



# Newsletter

June 2021

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Greetings,

Summer is right around the corner and it is time for a six month check in. It is time to ask ourselves how are we doing? We are now able to get the Covid 19 vaccine, should we choose, so what is next? For those that are still curbside, the demand by clients to reopen is constantly upon veterinarians. Do you have strategic plans in place to protect yourself, your doctors, and your staff because not all will be vaccinated. Reach out to you colleagues that have been open to see what is working well for them and then make plans on what will work best for your team.

Congratulations to our board member, Armando Vilamil, for the Medilaw Firm 2021 Physician of the Year! We applaud your recognition for dedication and service.

The Executive board is working to provide a social gathering by the end of the year. You will receive a survey in an effort to see if members are ready to meet in person. Please take a moment to respond to the survey so that we can provide the appropriate setting for our members. Your responses will also help us to decide when our CE meetings will be in person again.

Board positions are available, and we are looking for members with new and fresh ideas to help better serve our members and our community. If you are interested in joining the board and would like more information about the responsibilities of each position, please contact myself or one of the Board members.

As we continue to get back to normal, remember you come first. Protect your mind, body, and spirit, so that you can continue to care for your patients and support your team.

Stay safe and be well,

Stephanie Jones



# Newsletter

**June 2021**

## **Board of Directors 2021**

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### **Newsletter Chair**

**Armando Villamil, DVM**  
[drv@petcancergroup.com](mailto:drv@petcancergroup.com)

## **Membership Information**

Enjoy the camaraderie and top-notch continuing education offered by the BCVMA! We offer five great CE meetings per year, a newsletter, and the best Holiday Party in South Florida! Membership is \$130 yearly.

You can join or renew by visiting our website: [www.BrowardCountyVMA.com](http://www.BrowardCountyVMA.com) or e-mail [bcvma@mail.com](mailto:bcvma@mail.com) for more information. We look forward to seeing you!

## **Vet Directory**

Please visit our website [Veterinary Directory page](#) to view our compendium of local resources. If you'd like to add your information to this list, please email Laura at [Lcarran@gmail.com](mailto:Lcarran@gmail.com).

THE MEDILAW FIRM  
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**Armando Villamil, DVM, PhD**  
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***Congratulations, Dr. Villamil!***



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# Upcoming CE

**August 25, 2021 at 7 pm**

Antech Lab, Dr. Jessica Boudreaux Milligan

"A case based approach to understanding canine chronic enteropathy (CE)/inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)"

## Renew Your BCVMA Membership

The BCVMA exists to promote the highest professional relationship among its members and the public which we serve, to facilitate public relations, provide programs to further the professional education of its members and promote an atmosphere of friendship, cooperation, and good fellowship among its members, their families and employees. Each year we organize CE meetings, social events, and provide a forum for news and events via our digital newsletter.

Thank you for your membership with the BCVMA. Your involvement is important and very much appreciated.

To ensure you will continue to receive your benefits and mailings without interruption, please renew your membership via this link for online payment:

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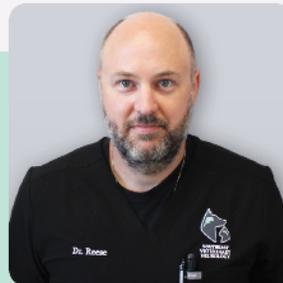
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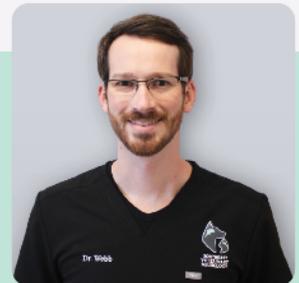
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# 2021 State of Florida DBPR Veterinary Board Meetings

The Board of Veterinary Medicine meets throughout the year at different locations throughout the state.

Attending any of these meetings will earn you up to five CE law credits and will teach you what really transpires in Disciplinary Procedures that the Board considers. You will benefit by learning how to abide by state DBPR regulations and how to avoid being disciplined because of a violation.

Friday, June 18, 2021

Please contact Linda Tinsley with any questions:

[linda.tinsley@myfloridalicense.com](mailto:linda.tinsley@myfloridalicense.com)



