2022

DERMATOPHYTOSIS IN CATS – ZOONOTIC ASPECTS

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REVIEW, RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abstract

The present study refers to the increased incidence among community cats in Oradea in the present year with an increased percentage of dermatophytoses compared to or together with viral and bacterial diseases. This incidence is treated and present in both cats and humans and is considered a zoonotic disease.

Keywords: *zoonotic, incidence, microsporosis, skin* #Corresponding author: <u>rpurge@yahoo.com</u>

INTRODUCTION

The most common dermatophytoses in cats besides Trichophyton spp are those produced by Microsporum spp. These are infections that affect the skin and fur. They belong to the category of mycoses, i.e. fungi, and a very high percentage of them involve Microsporum canis. It spreads very easily in the environment, affecting the population.

It is considered a zoonotic disease with a high risk of contamination directly from Microsporum canis infected cats to humans or indirectly through various objects, furniture, dishes from which infected cats are fed or hygiene tools used on infected cats (fur brushes or combs).

The occurrence of microsporiasis in cats varies, in that small cats - kittens - are more susceptible. The most common symptoms clinically are hairless skin depilation (cats shed large amounts of hair), crusting of the depilated areas.

The most common areas affected are the ears, muzzle, face, tail, feet, and in case of massive infection the rest of the body. Another symptom present in cats is excessive itching, which often leads to self-mutilation with bleeding infected areas.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present study was carried out on 25 cats from Oradea, with the help and support of volunteers and a veterinary practice in Oradea.

A month-long campaign was carried out, during which some volunteers caught some community cats in the neighbourhood of their home with skin problems and less aggressive, so that they could be examined by veterinarians, and brought to a veterinary practice.

The whole campaign was pro bono and included free consultation, making a diagnosis of certainty and administering treatment. Several cats were brought in, but only those with lesions and scabs with skin and fur depilation were considered in the study.

Consultation of the cats consisted of careful examination of the cats' depilated areas, skin and scabs.

In some cases, volunteers also had an anamnesis, after coming into contact with them, feeding or petting them, they also developed intensely itchy skin diseases.

As for the diagnosis, in the case of the cats in the study, it consisted of the use of the ultraviolet's Wood lamp.

The fact that cats were part of the campaign was the diagnostic method that worked the fastest and most economically. In practice, trichogram, PCR (polymerase chain reaction), fungal culture for Microsporum spp.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Of the 25 cats brought to the practice with skin problems, 18 tested positive for Wood's lamp and all clinically showed intense itching, depilation with round, wellcircumscribed areas specific for microsporosis.

Treatment was instituted immediately and with the help of volunteers the cats began to feel better.

Thanks to this campaign, the risk of spreading the disease has been reduced, especially to people with whom the cats have come into contact or who live in the vicinity where they roam.

It is very important that people know how to come into contact with these cats, especially children, who can easily get the disease by petting them. Unfortunately, in humans studies show that it can be treated, but it passes very slowly and the aesthetic discomfort with itchy skin appears (Keith A. Hnilica, Adam P. Patterson, 2001).

CONCLUSIONS

It is very important to educate the public and children on how to behave with community cats, especially those that are visibly hairless or furless.

Where possible it would be advisable to take them to a veterinarian to rule out the disease situation and, obviously, thus reducing the risk of spreading the disease through appropriate treatment.

It has been shown that all volunteers who did not use gloves in handling cats with microsporosis contracted the disease relatively quickly, especially in the hands and arms.

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