Many diseases cause pruritus in the cat.

Parasitic diseases: Demodex gatoi, Demodex cati, Otodectes cynotis, Notoedres cati, Cheyletiella spp., Lynxacarus radovsky, lice, chiggers

Infectious diseases: Dermatophytosis, Malassezia dermatitis, Bacterial folliculitis

Allergic diseases: Insect bite allergy (FLEA, mosquito, culicoides), Food allergy, Atopic dermatitis, Contact allergy

Immune-mediated diseases: Pemphigus foliaceus, Drug eruption, Erythema multiforme, SLE/DLE

Keratinization defects: Feline acne, Idiopathic facial dermatitis, Primary seborrhea

Endocrine disorders: Hyperthyroidism, Methimazole reaction

Environmental diseases: Solar dermatitis, Psychogenic dermatoses (pet, owner)

Miscellaneous diseases: Hypereosinophilic syndrome, Sterile granulomatous disease

Neoplasia: Mast cell tumors, SCC/Bowen’s disease, Epitheliotropic cutaneous lymphoma

Systemic diseases: Chronic urinary disease, gastrointestinal disease

ANYTHING!!!

Diagnosis: signalment, history, physical exam, diagnostic testing, response to therapy

My cat is not itchy- examine trichogram to look for blunted hairs

History: family history, age of onset, seasonality, degree of pruritus, disease progression, description of lesions, location of lesions, any housemates affected, normal environment, changes in environment, contact with other animals, indoor/outdoor, dietary history, previous treatments, response to treatments, current medications, current flea control

Physical exam: general, dermatologic

Primary lesions: macules, papules, pustules, plaques, nodules, tumors
Secondary lesions: alopecia, scale/crust, ulcers/erosions, follicular casts, comedones, epidermal collarettes, excoriations, pigmentary changes, lichenification, scarring

Now you can make your differential diagnosis list.

Diagnostic tests: skin scrapings, tape preps, flea comb for parasites, pluck hairs for trichogram (broken hairs, fungal arthrospores, parasites), bacterial culture, wood’s lamp examination, dermatophyte PCR, fungal culture, skin biopsy, CBC, chemistry panel, T4, urinalysis, food trial, IDST (insects or full panel), serum allergy testing, lime sulfur dip trial, advantage multi trial, bravecto trial, flea control, insect bite avoidance (keep indoors, repellents)

Modified differential diagnosis list

Therapeutic/diagnostic plan

Recheck! Definitive diagnosis may be reached on the first visit or fifth visit and control of the problem may take longer.

Case discussions: