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Prophylactic perspectives on small animal dermatophytosis

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Dermatophytosis is a contagious skin fungal infection of animals and humans with three genera involved, *Microsporum*, *Trichophyton* and *Epidermophyton*. Ringworm is considered a zoonotic disease meaning that it can be transmitted from animals to humans and vice-versa. Usually in humans, ringworm results in itchy, rough, and reddened skin and alopecia patches if hair or beard areas are affected. As this infection is extremely contagious and passed from person-to-person via direct skin contact or contact with contaminated items such as toilet articles, clothing, and even by contaminated shower or pool surfaces, extreme care should be taken and animal to human dissemination should be avoided. The prognosis for dermatophytosis is generally good, as most animals will clear the infection in few months but some infections may remain persistent, particularly in longhaired cats. Control of the disease in animals can prevent some cases of dermatophytosis in humans. Infected animals should be isolated until the infection has resolved and the premises and fomites should be disinfected to help prevent infections to other animals or humans. Gloves and protective clothing should be worn during contact with infected animals. Enrolling in such directives is of the utmost importance and they should be clearly and thoroughly described to the owners by the veterinary community professionals; only then an efficient dermatophytosis treatment can be expected.

Keywords: dermatophytosis, dermatophytes; fungal infection; zoonosis; skin.