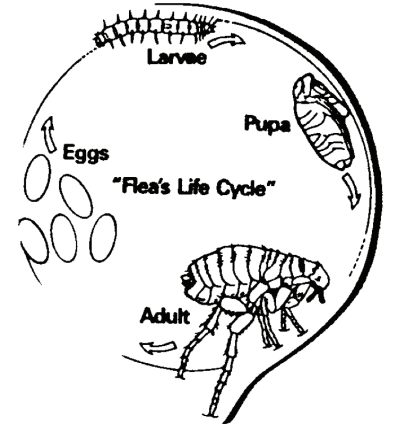


UTCVM DERMATOLOGY SERVICE

Flea Allergy Dermatitis

General Information

- Fleas are biting insects that may infest dogs, cats and houses.
- If one dog or cat in a household has fleas, it may be assumed that all the dogs and cats in the household have fleas! Therefore, all animals in the household must be treated.
- Fleas swallowed by your pet while licking or chewing may transmit tapeworms.
- One flea can produce 2,000 eggs in its lifetime.
- Fleas (like ticks) carry zoonotic diseases (diseases transmitted from animals to humans).



Flea Allergy

- When a flea bites your pet, it injects a small amount of saliva into the skin. Some animals are allergic to this saliva, which causes severe itching and scratching.
- Biting and scratching around the lumbar and groin area is the most common sign of flea allergy, especially in dogs. Hot spots often occur secondary to fleas.
- Successful treatment requires the absolute elimination of fleas from the affected dog or cat. All animals in the house need to be treated. Flea control must be used at the correct dosage, at the correct interval, throughout the entire year.

Therapy: *Read all directions on products prior to use.*

- **Dogs and cats** – Your dermatologist will recommend a flea treatment regimen for your pet and household. This may involve a topical “spot-on” product, oral medication, and/or collar. Be sure to follow the instructions to maximally benefit your pet.
- **Environment** – Treatment of the house and yard may be needed in certain situations.
 - » **House**
 - 1) **Professional extermination** – Try to get one that uses an insect growth regulator such as methoprene or pyriproxifen that decreases the need to spray as frequently for adults. Insect growth regulators should be applied in combination with other insecticides for best results. **The home should be treated twice two weeks apart** and then treated every 60 to 90 days with both insecticides thereafter.
 - 2) **Do-It-Yourself** – Ideal house treatment includes a product that kills adult fleas (adulticide such as permethrin) and an insect growth regulator, (such as methoprene or pyriproxifen). **Apply twice two weeks apart**, then repeat once every 60 to 90 days.
 - 3) **Vacuum** – Make sure to vacuum thoroughly before flea treatment and empty the bag outside. **Do not vacuum immediately after flea treatment.** After waiting 1 week or so, frequent vacuuming on a continuous basis is very helpful.
 - » **Outside premises** – may be indicated in severe infestations. Apply insecticide granules in shaded areas where the pet spends time. Focus on areas around the doghouse and under decks. **Areas receiving full sun should not need treatment.**

Please follow label directions carefully.