A RARE CASE OF NEOTROMBICULA AUTUMNALIS DERMATITIS IN A GERMAN SHEPHERD PUPPY

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Parasitic skin diseases are common in dogs. Among various parasites, sarcoptes, demodex and otodectes mites are frequently causing dermatitis in dogs. Trombiculids are rare mite causing dermatitis in dogs. Neotrombicula autumnalis is a free living mite, the larvae of which infest small animals especially dogs (Scott et al., 2000). Only the larval stage are parasitic to mammal, the reminder of the life cycle being completed in the environment, with the nymphal and adult stage feeding on vegetative matter (Curtis & Paradis 2003). Few data are available in the literature on the dermatological consequences and treatment of Neotrombicula autumnalis. In this report a successful management of trombiculids in a dog is presented and discussed in detail.

Case history and observation

A 3½ months old male German shepherd puppy was presented to the Small Animal dermatology unit of Madras Veterinary Teaching hospital with history of severe pruritus in the abdomen and head for the past one week. General clinical examination revealed normal temperature, pulse rate, respiration and mucous membrane. Examination of skin revealed focal erythema, papule on the ventral abdomen, and above the eye. Skin scraping was taken from affected lesion. Microscopic examination revealed presence of numerous live mite and it was identified as larvae of Neotrombicula autumnalis.

The dog was treated with fipronil spot on once and permethrin shampoo weekly once for two application and oral antibiotic with cephalexin at 25mg/kg body wt BID for two weeks. The owner was advised to avoid dog from further contact with vegetation on suspected areas. After two weeks of treatment there was complete remission of clinical signs and no mite was noticed on skin scraping.

Canine and Feline infestations are seasonal with the majority of cases occurring between June, July and November(Curtis & Paradis 2003). White (2001) reported an atypical feline trombicula larval infestation in January. The present case was reported during February month.

Nuttal et al. (1998) reported superficial pyoderma, crust and pruritus in the interdigital space. The mite attach to the skin of the host close to the points of contact with infected vegetation. They are commonly found on the feet, head (partially in the ear) and ventral abdomen, where they may be seen as orange red spots (Scott et al., 2000). All trombiculidae cause papular to papulocrustous lesions at their feeding site which tends to be concentrated interdigitally or along the ventral abdomen (Curtis and Paradis, 2003). Smal et al. (2004) reported lesion and pruritus score in fifteen dogs infested with trombiculides. According to their
Observation predominant signs were pruritus, erythma, papule and scales and less severe signs were crust and pustules. The clinical signs observed in the present case were in accordance with above authors.

Scott et al. (2000) reported that hand lens was useful in detecting orange-red mite on skin lesions and also skin scraping for microscopic examination of mites.

Nuttall et al.(1998) reported that monthly application of 0.25 % Fipronil spray controlled trombiculids in 15 of 18 days and trimethopim potentiated sulphaadizine at 30 mg/kg twice daily for 14 days controlled secondary bacterial infection. Smal et al.( 2004) recorded successful management of Trombiculus dermatitis in 15 dogs with two application of Permethrin-pyriproxyfen ( spot on) combination. The present case was managed successfully with fipronil spot on, permethrin shampoo and cephaalexin for two weeks.

REFERENCES


