

## A GUIDE TO SKIN SCRAPES & OTHER DERMATOLOGICAL SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

For ringworm examination a selection of plucked hairs (*including the root*) from the edge of the lesion is the best sample.

For ectoparasites a deep skin scrape is necessary. It is important to go sufficiently deep to achieve capillary blood oozing.

- Place a drop of liquid paraffin on the clipped skin to be examined.
- Gently squeeze the skin into a fold.
- Scrape with a sharp scalpel blade until oozing occurs.
- Carefully scrape the scalpel onto a microscope slide or place the scalpel blade into a labelled protective case (*syringe cases are useful*). Do not allow the sample to dry out. Examination of dry crusted scabs is unrewarding. A separate transport swab should be taken for bacteriology of suitable pustules or pyoderma. The adhesive tape technique is suitable for examination for superficial ectoparasites and malassezia.
- Take a section of clear adhesive tape.
- Sticky side down press down on the area to be investigated.
- Place tape sticky side down on a microscope slide for examination.