



## Ringworm Information for Fosters – Neonatal Specific

**What is Ringworm (Dermatophytosis)?** Ringworm is the common name for the skin infection caused by a group of fungi; it is actually not caused by a worm at all. Ringworm is the same fungus as the common athlete's foot -- the only difference is that ringworm is not confined to the foot. Typically, it will cause relatively circular, or "rings", of hair-loss that are slightly red and "crusty" or green/yellow colored. Ringworm can also have other characteristics but these circular, hairless lesions are how it most commonly presents. Ringworm is not a serious health threat, but it is, unfortunately, very contagious to all animals -- humans and other pets included.

**Am I going to get ringworm from my kitten(s)?** It is possible that you and anybody in your living space might get ringworm from your fosters. Washing your hands and wearing a "kitten shirt" when handling your fosters will help reduce the chances of transmission greatly. Adult humans and animals with healthy immune systems should be able to fight off ringworm naturally, but some people may be at greater risk than others; young animals and children, elderly people and pets, those who are HIV+, people on chemotherapy or taking medication after transfusions or organ transplants, and highly stressed people and animals are more at risk.

**What if I get ringworm!?** There are many over-the-counter creams for treating ringworm. Please ask your pharmacist! If your ringworm is particularly persistent or covers large areas of your body, please contact your physician.

**What about my other animals?** In order to keep your other pets from getting ringworm, we recommend that you keep your foster kittens isolated in a room/kennel that is easy to clean. Washing your hands and changing your clothes in between your ringworm kitties and other animals will reduce the chances of spreading the fungus.

**What about my home?** The basic gist of decontaminating for ringworm is, the less fabric/carpet, the better. Many ringworm fosters choose to keep their kittens in bathrooms or laundry rooms with primarily tile surfaces. Ringworm is easily killed using a bleach dilution of 10 parts water to 1 part bleach. Let the solution sit for approximately 15 minutes for maximum efficacy. During the time that you have your fosters, the area the kittens are kept in, and all of their bedding should be washed using this bleach solution at least once weekly.

**What treatment will kittens with ringworm need?** For younger kittens (under 8 weeks of age), treatment will consist of spot treating only with Lymdip. You will be provided Lymdip to treat at home and instructions are available at the bottom of this document. You will treat your kittens twice per week using a Q-tip or something similar to dab the Lymdip on any affected areas.

**What do I tell potential adopters about treating ringworm?** APA! will provide adopters with a complete information packet on ringworm, as well as a full course of oral medication and a container of lyme-sulfur dip. You are welcome to print out this particular document for your potential adopters as well.

**How do I get my Ringworm kitten/cat accepted into the Ringworm Ward or cleared for the main Adoption Center?**

1. Submit an adoption center request form for your kitten in advance of the scheduled S/N surgery date. (You submit the same form whether your kitten(s) has ringworm or not -- you simply indicate on the form if your kitten(s) have ever had ringworm. You will receive a confirmation email if/when space is available in the Ringworm Ward or Adoption Center.
2. Request a cattery clearance exam (can be done in conjunction with S/N surgery) to have your kitten(s) officially cleared of ringworm.

#### **Lymdip Instructions:**

Supplies needed:

- Lymdip
- Measuring cup
- Q-tips/cotton balls
- Carrier/kennel with heating pad

Things to know before dipping:

- Lymdip will change the color of metal, so remove jewelry before dipping
- Lymdip has a "rotten egg" like odor
- Keep towels used for dipping separate from regular laundry because it will transfer smell
- Dip will cause the fur of the cats to yellow but it fades quickly

Spot treatment twice weekly (every 3 days) is the only method of treating kittens under 8 weeks old, as full dips put young kittens at risk of hypothermia. The clinic or nursery will provide you with concentrated lymdip that will need to be diluted. The dilution ratio is 3.5mL/CC of lymdip to ¼ cup of water. Once diluted, dip a q-tip into the lymdip and dab onto visible lesions. Do not rinse, but place kittens on a heating pad in a crate until they are dry. Note that the dip will cause the kittens' fur to turn yellow, but this will eventually fade. The dip does have a "rotten egg" like odor, so keep towels used separate from regular laundry, and wear old clothes to dip. Also remove any jewelry or nice clothing that could come in contact with the solution.