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Food Therapy Case Example

January 2015- intake photo at shelter



Mia is a 5 month old female intact pit bull that was rescued from a back yard where she was confined to a very small cage. Likely due to her confinement, her lumbar spine was severely kyphotic. She was diagnosed at a general practice with generalized demodex and was placed in a foster home. In her foster home she was started on a daily dose of ivermectin and fed Bill Jack's Chicken and Rice dry puppy food.

February 2, 2015

I saw this pet initially in February only for chiropractic care for her significant postural abnormality. She had significant lumbar kyphosis and an abnormal hindlimb gait. Her skin was diffusely erythematous, scaly and greasy with diffuse alopecia. She felt warm to the touch and had a bad odor. Scales exfoliated all over the table. She was small for her age and underweight.



March 5, 2015

At 7 months of age, I saw Mia for a recheck. Her lumbar kyphosis was mildly improved. Her skin (whole body) was hot to the touch, red, and had greasy scales that exfoliated all over the table. Few erythematous papules were present on the ventral abdomen. Mild hair regrowth had occurred. The skin scrapes were still positive for low numbers of demodex. Tongue was red, pulses were strong.

Western diagnosis: Generalized Demodex

TCVM Diagnosis: Damp Heat Skin, Jing deficiency

Food therapy was initiated at this time and focused on cooling Mia's intense heat. Herbal therapy was discussed, but due to cost and that pet was a rescue it was decided to start with changes in diet. Mia's foster parent started with a turkey based diet with other cooling foods. Daily ivermectin was continued, as well as weekly baths with medicated shampoo (benzoyl peroxide).

The foster parent used a variation of the "Hot Dog Recipe". A whole turkey was boiled for 24 hours, then deboned and pureed. The following was added:

2 tsp Fish oil

1 tsp bone meal (turkey bone)

1 cup raw organic spinach (pureed)- to clear heat

1 cup cucumber (pureed)- to clear heat

1 cup organic brown rice- to clear heat

2 cups turkey- to clear heat

1 tsp egg shell

1 tbs honey- to clear heat

This was all pureed together adding turkey stock as needed for consistency. Single servings were kept in the refrigerator and new batches were made weekly.

March 9, 2015

Progress report: Mia's foster mom noticed that Mia is not as hot to the touch. She does not pant as much, but is still red and warm when she comes in from outside. Mia loves the home made food, but she did experience some diarrhea from the change. No treats were being given- only the home made diet at 1 ¾ cup twice daily.

March 14, 2015

Progress report: It was bath day and the foster mom noted that the inflammation had decreased in the ventral abdominal/inguinal area. Redness had decreased but was still present.

New homemade diet included:

2 cup Turkey- to clear heat

1 cup organic brown rice- to clear heat

1 tsp fish oil

1 tsp flaxseed oil- to clear heat

1 cup spinach- to clear heat

1 cup broccoli- to clear heat

1 tsp bone meal

1 tsp eggshell

1 tbs Honey- to clear heat

March 20, 2015

Progress report: Foster mom noted that Mia's hair growth has increased and the redness around her eyes has decreased

March 21, 2015

Progress Report: Mia is noted to have increased energy without needing constant breaks from playing.

April 2, 2015

Progress Report: Hair regrowth continues to occur, inflammation decreasing and nearly gone. Temperature has decreased to feel "normal" to the touch

April 15, 2015

On examination, Mia's coat is soft to the touch, except for her legs that still have very mild alopecia. Her skin is light pink-white. She has mild greasiness in her axilla/inguinal regions with mild soft crusts on the front legs. There are no papules. She does not have any redness around her eyes or in the inguinal area. Her skin scrape is negative. Her lumbar kyphosis is now mild. Tongue pink-red, pulses normal.



April 20, 2015

Progress Report: Mia's skin and coat is soft and not brittle. Her skin is cool to the touch, but warm in the ventral abdomen/inguinal area. It was also noted that her skin did not increase in temperature when she became worked up during barking and play like it used to.

May 3, 2015

Progress Report: Mia has increased tolerance to being outside and doesn't get so hot after playing. Mia is being slowly changed to store food in preparation for adoption. We chose Solid Gold Bison and Oatmeal Puppy Formula, a dry dog food with neutral/cooling properties. She has a beautiful white coat.

May 8, 2015

Mia's skin temperature has mildly increased since starting the store-bought food. Her energy is still increased. There has been no increase in her panting. Her skin and coat look great.



When Mia was adopted at the end of May her new pet parents started her on a Purina dry food with Turkey as the main ingredient.

July 21, 2015

Progress Report: Mia's new owners stated that she is now on a white fish dry food (brand unspecified). Owner reported that she had one "breakout" with the skin, however, they were giving her some different treats. He reported that she does occasionally get hot to the touch.

July 24, 2015

Progress Report: The rescue agency saw pictures from the new owner and noted that her skin looked significantly worse than at the time of the adoption. A veterinary appointment was scheduled and a skin scrape was positive for demodex, approximately 9 were seen on the whole slide. The new owners surrendered Mia back to the rescue agency due to lack of funds to treat her.

July 25, 2015

Mia was returned to her foster mom. She is overweight (has gained approximately 15 lbs in 6 weeks), warm to the touch on legs and ventrum. Significant erythema, alopecia and greasy soft scales are present on her muzzle, entire ventrum from chin to inguinal region and legs. At this time the damp is predominating as all her lesions are ventral and in the legs, but she also has significant warmth in those areas. Pulses strong, Tongue red, dry.





TCVM Diagnosis: Damp heat skin, Jing/Qi deficiency

The foster mom requested to cook food for her again since it made such a significant difference last time.

She used a variation of the “Hot Dog Recipe” with the following ingredients:

Turkey, honey, spinach, honey, tomato, and tofu to clear heat

Kidney bean, celery (also cooling), and corn to drain damp

Apples and Eggs as neutral food and eggs also as a Jing/Qi tonic

Herbal therapy was also started with herbs on hand. Damp Heat Skin powder was dispensed at 2grams twice daily. Concentrated Wei Qi Booster was dispensed at 1/6th of a packet twice daily. A one month supply was dispensed of each. Advantage Multi was administered and the foster mom plans to start Bravecto on Monday in place of ivermectin. She will be bathed with BPO (benzoyl peroxide) shampoo twice weekly until symptoms improve. She was also started on a weight loss plan.

August 5, 2015

Mia had Advantage Multi 25 July and Started Bravecto approximately 28 July. Her home-cooked diet, Damp Heat Skin (2g BID powder) and Wei Qi Booster (concentrated 1/6 packet BID) were started since the last visit as well. Her foster parent reports that there is reduced redness/rash and heat since last visit, however she is very itchy under her chin/ventral neck.

On exam, her skin was white dorsally, light pink ventrally. No interdigital faruncles (abscesses) were noted and the erythematous papules noted on previous exam were also resolved. The entire ventrum and legs were slightly warm, with mild scaling, hypotrichosis (thin hair coat) and greasiness (damp). Minimal soft crusts (scabs) were still present on the front legs. She was still overweight, but had lost approximately 3 lbs since returning to the foster parent. Pulses normal, Tongue pink to red.

Therapy was continued as previous with the addition of herbal External Wind due to itchiness (2g BID)