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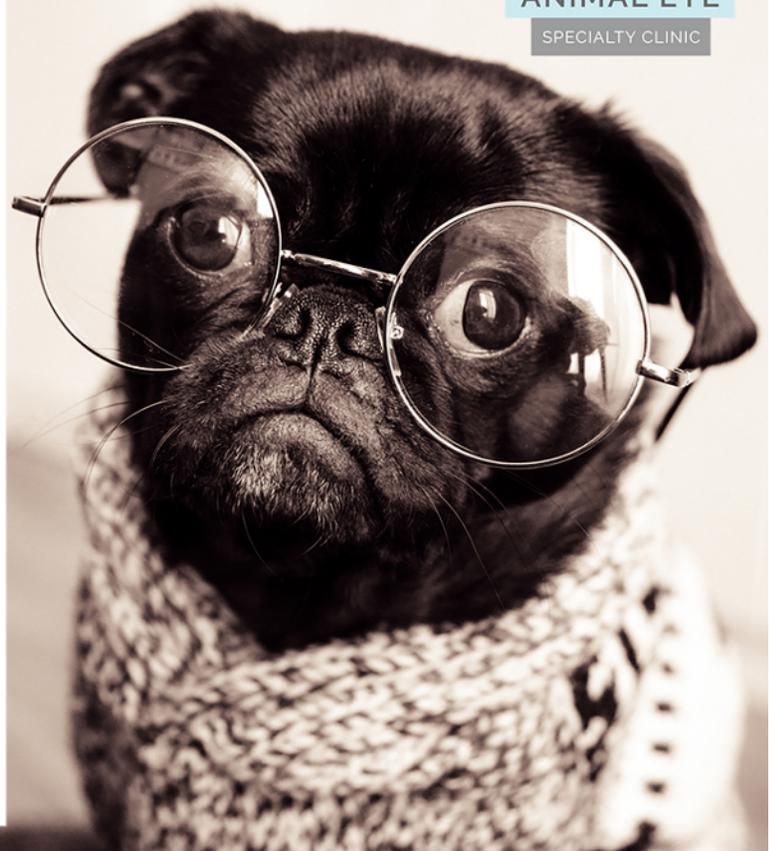
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# FVMA Update from Dr. Robert Swinger

## FVMA District 6 Representative

Dear Colleagues,

What a difference a year can make! As this newsletter come out, nearly everyone who desires a COVID-19 vaccine has it. Let's hope and pray that this soon places more normalcy on our lives and practices.

The 91st FVMA Annual Conference will be held LIVE from July 8-11, 2021 at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek & Waldorf Astoria Resort. I ensure you that the FVMA office is doing everything possible to make this a safe and educational event for everyone. We are all looking forward to seeing a few old faces and enjoying some comradery among our colleagues. Similarly, The Gulf-Atlantic Veterinary Conference is planned for December 2-5, 2021 at the Hilton West Palm Beach! Mark your calendars and plan to attend!

On a legislative agenda, HB 911 and SB 1370 did not pass this year. These bills pushed to remove the one thing the FVMA believes is fundamental to the protection of animals and their owners: a proper veterinarian/client/patient relationship (VCPR), as currently defined in the Rules we practice under in our State. As telemedicine continues to become more popular in our field, we will continue to protect our VCPR as we truly believe this ensures that our patients receive "Best Medicine".

The FVMA has chosen Florida House of Representatives member, Rene' Plasencia, as our new Executive Director. His experiences are highlighted by a 17-year career in teaching social studies and coaching cross country and track and field at Colonial High School in Orlando, Fla., serving as the district regional manager and executive director for Florida Virtual School and as a member of the Florida House of Representatives. We are excited to have him on our team!

Be well my friends,

Robert Swinger, DVM, DACVO



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# Pododermatitis in Dogs

*By: Millie Rosales. DVM, DACVD*

*Miami Veterinary Dermatology*

## Pododermatitis in Dogs

Pododermatitis is a descriptive term for inflammation and/or infection of the skin of the paw. There are a variety of causes for pododermatitis in dogs. It is important to find the underlying cause to prevent the recurrence of the paw problem. This article will discuss the clinical approach to pododermatitis in dogs with a brief focus on interdigital cyst cases.

### Clinical presentation

Pododermatitis cases can present as affecting one paw or several paws. There may be minimal to extreme pruritus of the paws. Interdigital erythema with or without thickening and swelling of the interdigital spaces can be present. It is important to look closely at the nailbeds of these dog as many can have this thick greasy to crusty debris adherent to the proximal surface of the nail and nailbed. Cytology of the nailbeds will often reveal numerous *Malassezia*. *Malassezia* will also cause brown discoloration of the nails. Salivary brown staining may often be present of the coat of the paw due to excessive licking. Depending on the degree of pruritus there may be alopecia of the paw and digits. Some dogs will also present with interdigital lesions that are either firm nodules or hemorrhagic bullae. These nodules often have draining tracts on the similar side of the undersurface of the paw. Serious conditions like autoimmune or systemic disorders should be considered when pododermatitis cases have thick crusts on the digital pads and/or nailbeds. Depending on the severity of lesions on the paw there may be lameness. Although any breed can be affected, short coated breeds like bulldogs, boxers or bull terriers are over represented.

