

Flea and Worming Treatments...

For the health of your dog and your family it is vital that you routinely use effective, preventative treatment against the most common parasites throughout your pet's life.

Fleas

Fleas are the most common of the external parasites (ectoparasites) and the cause of many skin problems. Although you may only see fleas on your pet, they are continually shedding eggs into their environment (your home) and if unchecked you will quickly find that you have a flea infestation to deal with. Prevention is much easier and cheaper than cure. Remember, for every adult flea there are up to 500 developing in your carpets.

Although the flea lives on the outside of the dog, the tapeworm egg lives inside the flea and is swallowed when the dog licks or chews him. The flea is digested in the intestine and the tapeworm hatches and anchors itself to the intestinal lining. Thus, it's important to treat for both fleas and worms.

We can advise you on which flea and worm product is most suitable for your dog.

Ticks

Living in a semi-rural area, ticks are another familiar external parasite. These pose a danger in that they can transmit disease whilst feeding on the animal's blood. If you find a tick on your dog, don't just pull it off as this will leave the head and mouthparts under the skin causing infection. The tick should be killed as quickly as possible, once dead it will not be a danger. It can be killed quickly using a suitable product. After a few days the tick will wither and drop off, or you can carefully tease it out. Never use a lit cigarette to kill a tick. If you cannot get to the surgery, try nail varnish remover or covering the tick in petroleum jelly so it can't breathe.

Worms

Our usual advice is to treat your puppy monthly for both worms until 6 months old, so now you should be able to go onto monthly roundworm and 3 monthly tapeworm preventative regimes.

The roundworm lifecycle is 21 - 28 days and hence monthly worming is required to guarantee your pet is worm free. Obviously, the frequency of worming depends

on your pet's lifestyle and product used, but your vet can advise you on the best regime for your pet.

Please be aware that many products available elsewhere other than your Veterinary Practice may be ineffective at treating all the species of worms and fleas your pet could get.

Please ask us for advice on effective products. This advice is free!

Roundworms - Usually occur in puppies and may be present in large numbers living in the bowel. The puppy may appear potbellied. Roundworms can cause digestive upsets, stunt growth and generally weaken a young dog. They will spread directly from dog to dog via infected eggs or from the environment.

Tapeworms - infect your dog via fleas as above, from the environment, or from eating raw or undercooked offal. Infected dogs will pass small grain-like segments of the worm in their faeces, or they may stick to the hair under the tail. These worms are sometimes difficult to spot.

Heartworm disease - has not until recently been a condition occurring in Great Britain other than in imported animals. Since transmission depends on mosquitoes that are not indigenous to the UK, it's unlikely that the condition will become a general problem, but with global warming this risk is gradually increasing. However, heartworm disease is prevalent in parts of Europe and it does occur in isolated regions of the UK, USA and Australia. For this reason, anyone wishing to take their dog abroad under the Pet Passport Scheme should seek advice. Prevention is the key for heartworm as treatment can have serious associated problems.

There are many ranges of worming treatments available including tablets, liquids, granules and spot-ons. Worms can infect your family so please treat your dog regularly.

