



CAL ZOO'S REFERENCE SHEET



THE PROPER USE OF PEST STRIPS™

PEST STRIPS™ ARE FOR TREATING FOR SNAKE MITES ONLY. NOT FOR USE WITH LIZARDS!

CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED WHEN USING PEST STRIPS™. USE IN WELL VENTILATED AREA.
WASH HANDS THOROUGHLY WHEN FINISHED.

It is inevitable from time to time that you will encounter acariosis, more commonly known as a snake mite infestation. No matter how many snakes are in your collection or how immaculate you keep them, chances are you and your snake will become victims. Sometimes the source of an infestation appears to be a mystery. Snake mites (*Ophionyssus natricis*) are tiny external parasites which look almost identical to poppy seeds. This will more than likely be noticed most in the water bowl. Snakes will soak in the water bowl to relieve the irritation of the mites, which attach themselves under the scales. If left untreated, mites will irritate the snake to the point where the snake will not feed and will eventually become dehydrated and not be able to properly shed its skin. Snake mites can also transmit pneumonia and mouth rot. In any case, your snake could die. Follow the directions below closely. Using the entire strip or letting your snake come in contact with the Pest Strip™ could prove fatal to your snake.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- * Pest Strip™
- * Disposable gloves
- * Scissors
- * Shallow deli cups & lids (sm margarine tubs work well)
- * Hole punch
- * Tape
- * Ophthalmic ointment (such as Terramycin)
- * 2 clean plastic trash bins with ventilated lids.
- * Spray bottle
- * Chlorine bleach

If you find an infestation, the first thing to do is to remove the snake(s) from the enclosure and place them in one of the trash bins with room temperature water. The amount of water is important. The water level should be no higher than one inch above the snake's body height. This will allow the snake to rest its head on its coils and prevent accidental drowning. Place the lid on the bin secure enough to prevent escape. This procedure will allow the snake to drink as well as removing any visible mites. Leave snake in trash bin for two hours minimum. If snake(s) should defecate in water, immediately replace with clean water.

Mites will lay eggs anywhere. So next you will need to remove all furniture in the enclosure and thoroughly clean them. This includes branches, vines, water bowls, astroturf, etc., these items will go in the second bin with 95% water, 5% chlorine bleach. Immerse completely and soak for 1 hour. Throw away any newspaper, gravel, etc., essentially all substrate used.

The enclosure will now need disinfecting. Fill the spray bottle with 95% water and 5% bleach. Spray the entire enclosure. Let stand 10-15 minutes. Rinse it with clean water until the smell of bleach is gone, then wipe dry with a clean towel. Remove the cage furniture from the water/bleach solution, rinse clean and dry. (Sun drying works best. UV light also helps kill germs). Line the bottom of the enclosure with fresh newspaper and return the cage furniture.

CAUTION: THE WATER BOWL SHOULD NOT BE RETURNED TO THE CAGE WITH THE PEST STRIP. THE WATER MAY BECOME CONTAMINATED AND COULD HARM YOUR ANIMAL IF ALLOWED TO DRINK IT.

Now you will need to prepare the Pest Strip™. Put on the disposable gloves. Remove strip from box. Open the foil wrapper with the scissors. Cut a one inch square piece per 15 gallons of enclosure. (i.e., 2 inch square/30 gallon, 3 inch square/45 gallon etc.) With hole punch, place 6 holes in the side of deli cup, insert strip and secure lid. Tape lid down to prevent accidental opening of container.

Next, remove snake(s) from trash bin and dry thoroughly. Coat the eyes completely with the Terramycin™ ophthalmic ointment. This will suffocate any mites which may have gotten inside the eye socket. Place snake(s) back in enclosure with Pest Strip™ container. Leave Pest Strip™ in for at least 24 hours but no more than 36 hours. The snake(s) should be soaked in clean water every 12 hours to allow rehydration. Dry off snake(s) completely before returning to enclosure. Repeat entire process in 6 days. This will ensure killing any mites which may have hatched after treatment as Pest Strip™ might not be effective on every mite egg.

AGAIN, REMEMBER, DO NOT LEAVE WATER BOWL IN ENCLOSURE WHILE PEST STRIP IS BEING USED

Once treatment is finished, place the container of Pest Strip™ in an air tight bag and keep in safe place away from children. Be sure to wash hands well. This information sheet is meant to be a guideline only.

California Zoological Supply assumes no responsibility in cases of sickness, injury, or death in animal(s) and/or person(s) as a result of misuse of Pest Strip™ or any above mentioned objects, medication or processes.

Warning: This product and/or its breakdown products contain a chemical known to the state of California to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm. Please read and follow label instructions. This warning complies with California proposition 65 (California health and safety code section 25249.6).

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