### Differential diagnosis

It is extremely important with any dog that presents with pododermatitis that demodicosis be ruled out. Once this is ruled out then the other differential to consider are dermatophytosis (especially if one paw is involved), allergies (food allergy or atopy), nutritional disorders (zinc deficiency), autoimmune conditions (pemphigus foliaceus), systemic disorders (hepatocutaneous syndrome), neoplasia or idiopathic.



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## **Diagnostics**

In a paw that is not severely inflamed a deep skin scrape should be performed to rule out demodex. However, if the paw is inflamed, swollen or painful then tissue biopsies under deep sedation or anesthesia are recommended to rule out demodex. Trichogram is another option to look for demodex mites, but it is not as definitive as a good deep skin scrape or biopsy. Skin cytologies are another important diagnostic in pododermatitis cases to look for bacteria and malassezia. Cultures of the paw using hair samples are often necessary to rule out dermatophytosis. If a pododermatitis case has been exposed to several antibiotics with no improvement, then aerobic and anaerobic cultures are indicated to rule out a resistant bacterial infection. The author does not find that a swab culture is an accurate methodology for culturing the paw as often contaminant bacteria from the environment or bacteria from the mouth (from licking) will be picked up that are not the true organism causing infection. Pododermatitis cases with swelling and draining tracts or interdigital cysts usually have deep bacterial infection and a tissue biopsy (>4 mm punch biopsy) is best for culture. If the digital pads have crusts then biopsies of these areas for pathology review are indicated to rule out autoimmune, systemic or nutritional disorders. Bloodwork (CBC/Chemistry/thyroid panel) would also be beneficial in the work up of a pododermatitis case to rule out systemic disorders like hepatocutaneous syndrome. If one paw is affected and the pet is clinically lame, radiographs of the paw are important to rule out any boney involvement possibly secondary to neoplasia.

## **Treatment of secondary infections**

By far most if not all pododermatitis cases have secondary bacterial and/or malassezia infection. Cephalosporins are a good first choice for treatment of cases that have not been previously exposed to antibiotics. Please avoid the use of fluoroquinolones unless based on culture. Cases that have been exposed to various antibiotics should have an antibiotic chosen based on culture. Since many of these pododermatitis cases have deep bacterial infections the minimum length of antibiotic should be 6-8 weeks. Depending on the degree of infection it is possible to go past 3 months of treatment. Yeast or dermatophyte infections will require antifungal treatment. Use of azoles or terbinafine are good options for fungal infections. Aggressive topical therapy with antibacterial



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and/or antifungal shampoo is important as well. For those pets that are in severe pain, even to the point of lameness, or extremely pruritic, steroids are often necessary. The author uses steroids in conjunction to the antimicrobials for the first 2-4 weeks on a tapering dose. Pain medications like gabapentin and tramadol can also be added on.

## **Treatment/Management of underlying cause**

As the infection is being addressed the underlying cause needs to be treated as well. If demodex mites were found then the best treatment is using one of the isoxazolines until 3 negative skin scrapes are achieved. Dermatophyte infections will need to be treated with antifungals until 2-3 negative fungal cultures are achieved. If biopsies confirmed nutritional disorders like zinc deficiency, then supplementation with zinc should resolve the paw lesions in a few months. A full explanation of the treatment of autoimmune conditions is beyond the scope of this article, but in brief it will entail the combination of immunosuppressive doses of steroids along with other immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory drugs. Systemic disorders like hepatocutaneous involve supplementation with fatty acids, zinc, high protein diet, vitamin E and amino acid infusion therapy. For neoplastic lesions, treatment will depend on the type of cancer and extent of metastasize. The author recommends referral to an oncologist for these types of cases.

By far most pododermatitis cases have an underlying allergy cause. Food allergy or atopy are the top allergies that will cause pododermatitis in a dog. If the paw problem is year round then the author recommends starting an elimination diet trial using a prescription diet or home cooked diet that has ingredients the pet has not been exposed to in the past. By 8 weeks into the diet trial dogs with a food allergy are showing more than 80% improvement. If the paw problems completely resolve on the diet trial then food allergy is present. Keep in mind that secondary infections on the paw need to be resolved before assessing how well the diet trial is working. A diet trial may look like it is not working if the foot is still infected. If the pet starts relapsing with paw problems while on the food trial then it is likely not food allergic but atopic. For atopic dogs, the author highly recommends intradermal allergy testing for immunotherapy treatment. Apoquel and Cytopoint work well in reducing the



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pruritus of the paws. However, for those dogs that have interdigital nodules, the author finds that Cyclosporine works best in keeping these lesions and their waxing and waning course under control. If a few stubborn nodules remain topical therapy with Tacrolimus or steroid topicals (betamethasone valerate ointment or Synotic®) work well. The occasional use of a short course of steroids may be necessary for these interdigital nodule flare ups. Laser therapy may help some dogs with chronic interdigital nodules when medical therapy doesn't work. The author doesn't have experience with this procedure, but advises referral to a dermatologist or surgeon with extensive laser therapy knowledge. Surgical podoplasty is written in the literature, but this is not the best recourse for these chronic cases. In the author's experience the nodules will continue to reoccur and since many of these paws have deep infections, the infection will continue to tract up or down on the affected area of the paw.

