

Skin Scrapings & Mange Mites Collection Techniques

1. This technique is used for lesions with minimal epidermal hyperplasia and lesions caused by deeply burrowing mites (e.g. *Sarcoptes*, *Notoedres*) or in hair follicles (e.g. *Demodex*). Dip a scalpel blade in mineral oil or glycerine. Using the blade, scrape the periphery of the lesions at right angles to the skin until pinpoint hemorrhaging occurs. The material collected on the scalpel blade should be pink in color. Put the scalpel blade with the oil and detritus into a sealed container, such as a small ointment jar or stoppered test tube.

Note: Do not use glycerine or mineral oil on samples destined for bacteriology or mycology. Separate samples should be collected for these procedures.

2. The following technique is used for lesions with marked epidermal hyperplasia and exfoliation and lesions caused by lice and superficially dwelling mites (e.g. *Chorioptes*). Scrape the dried exudate and debris into a small specimen jar. Alternatively, a household vacuum cleaner fitted with an in-line filter may be used to collect epidermal debris and various ectoparasites (such as *Cheyletiella*, *Sarcoptes*, *Psoroptes*, *Otodectes*, and *Demodex* mites, fleas and lice). The filter is then contained and submitted to the laboratory.
3. Ear mites (e.g. *Otodectes*) can be found easily with an otoscope. They can be removed from the external ear with a cotton swab. Place the swab in a container and submit to the laboratory.
4. Poultry mites (e.g. *Dermanyssus gallinae*) do not remain on the host in daylight. The bird's environment must be examined. Search in bird nests, roosts, and nearby cracks and crevices in housing structures. Collect and contain specimens and submit to the laboratory for identification.
5. Some surface feeding mites (e.g. *Cheyletiella*) in dogs and other hosts can be collected by vigorously brushing the host over a plastic sheet. Mites and debris will accumulate on the sheet and can be transferred to a container.