



## Rabbit Fur Mites

*Cheyletiella parasitivorax* is the most common mite that we see in rabbits. It is a non-burrowing mite which is just visible to the naked eye or as “dandruff” on your rabbits fur. Mites live in close association with the top layer of the skin and their eggs are found sticking to the hair about 3-4 mm above the skin.

Many rabbit are subclinical carriers of the mites and immune suppression and/or poor grooming can play a role in clinical infection.



Lesions are generally not severe and typically present as flaky skin, seborrheic (weepy) lesions mainly found on the face, neck, shoulder blades and the dorsal midline (middle of their back) as well as pruritis (itching). In heavy infestations, alopecia (fur loss), self-trauma and restlessness may occur.

The life cycle of the mite is approximately 5 weeks long and the development from egg to adult mite takes place on one rabbit host. The adult females can survive for at least 10 days off the rabbit host.

### *Main treatment options:*

- Revolution (selemectin) is a skin spot on medication that is applied and then repeated generally every 2 weeks for 3 treatments
- Ivermectin injections are another option in some cases



It is best to always assume a mite infection is present if dandruff is there as observation of mites on microscopic evaluation is not always possible.

### *Other treatments:*

Sometimes pain relief, antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medications are also required if the rabbit is overly uncomfortable from the itching and/or has caused self-trauma or damage to the skin.

If you are at all worried about your rabbit please don't hesitate to contact us.