## Summary

Pododermatitis in dogs, especially those with interdigital cysts, can be one of the most frustrating dermatological conditions in dogs. Proper treatment of the secondary bacterial and malassezia infection is important as these infections largely contribute to the pruritus and inflammation of the paws. Looking for the underlying cause is essential to resolve the continued foot problems. For those dogs with pododermatitis with interdigital cysts due to atopy the author finds that these cases usually need lifelong management. It is important to relay this information to pet owners for proper future expectations.

If you need additional information or have questions of a particular pododermatitis case, you can reach Dr. Millie Rosales at 305 -740-3376 or [miamivetderm@gmail.com](mailto:miamivetderm@gmail.com).

## Bio

Dr. Millie Rosales graduated with a Bachelors of Biology and high honors from Florida International University. She received her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine in 2000. Following graduation, she worked as a general practitioner in Miami for a non-profit small animal clinic. In 2003, Dr. Rosales returned to the University of Florida and completed a two year residency in the specialization of veterinary dermatology. She established [Miami Veterinary Dermatology](#) in 2005. She has also authored several articles and lectured at local and state veterinary associations. Dr. Rosales holds a primary interest in allergic and immune mediated skin conditions in dogs and cats; and chronic (recurrent) ear infections in dogs.



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# Humane Society of Broward County

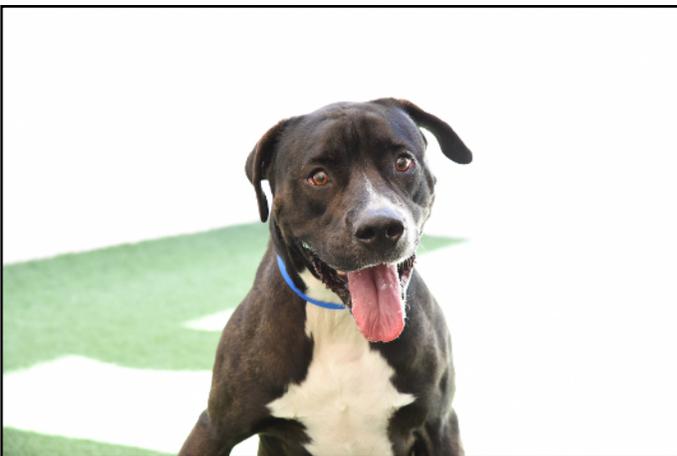
## Sleepovers Available!

Thinking about adding a furry friend to your family, but not quite sure if you are ready? Do you have a client who has a dog at home and they want to see if they would enjoy the companionship of a playmate? The Humane Society of Broward County is offering doggie and kitty sleepovers for select pets; sorry, puppies and kittens are not available.

According to Cherie Wachter at the adoption center, "sleepovers give potential adopters the opportunity to see how the pet they selected will blend in with their family. It also gives the pets a break from being in the shelter. We started doing sleepovers on a limited basis when the pandemic started last March and have had great success with it. More than two dozen pets were adopted as a result, including Marvel – a fabulously fun American bulldog mix who is deaf. His new family adores him."

Pets typically available for sleepovers are those that have been passed by for no apparent reason. Once in a home environment they relax and just want to be part of the family. In order to take home one of the select sleepover pets, a \$50 deposit is required and the dog must leave with a collar and leash. Sleepovers can last for a maximum of two weeks, at which time you will either need to bring the pet back or finalize the adoption and pay any remaining fee.

If you have thought about adopting, or think a sleepover might be right for you, stop by the Humane Society of Broward County located at 2070 Griffin Road. The center opens daily at 11 AM. To see who needs a home visit [www.humanebroward.com](http://www.humanebroward.com) or call 954-989-3977 ext. 6..



*Cosmo and Sally are just two of the several dogs available for a sleepover.*



# Classifieds & Advertising

This newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Broward County Veterinary Medical Association, Inc., 200 NE 12th Avenue Apt 8 B Hallandale, FL 33009.

**Editorial Guidelines:** Letters and articles are welcome. All submissions must be signed and the author's name will be published. Entries must be received 7 days prior to the publication date.

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