

Acne in Cats

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BASIC INFORMATION

Description and Causes

Feline acne is obstruction of the hair follicles on the chin. The underlying cause and reason the problem develops are unknown.

Clinical Signs

Early lesions consist of blackheads and black debris on the chin. Sometimes mild scabbing, red bumps, and pimples occur. Lesions may also involve the skin of the upper and lower lips. After time, the pimples can get larger and cause the hair follicles to rupture (furunculosis), which leads to discomfort and bloody drainage.

Diagnostic Tests

Diagnosis is based on the presence of compatible clinical signs and elimination of other possible skin conditions of the chin.

TREATMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

Treatment Options

Secondary bacterial infections are treated with systemic antibiotics for 2-4 weeks. The hair may be clipped and the skin gently

washed with a shampoo that contains benzoyl peroxide or ethyl lactate until the lesions have dried out and healed. Gentle washes can then be continued as needed. Topical antibacterial ointments or creams, such as 2% mupirocin, 0.75% metronidazole gel, or products containing clindamycin or tetracycline may also be helpful.

Follow-up Care

If lesions recur and are painful, or if bleeding pimples come back, a recheck visit should be scheduled with your veterinarian. Notify your veterinarian if any other clinical signs arise.

Prognosis

The prognosis for improvement is good, but affected cats may require lifelong topical therapy. Permanent hair loss and scarring are common after the lesions heal.