolution of pruritus

Pruritus persists after resolution of fleas/scabies/infection

➢ Food allergy